

How to Create a Freelance Medical Writing Business That's Fulfilling and Exciting Every Day

Speaker

Sophie Ash, BSc (Hons), DiplON, DipLCM
Prospology

By Diana Henzel, PharmD

Aspiring freelancers seek autonomy but often fear burnout, while experienced freelancers may feel undervalued and overwhelmed by daily pressures. This article summarizes a session delivered by Sophie Ash, BSc (Hons), DiplON, DipLCM at the AMWA Carolinas Chapter Conference on May 16, 2025. A full-time business coach for aspiring medical writers, Ash taught attendees how freelancers can establish and sustain a business that is both fulfilling and exciting to operate.

Define fulfillment:

Freelancers should first define what fulfillment means to them as individuals. Definitions may include doing meaningful work, creating work-life balance, and being in full control over one's life. "Fulfillment differs from happiness in that happiness is fleeting and often influenced by external circumstances, while fulfillment is deeper and more enduring," said Ash. With a clear definition of fulfillment, freelancers can create businesses aligned with their needs.

Establish self-worth:

Being fulfilled necessitates having self-worth and feeling deserving of success. For example:

- Accepting compliments rather than dismissing them
- Practicing positive self-talk and not undermining oneself

Feeling worthy of success makes it easier for freelancers to engage in meaningful work that promotes fulfillment.

Practice authenticity:

Many freelancers have work histories that required them to please others without consideration for themselves. This can easily translate into unhealthy business practices, such as accepting last-minute client requests and agreeing to relentless meetings that leave them feeling drained and underappreciated. Practicing authenticity by honoring personal needs is essential for creating excitement and fulfillment in one's day-to-day life.

Invest in yourself:

Unlike employees who must subscribe to a company's vision, freelancers carve their own career paths. "This newfound freedom can feel overwhelming," said Ash. "The most important thing is to take ownership of your life and business trajectory, proactively identifying areas in which you need more training or support." There are plenty of classes, workshops, and coaching programs out there that can steer freelancers towards meaningful work opportunities with genuine alignment.

Build resilience:

Many freelancers choose to tolerate discomfort and simply learn how to endure challenging situations instead of building true resilience. Those who make changes in accordance with their goals or personal preferences are far more likely to feel happy and fulfilled in their business than those who continue being self-sacrificial.

Reframe your beliefs:

Freelance writers often carry beliefs from childhood or past experiences into their business without realizing it. These old patterns can keep them playing small or chasing someone else's version of success. Challenging and reshaping those beliefs allows for more control, meaningful work, and genuine fulfillment.

Conclusion:

By defining fulfillment, cultivating self-worth, practicing authenticity, investing in personal growth, building resilience, and reframing limiting beliefs, freelancers can create businesses that are both meaningful and sustainable. Through intentional choices and staying true to their values, they can experience lasting fulfillment and excitement in their day-to-day lives.

Acknowledgments:

Thank you to Kylie VanDerMolen and Sophie Ash for reviewing and editing this report.

AI Disclosure: AI (ChatGPT, model GPT-4o) was used to refine portions of this text. Output was reviewed and edited for accuracy, clarity, and alignment.