

# Portfolio

John Coutts



[www.WriteSystem.com](http://www.WriteSystem.com)

My name is John Coutts. I write for a living, and I have been doing so professionally for over 16 years. My first language is English, and I have a passion for proper grammar, spelling and punctuation, as well as for producing creative and imaginative writing.

Over the years I have co-authored three books for a museum that won "Scottish Museum of the Year" award in the year 2000; for 10 years I wrote a weekly column for a newspaper that won the prestigious "Scottish Newspaper of the Year" award three years running; I have had various poems and short stories published in magazines; and I have written thousands of SEO web copy pieces and articles for many, many businesses all over the world.

Examples of my writing ability can be found in this ebook, and also on my website at: [www.WriteSystem.com](http://www.WriteSystem.com).

The quality of my work is appreciated by a number of professionals in the SEO field. For example, two highly respected SEO companies retain my services. You can find me mentioned as part of the external freelance copywriting team on these two pages: [One Result](#) | [Red Evolution](#)

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I should point out here that I am not Spanish. My first language is very definitely English. I live in Spain because it is a beautiful country.

My services and rates are available on request as they may vary, depending on what you require:

- <http://www.writesystem.com/contact-form/>

Please contact me to discuss any writing requirements you may have. I am normally available during working hours in my time zone, which is Central European Time (+1 hour GMT), Monday through Friday, every week.

The following pages contain various examples of my writing:

## **Joint Pain Relief - 3 Simple Tips To Ease Pain And Help Mobility**

Joint pain relief is the single most important consideration for arthritis sufferers. A reasonable degree of mobility is essential for normal living and relief from pain in the joints can allow this to happen. Is there any easy way to achieve it? Yes, there are many simple and natural ways that can achieve joint pain relief that don't involve mind-numbing drugs. Here are a few.

### **1. Joint Pain Relief - Exercise in Water:**

A study in England found that two 60-minute sessions a week spent doing easy and enjoyable exercises in a community pool resulted in a considerable improvement in a study group compared to another group who had just spent the same time being educated in joint pain relief for themselves.

Being immersed in water removes much of the stress from our joints. The lessened stress and strain leads to joint pain relief in most individuals. Regular aquatic therapy can result in greater mobility and flexibility with considerable joint pain relief for most individuals.

### **2. Joint Pain Relief - Devil's Claw:**

This substance has been used in the treatment of joint pain relief with good effect in many cases. However, you should consult your doctor if you intend to try it. There are many who swear by its ability to ease painful joints and increase mobility. If you are seeking arthritic joint pain relief, perhaps it would be worth your while to investigate Devil's Claw further.

### **3. Joint Pain Relief - Glucosamine:**

This has been tested in double blind studies and found to be remarkably effective in relieving arthritis pain. There are some side effects from glucosamine in some cases, and different kinds of arthritis needs different preparations of the substance to achieve effective joint pain relief in most people. However, further investigation into this potent product may be rewarding in individual cases, though again, medical advice should be sought from the outset.

Joint pain relief is not always an easy thing to achieve for those suffering from any form of arthritis. The disease can be very debilitating and can lead to a low quality of life. If you don't want to take strong drugs to ease the pain, then perhaps a fresh look at alternative medicines and simple practices will yield joint pain relief benefits. The bottom line is this: explore and enquire about everything you can related to joint pain relief - you never know what you might discover!

*[400 Words - Keyword(s) "Joint Pain Relief"]*

### Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar - The Fundamentals of Writing

Practically everyone in the developed western countries can write to some degree these days. Illiteracy is largely a thing of the past, but there still remains a huge gap between good writing and bad writing. I don't mean magnetic copy that compels the reader to stay riveted to the seat, reading every word with relish, although writing that kind of copy is great. I mean ordinary writing that observes the basic fundamental rules of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

English classes at school were probably boring for you. They were for me, and yet I always loved the written word. It has always amazed me how it's possible to combine words in so many ways to bring out emotion in people. It's a powerful thing. Yet it's so easy to destroy the magic. Just one wrongly spelt word, an incorrect punctuation or some bad grammar can ruin the whole effect.

