

10 Things You Won't Learn in an MFA about Making a Living as a Writer



1. [Writers can make great money, part time.](#) Clients can pay \$100+ an hour for a writer to fill their websites, social media, and anywhere else they need words. The more powerful your words, the more you'll be paid.
2. [Your literary skills transfer to business.](#) What you're learning about how to make incredible written art can be applied to power your money-making. Specificity, a narrative arc, and strong verbs — these are all part of a fantastic PowerPoint presentation too!
3. [Writers don't have to starve.](#) They have to get intentional about earning the most per hour with their business work, so they can buy themselves time for their creative work.
4. [Writers have leverage to negotiate.](#) What? Ask for more? When I feel lucky to be getting writing work in the first place? YES. Businesses expect it, and the more frequently you practice asking for more, the better you'll get at it.
5. [Networking is important, yes even in writing.](#) Of course, your work must be excellent to be selected for publication. But getting to know an editor or getting an introduction to one can make a huge difference in your chances of getting assignments and writing work, and even getting published.
6. [Resilience is essential.](#) You'll be rejected a thousand times. You'll get critiques that sting. What makes the most difference is getting back up, over and over and over. Your writing community can help.
7. [A social media following will help your career.](#) When you need more work, when you have something you want people to read, when you have something you want people to buy, you'll get on social media and say so. How many people will hear you? You don't *have* to do social media. But if you use it to get the word out, you'll have a better chance of success.
8. [Other writers are not your competitors.](#) First, you compete to get into an MFA. Then to get published. Then for awards. It can feel like a competition. But it's truly not. There is room for everyone's path.
9. [If you are a professional writer, you are a small business owner.](#) Anything that applies to a small business — bookkeeping, marketing, advertising, customer service, operations — now applies to you. Don't run. You can do this.
10. [Business is a creative act.](#) It's challenging but rewarding, just like writing. You get to decide your style, your icons, your boundaries. It can be, gasp!, a beautiful thing.