The mistake that I see most often on the Internet is the confusion between "loose" and "lose." I read sales letters that tell me I can't loose on this great deal. Hmm... maybe I could tighten though... The difference is simple: if your pants keep falling down, they are loose; and if you gamble and you don't win, you lose.

If the way you are pronouncing the two words, "loose" and "lose," is the thing that is confusing you, then this is how you should pronounce each word. Pronounce "loose" with a short "oo" sound, and pronounce "lose" with a long "ooooo" sound, a bit like the wind wailing at night. It does seem illogical, I admit, but that's how it goes.

The other words commonly confused include "its" and "it's." Here's a simple way to determine which is right. Try saying the phrase with "it is" instead. If it sounds right, then it probably is right. If not, then it's probably wrong. For example, "It's a nice day." Saying, "It is a nice day" works fine, so "it's" is the one to use. However, "The dog wags its tail" sounds wrong when you say, "The dog wags it is tail," so "its" without an apostrophe "s" is the one to use there.

The use of the apostrophe in the case of "it's" denotes a contraction of the two words, "it is." On the other hand, "its," without the apostrophe, denotes possession, as in the earlier example of the dog wagging its tail; the tail is owned (possessed) by the dog.

Another couplet that often confuses is "their" and "there." This one is easier. If you want to indicate where something is located, you could say, "It's over there." If you want to indicate that some people own something, you could say, "It's their car/house/dog/etc."

The apostrophe is also used to denote possession as in, "Tom's book." There is often confusion over where the apostrophe should go when the word ends in "s." To be fair, this is not an easy one to get right.

Place the apostrophe before the "s" if you are dealing with singular possession, as in the earlier example of "*Tom's book*." There is only one Tom and it's his book, so it's singular possession.

If the person owning the book, as in this example, has a name that already ends in "s" then you can either place the apostrophe after the "s" only, or place it after the "s" and add another "s".

That is a bit complicated, so let me show you what I mean. If the book belongs to Iris, then you can say either, "*Iris' book*," or "*Iris's book*." The choice here works only for singular possession where the name of the person or thing possessing ends in an "s."

When the person or thing owning something has a name that ends in "s," and it is plural possession, then an apostrophe only is added to the end of the word. For example, "*The workers' shovels*." There is more than one worker owning a shovel, therefore it is plural possession. If you said, "*The worker's shovels*," you would be saying that one (singular) worker has lots of shovels. But saying, "*The workers' shovels*" means that you are referring to lots of workers who each have at least one shovel.

There are exceptions to the plural possession rule, however. If the person or thing owning something is plural, but the word does not end in an "s," then the word becomes apostrophe "s." Here's an example: "*The children's toys*." The word "*children*" is plural as it denotes more than one child. It doesn't end in an "s," so you have to add an apostrophe "s" to the end of it.

There's a syndrome sometimes known as the "*greengrocer's apostrophe*." This is because greengrocers are often the worst offenders when it comes to confusing possession with a plural situation. They write things like, "*We have carrot's, turnip's and onion's*" when they simply mean to express that they have these items in quantity.

Think of it this way; the carrot isn't owning (possessing) anything. The turnip and the onion isn't either, so why have an apostrophe "s" after those words? The greengrocer in this example is actually trying to say that he or she has a plural amount of the vegetables mentioned. The message should have been written like this: "*We have carrots, turnips and onions*." One carrot, lots of carrots; one turnip, lots of turnips; and one onion, but lots of onions. It's as easy as that.

My favorite mis-use of an apostrophe? It comes from the wonderful book, "*Eats, Shoots and Leaves*." Someone called Gladys signed herself as, "*Gladys's*." Now, that's someone who is really working hard to get it wrong!

One grammar mistake that really annoys me is the incorrect use of "*I*" and "*me*." I know people who use "*I*" simply because they think it's the proper way to speak, when in fact they are wrong and should be using "*me*." The Queen of Britain often says something like, "*My husband and I are very pleased...*" in speeches. That is correct grammar. On the other hand, I've heard people say something like, "*Our house is just right for Betty and I*." That is bad grammar.

Let me explain... The easiest way to test whether or not you are right is to split the sentence into two parts and see if each part sounds right. In the example of the Queen, if you say, "*My husband is very pleased...*" and "*I am very pleased...*" it shows you that she is using good grammar; it makes sense and sounds right. However, in the other example, saying, "*Our house is just right for Betty*" and "*Our house is just right for I*" clearly shows that "me" should have been used instead of "I," as in, "*Our house is just right for Betty and me.*"

In America over the years it has become almost normal to use "off" twice consecutively in certain circumstances. This is wrong. An example is an old 50s country song entitled, "*I Can't Get You Off Off My Mind.*" That's bad grammar. OK, it works great in the song, but it's still bad grammar. Only one "off" should be used - every single time.

Split infinitives! They sound really complicated, but they are not. The classic example of a split infinitive is in the Star Trek opening sequence where the narrator, William Shatner, says, "*To boldly go where no man has gone before.*" That's a split infinite. Correct grammar would dictate that it should be, "*To go boldly where no man has gone before.*"

The infinitive in this example is, "*to go.*" The adverb "*boldly*" splits it by coming in between: "*to boldly go.*" It's that simple! However, I am happy to cheerfully concede that "*To boldly go*" has more impact and sounds just right for what the producers of Star Trek were trying to achieve, and it is therefore a good example of when it can be right to break the rules.

I could go on for hours writing about this, but I won't. Someone will probably be delighted to happily go on record as being the one to point out a mistake I have made somewhere. That's OK, it simply proves that I am human, and who knows, I may have made the mistake (or mistakes) deliberately, but I do try to write properly as much as possible, and you should too.

## **What Are The Causes Of High Blood Pressure?**

The causes of high blood pressure are many and varied. However, there are certain recurring causes that will affect most people adversely. Knowing the causes of high blood pressure will mean that you are better placed to avoid them, or even to reverse the effects.

One of the causes of high blood pressure may be your family history and you can't really do very much about that. However, you can do something about most of the other causes of high blood pressure. In this article we will look at the effects of eating the wrong foods, of being overweight, and of being physically inactive.

Consuming the wrong kinds of food is one of the causes of high blood pressure. Too much salt can have an adverse effect on blood pressure. The remedy is simple; cut out salt in your food wherever possible. Watch out for processed foods too. They often already contain salt for flavor. The causes of high blood pressure can sometimes lie hidden.

Another of the prime causes of high blood pressure is excessive alcohol. Alcohol raises blood pressure and keeps it high. Smoking is also one of the biggest causes of high blood pressure, so cut down or stop.

Carrying too much body weight is another of the causes of high blood pressure. Many people are more overweight than they think. The heart has to work harder, and your blood pressure rises. Lose weight and one of the major causes of high blood pressure will disappear and your blood pressure will reduce.

One of the easiest ways to lose weight is through regular exercise. For many people that conjures up images of sweating in the gym - hard work, in other words! It needn't be so. It will take you around 15 minutes to walk briskly for the distance of one mile. That alone every day will make a huge difference in time. Physical inactivity is another of the causes of high blood pressure, so get active.

Consider walking more than a mile every day though. Just doubling that mile will leave you with plenty of time every day for the other things you need to do. For an able-bodied person, this is the easiest of the causes of high blood pressure to put right. So, exercise and be physically active for at least thirty minutes a day, every day.

There are many causes of high blood pressure. The easiest way to do something about it is to start by combating three of the most common causes of high blood pressure: consuming the wrong things, being overweight, and not being physically active enough. There are other causes of high blood pressure, but starting with these three is a step in the right direction.

*[453 Words - Keyword(s) "Causes Of High Blood Pressure"]*

## The Power Of Writing A Press Release

Most of us think of press releases as being a document that is syndicated to the media whenever there is a big news story to announce. This is the traditional view of the press release, and it is still used in this way every day to good effect. However, in today's online environment, the humble press release can be utilized for announcing just about anything, anytime you choose. The trick is to do it the right way to gain the maximum effect.

There are a number of reasons why a press release might be written. These include the broadcast of valuable information, to boost and increase profits in a business, and to keep a target audience up to date with latest developments. However, sometimes you may not have valuable information to broadcast, or any latest developments to comment on. You most likely will want to increase your business profits, but without a good reason for a press release, you will most likely turn to other methods of boosting your business.

This is a shame, for it doesn't take much to come up with a good, valid reason for writing a press release. You should never lie, of course, but you can make the truth more interesting, while still keeping it the simple truth. Don't use unnecessary hype, but find ways to create interest.

Here's a small checklist of what to do and what not to do when writing a press release:

- ➔ Always use a reporting style and write in the third person. Check out a newspaper if you're not sure how to.
- ➔ Never talk to your audience directly by using limp phrases like, "If you do this you will immediately see that..."
- ➔ Always include one quote at least (if you are promoting your own site you can quote yourself).
- ➔ Never use a hard sell style of writing, phrases like, "Opportunity of a lifetime," or similar.
- ➔ Always write in proper, grammatically correct English with no spelling errors!

The last point is very important. If you don't know the difference between "loose" and "lose," "its" and "it's," "your" and "you're," "their" and "there" ... the list is endless - then learn the difference before you let your press release loose on the world! If you don't, you'll lose out.

A press release should be fairly short, between 250 and 350 words. Three paragraphs works well using the inverted pyramid reporting style. The first sentence should summarize the entire story as much as possible. Answer the obvious questions next, the who, what, where, when, why and how of the matter.

The second paragraph should expand on the first one. This is where a quote can be used to best effect. In the third paragraph back up all claims and facts stated, rounding up the story with a link to more information if possible. This will usually be the web site that you are promoting. You can also include one or

two relevant links in the first and second paragraph, but only do so in a reporting manner; never say, "click here!"

There are various conventions that are used in the traditional press release structure, such as placing *##Ends##* at the end of the release to signify that it has finished, but it is really more important to structure the actual release properly before being concerned about anything else.

I didn't mention the headline... I left it until last deliberately, because it is arguably the most important part of your press release. Your headline should be interesting and compelling to draw the reader in. Dull headlines ensure no readers, even if your press release is great. Conversely, a really awful press release will get read hundreds of times if it has a stunning headline!

The results of writing a good press release? I wrote a press release for my web site at <http://www.writesystem.com> one evening. Within one hour it was ranked number 4 on Google for the keyword phrase I was targeting. There were over 3 million competing web sites. It only took me about an hour to write. Did it boost my business? Oh, yes! It certainly did, and so did all the others I have written. Properly structured press releases are probably the best kept secret on the Internet.

*[This is a press release that I used to great effect for my own business]*

### **SEO Article Writing Service**

A new web site is promising discerning SEO companies and Webmasters valuable help in weeding out the good from the useless and finding their way through the junk being touted as web content that is today polluting the Internet. Using a straight to the point writing style, <http://www.WriteSystem.com> is experiencing great success. Good, clear, concise and engaging web content can increase traffic many fold and is often the crucial difference between those sites that "make it" and the rest that simply clutter up the web with barely readable garbage, never to realize their full potential.

When interviewed, John, the site owner, said, "It isn't content that is King on the Internet, it's quality content. Over the past few years there's been far too much inferior writing passed off as suitable content, when in fact it is often barely readable, grammatically a joke, and just plain dull and boring. That's why I started <http://www.WriteSystem.com>. I wanted SEO companies and Webmasters to know that there's an article writing service they can rely on for high quality web content"

What makes the difference between quality web content and something too embarrassing to read? John believes that experience counts, and he certainly has plenty of that. He has co-authored three books, he's been the editor of a monthly magazine as well as maintaining a newspaper column for over 10 years. In addition to that he has written countless SEO articles for more clients than he can remember over a writing career that spans some 15 years in total. The aim of John's web site is simple: if you want high quality SEO web copy, and you should if you are serious about your online business, then get the best you can get.

For more information please visit: <http://www.WriteSystem.com/>

*[294 Words - Keyword(s) "seo article writing service"]*

## How To Attract A Woman

The mating game is a very important ritual for any young man starting out in life. Learning how to attract a woman into your life is not always easy at first, but if you follow these 5 tips on how to attract a woman, you'll soon be surprised at how easy it becomes.

### **1. How To Attract A Woman - Be Impressive:**

As you have no doubt already heard, first impressions count. Get into the habit of looking good, even when you're not wondering how to attract a woman. Dress well, smell good, and try to exude an air of elegance and confidence. Either that, or go for the "dangerous" look. Don't go so far as to frighten her off or you'll never learn how to attract a woman, but a little danger can be an attractive thing, if nurtured properly.

### **2. How To Attract A Woman - Be Unique:**

Give her a reason to remember you by. This is always an effective strategy of how to attract a woman and get her attention. It could be an unusual piece of (tasteful) clothing, an unusual piece of jewelry, or maybe just you being somehow different from the rest. But again, don't frighten her off; there's different, and then there's way, way too different.

### **3. How To Attract A Woman - Be Attentive:**

Give her your full and undivided attention at all times. Don't smother her in a claustrophobic fog of devotion - that won't help with your quest of how to attract a woman, but rather pay attention to what she likes. Don't talk about the things you like - let her be the center of attention. Everyone loves attention, and she'll be no exception. Understand this and you'll know more than most men about how to attract a woman.

### **4. How To Attract A Woman - Be Honest:**

Be honest. Be sincere. Those two attributes will hold you in good stead for a long time. Never break a promise, unless there's a really good reason for doing so, and I mean REALLY good! And sincerity, properly mastered, is the one trait that all women adore.

### **5. How To Attract A Woman - Be Mysterious:**

Try to create an air of quiet mystery about yourself. Don't tell her everything all at once. Keep things back, but don't give her cause to worry that perhaps the FBI are out looking for you! You're learning how to attract a woman - not how to scare her off.

It's said that for everyone there is the perfect partner. It's just a matter of finding the right one. There's really no mystery about how to attract a woman - any man can do it if he goes about it the right way. Learning how to attract a woman comes naturally to most men, but some of us need that extra shove in the right direction. There's no time like the present, so go for it!

*[494 Words - Keyword(s) "How To Attract A Woman"]*

## 5 Dating And Relationship Tips

A first date is always a nervous time for both of you. It's a journey into the unknown, but also a journey that offers excitement and reward. With my 5 dating and relationship tips, I'm going to tell you how to make the best of that first date. And how to ensure you get more than just one date, to go on and build up a loving and long-lasting relationship. So, pay attention to these 5 dating and relationship tips - they could make all the difference!

### **1. Dating And Relationship Tips - Distinguish Yourself:**

Distinguish yourself from the ordinary - be different. Don't use the usual clichés, or make it obvious you are more interested in her body than her mind. Treat her as a real person. Hold eye contact and speak in normal conversational terms. You'll pleasantly surprise her.

### **2. Dating And Relationship Tips - It's All About You:**

Speak to her about her. Everyone likes the word "you" and she will be instantly flattered that you want to learn more about her. Ask about her likes and dislikes. Ask about things she's done, places she's visited, her ambitions and dreams, etc, etc. Dating and relationship tips don't come more important than this one. Trust me.

### **3. Dating And Relationship Tips - Compliment Her:**

Don't go overboard. Be subtle and honest. The occasional genuine compliment is worth far more than a barrage of compliments on anything and everything. Of all the dating and relationship tips, this one is very important indeed.

### **4. Dating And Relationship Tips - Body Language:**

Use the right body language. Non-verbal signals usually say more about how we really feel than anything else. Use an open posture, rather than sitting cross-legged or with arms crossed. It's the small gestures and the voice tone that says more than the actual words every time.

### **5. Dating And Relationship Tips - Self-Disclosure:**

If all goes well there will come a point in the evening when it's time to find out where the encounter is heading. This usually takes the form of self-disclosure; you will tell her some things, she will tell you some things. The level of disclosure usually deepens until you both reach a point where you know (hopefully) what's going to happen next. From here on dating and relationship tips should become largely redundant.

In conclusion, take it slow and stay subtle and confident throughout. These 5 dating and relationship tips are the basics of successful dating and relationships. There are many more things to learn of course, but learn these and you won't go far wrong. I wish you a happy and fulfilling future.

*[448 Words - Keyword(s) "Dating And Relationship Tips"]*

## 5 SEO Tips You Can Put To Use Today!

Search Engine Optimization, or SEO, is not rocket science. It isn't something particularly difficult to employ in your articles or web content, but it will make an enormous difference if you do it right. In this article we will look at 5 SEO tips that you can put to use today to help the search engines decide that your web content really is worthy of being ranked higher.

### 1. SEO Tips - The Domain:

If you're starting a new web site, choose a domain name that has a searched for keyword if possible. Try to get the .com if you can, but the .net or .org will work fine too. Try to get as short a phrase as possible, and try to get the domain as one word, without hyphens with all the words bunched up together. However, don't be afraid to use hyphens in the domain name to separate each word if you have to. This is one of the more powerful SEO tips that is so easy to employ.

### 2. SEO Tips - Keywords:

Each web page should be targeted on a single primary keyword. It can also have one or two secondary keywords targeted, and synonyms of the primary keyword included as well. Make sure that the title tag in the HTML head section of the web page has the primary keyword phrase in it. Also, make sure that the title tag reads well. Make it easy for people to read while also making it acceptable for the search engines.

### 3. SEO Tips - Meta Tags:

If you want to have keyword and description meta tags, make sure that any comma separated keyword phrases you include are also included somewhere on the visible page. Never include a keyword in the meta tags that does not appear on the page; this is one of the SEO tips you should never ignore. Include your primary keyword at least once in your description. Keep both meta tags short. Meta tags including around five keywords is enough, and a description of no more than 200 characters - not words - is also usually enough.

### 4. SEO Tips - The H1 Title Tag:

The H1 title tag on the visible page should also contain the primary keyword. This is the headline of the page, so make it compelling for the people who read it. Make them want to read more, while also letting the search engines know that there is no doubt about the subject of the page.

### 5. SEO Tips - Keyword Density and Theming:

You should use your primary keyword, which will also be in your page title and your H1 tag headline, several times throughout the page. Use it at least once in the first paragraph. This helps to reinforce what the page is about. Use synonyms as well. For example, if your page is about cars, refer occasionally to automobiles, motor cars, road traffic, vehicles, etc. This will help to make your page more themed and LSI friendly.

There are many other SEO tips you can use to improve the SEO qualities of your web pages, but following these 5 SEO tips will definitely help a lot. If you

always lay out your web pages in a methodical manner and follow this basic routine every time, you will see an improvement, as compared to just throwing up a page and hoping for the best.

*[558 Words - Keyword(s) "SEO Tips"]*

### A Choice, Or Two Choices?

How often have you seen a sales page that tells you, "You now have two choices..." or something similar? Did it seem like a sensible way to present an offer?

I hope not...

Think about it. What is a choice but an "either or" situation. You either choose one or the other. Carrying this to its logical conclusion, two choices would presumably be four options. You either choose one or the other, or the next one or the next other.

Does that sound silly? It does to me too.

You see, all too often we confuse "choice" with "option." A sales page, or indeed any other piece of written text, that tells you, "You now have two choices..." is really trying to say, "You now have two options..." At least, they should be saying that.

So, what's the difference between a choice and two options? Not much, really. It's pretty much the same thing. A choice implies having two options, while saying you have two options simply spells it out.

Of course, you may be thinking that saying, "You now have two choices..." is how most people say it, and if you say something different you won't communicate as well. I would argue that it's not so. Correct English, grammar and syntax is never wrong.

Think of it this way: If the same sales letter says, "You now have a choice..." wouldn't you understand what they meant? Of course you would! And if it went on to say, "You can either choose A or choose B," there would be no lack of communication, would there?

Unfortunately, this kind of thing can become very persistent. Someone who doesn't know better starts saying something in the wrong way. It may sound logical, but it is still wrong, and before you know where you are, everyone is saying it too.

It's still wrong though.

And now you know better!

### **Bad Grammar At The Top!**

I just came from browsing one of the top work bidding sites where providers show off their wares and buyers ask for bids on projects. You know the kind of site, and because I'm going to be referring to one of them, I won't mention it by name to avoid embarrassment.

I started by looking at all the providers who are offering writing services. I was simply curious to see who is out there and who is charging what. On this particular site, one of the top rated ones, there was someone who had an interesting statement in their profile. I won't print it word for word, but it went something like this:

"Your success is important to my team and I."

Now, you are either smiling because this top-ranked writer made a silly, but common mistake, or you are puzzled because you don't see anything wrong with the statement.

It's the old one about whether to use "my team and I" or "my team and me." Most people perversely think that saying "my team and I" is correct, regardless of the circumstances, which this writer obviously thought too.

It is not.

The simple way to know whether to use "I" or "me" is to split the statement and see how it sounds.

You do it like this...

"Your success is important to my team." That sounds fine, but when we try the other part, "Your success is important to I," it doesn't sound quite so fine. The correct statement should have read, "Your success is important to my team and me."

When we split it again you can see that, "Your success is important to my team" sounds right, and "Your success is important to me" also sounds right.

The Queen of Britain is famous for saying in speeches, "My husband and I would like to thank..." That's correct. Split it and see. She would never say, "Your success is important to my husband and I!"

OK, it's just a little thing, but when you plaster your profile on a top-ranking site in the hope of eliciting writing work, the little things matter. That is why I wrote this article; your success is important to me (I don't have a team :-). And if you need any help with grammar, or just writing in general, **[I'm here to help!](#)**

### **How To Break Out Of The \$5 (or less!) An Article Insult!**

I write for a living, mostly articles, but also SEO web content, press releases, ebooks, blog posts and whatever else I'm presented with. There was a time, not too long ago, when I had to scramble for peanuts and take \$5 for a 500 word article. That was just too insulting. It was near impossible to make a living on that kind of pay, but worse than that, I felt undervalued, not appreciated and not respected.

I decided to do something about it...

About this time someone, coincidentally, let me in to a HUGE secret that I will share with you: go where the money is. I know, that seems too easy and it doesn't explain enough.

OK, let me expand... When reporter, Mitch Ohnstad, asked serial bank robber, William Sutton, on his capture why he robbed banks, Sutton reportedly replied, "Because that's where the money is!"

Most article writers go to elance, guru, rentacoder and others to seek work. There they usually find webmasters needing articles for their web sites. So far so good. However, the average webmaster needs articles for his site because he hopes to make a lot of money from them some day.

The important words to note here are, "some day." The average webmaster is not rich. He or she hopes to be, but until they are, they can't afford to pay \$25, \$35, \$50 an article. They are looking for reasonable quality articles costing no more than about \$5 a piece. They find plenty of people willing to write them for that, because everyone thinks that's the going rate.

It is not!

Thinking along the lines of bank robber William Sutton who went where the money was, and who stole some \$2 million in his time, who has the money and who doesn't mind spending it? That's the question you should be asking yourself.

And the answer is...

Well, there's no single place, but how about the SEO companies for a start? They get clients with deep pockets who want their sites ranked at the top for their keywords. Most SEO companies will employ a number of strategies to achieve this, one of which may be web content, or SEO articles. Most SEO companies who seek out web content writers are looking for people who are a notch or ten above the \$5 an article mentality, and they will be willing to pay them higher rates too.

Of course, you have to position yourself as a quality writer. You have to get rid of the \$5 an article mentality, and believe that you are worth \$25 or more an article. The money is there, believe me, but are YOU there?

Put up a web site advertising your service. Have plenty of good quality samples in it along with a rates and services page. Testimonials from previous satisfied clients is great too, but don't make them up!

The bottom line is this: if you spend a week or two marketing yourself effectively, and if you believe in your abilities, then you will find good paying work. You will find clients who recognize you as an expert and who respect your abilities. Writing will become fun again. This is exactly what I did. It works, plain and simple. Good luck!

### How To Be A Failure And Still Succeed

We all hope to be successful at whatever we try our hand at in life. Sometimes we enjoy success straight off and then we feel great. At other times we fail. On those occasions we usually give up and try something different because we have "proved" that the method used was wrong. However, there are plenty of people who don't give up right away. They often become famous in their chosen fields. They discover how to be a failure and still succeed.

Thomas Edison rather famously considered the light bulb "An invention with 1,000 steps" when asked by a reporter how he felt about having 1,000 attempts to create it that all ended in failure. We only remember the fact that he was eventually successful. That's certainly turning failure into success. Next time you flick a switch, remember all the failures that went into the wonderful success that gives us instant light.

Charles Darwin evolved from mediocrity into success, as is evidenced by this passage in his autobiography: "I was considered by all my masters, and my father, a very ordinary boy, rather below the common standard of intellect." His theories of evolution changed the world.

A young boy who seemed unable to speak until he turned four years old, and who didn't know how to read until he was seven years old, went on to become famous, despite his teachers reporting that he was, "...mentally slow, unsociable, and adrift forever in foolish dreams." However, those foolish dreams resulted in an equation that most of us are familiar with, even if we don't quite understand it:  $E=MC^2$ . Albert Einstein is now considered by many to have been one of the finest minds operating in the 20th century.

Michael Jordan is a well known and highly successful sportsman. It hasn't always been so, however. He once admitted, "I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. Twenty-six times I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."

A young man working for a newspaper was fired by his boss who claimed that, "He lacked imagination and had no good ideas." He did better later on, even though he went bankrupt several times. He had an idea for a park attraction, but the governing council of the planned area initially turned him down, claiming that his idea would "only attract riffraff." However, his park went on to be rather successful with several more parks opening, as well as the dozens of films he made. All of them carried the name of their creator, Walt Disney.

A director at MGM wrote a memo after a screen test in 1933 that read, "Can't act. Can't sing. Slightly bald. Can dance a little." The man about whom the memo was written later kept it framed above the fireplace at his Beverley Hills home. That was after Fred Astaire had shown the world that he was actually not too bad at acting and singing, despite the slight baldness, and of course, his dancing improved too.

There are hundreds of similar stories, all of them quite true. So, if you are just starting out, or even if you've already given it your best shot and failed, don't despair - your moment may be just around the corner. As Sir Winston Churchill, another one-time failure who went on to do rather well, once said, "Never give up!"

PS: here are a few more of life's well-known "failures":

**Louis Pasteur** - born a poor farmer's son, came close to last in his class of undergraduate studies in chemistry.

**Henry Ford** - went penniless five times before finally turning a profit.

**R.H. Macy** - failed at making a go of his store in New York seven times before he turned the corner and became a success.

**Babe Ruth** - once held the record for strikeouts.

**Sidney Poitier** - told by a casting director, "...stop wasting people's time ... become a dishwasher or something."

**Jerry Seinfeld** - booed off the stage on his first professional appearance.

**Michael Caine** - his headmaster at school told him, "You will be a laborer all your life."

**Charlie Chaplin** - initially rejected by Hollywood because his comedy routines were considered "nonsense."

**Enrico Caruso** - as a child his music teacher told him he couldn't sing and his parents wanted him to become an engineer.

**Elvis Presley** - told by the manager of the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, "You ain't goin' nowhere, son!" Does anyone remember the name of the manager?

**Ludwig van Beethoven** - his teacher told him he was "hopeless as a composer." He did quite well though and even wrote five of his symphonies while stone deaf!

**James Joyce** - his book, *The Dubliners*, was rejected 22 times.

**Marilyn Monroe** - told by a modeling agency, "You'd better learn secretarial work, or else get married."

**Abraham Lincoln** - demoted in war, failed in business, unsuccessful lawyer, defeated in politics several times, then became President of the USA!

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