

Case Study: Joseph Cole Breaks Through Longstanding Income and Client Ceiling Within Weeks of Enrolling in B2B Biz Launcher

ED GANDIA: Thanks for talking with me a little bit today about your experiences so far, it's good to have you here.

JOSEPH COLE: Well, it's good to be here, I'm glad to share my experience with other people.

ED GANDIA: Awesome. Well, before we get into some of the deeper questions, I'd like to start with a little bit about yourself. So why don't you tell us a little bit about where you live, your current work situation, where you were in your business when we started working together, that sort of thing?

JOSEPH COLE: Sure, sure. So I live in a place called Red Oak, Texas. It's just a little south of Dallas, but I've lived in Dallas for the past two years. Before Dallas, I lived in Ohio and that's where I started my freelance copywriting business. I was a pastor at the time of a little church and it was great. They were able to give me a full-time salary so I was able to support my family. But I wasn't able to really do much more than that. I had school debts that I wanted to really pay off. I had some financial goals and even though that salary was enough to provide for us, it wasn't enough for me to get ahead.

So I started looking around and researching different ways to make a second income that was flexible that I didn't have to clock in and out. Because of my pastoral duties, I needed to be free to go where I needed to go and meet with people throughout the community. And so I've always loved writing and there—I don't know how I got in contact with American

Writers and Artists Incorporated, but somehow I got on their e-mail list and they had the headline, “Did you know you can make money writing?”

I had no idea people could do that. So I looked it up and that started my journey to become a copywriter. So I started my side business in Ohio three years ago and then I left the pastorate and I started working as a nonprofit professional, working in fundraising. And I got that job because I was writing for a nonprofit. So they hired me as a copywriter to write their appeal letters. And their donations increased and response was so good, they asked me to come onboard full time as one of the fundraising staff.

So I decided to do that. They allowed me, very graciously with no pressure, to continue doing my side business. So I continue to this day, three years later, serving other clients, both nonprofit and for-profit clients in my copywriting business.

Now, when I started working with you, Ed, I had already had probably already had five to ten different clients that I had done projects for in the last three years. Most of them smaller projects with either a small project price or maybe I did something on spec for them. But I had several projects and clients to speak of and put on my resume, if you will.

But I really didn't have a system to acquire new prospects or to acquire new clients that I felt was working for me. I was just scattered and trying different things here and there and I wasn't happy with—it wasn't steady enough for me to really rely on. So, when we started working together, I had one steady retainer client every single month and that was it, I just had one client.

ED GANDIA: Got you. So yeah, you had landed a few clients, nothing huge. You did have a great retainer client which I believe you still have, right?

JOSEPH COLE: Yes.

ED GANDIA: So I'm curious, this sounds like a pretty good situation to be in. What motivated you to then work with me if you had already gotten to where most people don't ever get?

JOSEPH COLE: Yeah, and honestly the place I work at full time, the nonprofit I work in, I consider them a client still. In my mind, that's how I think of them because I still do that work for them. The value that I bring to them more than anything is the letters that I write. But now I can do it from a director point of view and it makes it even better because now I'm in charge of the whole project. So from start to finish, I'm thinking as a copywriter and it really helps them in that way. So I almost think of myself as having two clients.

The motivation to work with you as a coach came from probably the last two years of listening to your podcast. I've learned a lot from you and your guests over the years. I've learned new things. Also, the books that I've read with ... is it Steven Slaunwhite?

ED GANDIA: Yeah.

JOSEPH COLE: Or Steve? He wrote with you and so did, what's his name, Peter?

ED GANDIA: Yeah, Pete Savage.

JOSEPH COLE: Yeah, Pete Savage, your other co-author. I read some of their works and their articles for American Writers and Artists as well. Took some courses

from American Writers and Artists and I felt like I had reached the ceiling for me in self-study. So I took courses with American Writers, I read your book, I listened to the podcasts but I felt like I had hit a ceiling because I knew these things that I could do, I just didn't have anything consistent. I didn't have a system that I could steadily prospect and acquire new work. And I knew that to go to the next level in my business, I had to take this knowledge and really, like rubber meets road, make it practical in every week, everyday routine that brought new work in, so that I could grow it because I really want to grow this copywriting business.

ED GANDIA: Okay, yeah, that makes sense. I come across that a lot where there's a point where gosh, reading more, learning more, taking more courses is not necessarily going to help. Now you need someone to help you—whether you work with an accountability partner or a coach or whatever.

JOSEPH COLE: Right.

ED GANDIA: To kind of take that to the next level, right?

JOSEPH COLE: Yeah, and I'd heard numerous guests on your show and you yourself in one of the podcast episodes, you share your story, how you came into the business, how you've grown your business. And one of the similarities that I saw was people would find a coach, whether it was a formal arrangement or they just found a mentor who was happy to share with them.

But I needed focus. I needed, over a period of time, and so the best way for me to do that, when I heard about you opening up your B2B Biz Launcher course, your coaching course, I jumped on it immediately. You'd already kind of been a distant mentor for me in my business and so

I really agree and believed in the strategies and the philosophy behind your business and so I wanted to pattern mine after that.

But more than anything, I think coaching provides me focus. I know what to do next and I have a sounding board to see how I'm doing and that I stick to a method to see it through, to see fruit from it. So I think more than anything, that's what the coaching program has done for me, is just given me a lot of clear focus on where I'm going and how I'm going to get there.

ED GANDIA: That's wonderful. Yeah, it's great to hear and just to put it in context for everyone listening, so I want to be clear, we're just a little bit over the halfway mark right now, you and I working together in B2B Biz Launcher. So it's still early. You mentioned a couple of ways you've benefitted already. You've talked about focus, clarity. You've talked about a system, having a system you can follow and implement and deploy, something tangible.

JOSEPH COLE: Yeah.

ED GANDIA: Any other benefits so far from our work together?

JOSEPH COLE: Well, I think what might be an obvious benefit is that I get more access to your expertise, to you personally. Listening to the podcast, it's not like I can just push the button and call you when I have a question. It's a great way to learn, but this is another level where I can interact with you in this structured way where we have time set aside throughout the week that we get together on the phone with other group members and that's also another benefit for me.

Not only do I get to ask you questions and get an answer, but I get to hear my colleagues in this group ask you questions and then get answers. And so those two are real benefits to me. I get to hear their answers, I get to hear answers for my questions. I learn from both. And also my colleagues in the group have their own field of expertise and they bring a lot of value to me. They share lots of insights that I had no clue about.

And so, I guess, the whole program is like an accelerator. I could probably figure out some of these things and learn them on my own trial and error. But with this group and especially with you, I get answers very quickly and nothing is 100 percent guarantee obviously. But when you have experience like you have and experience like my colleagues have in this group, all of their answers are backed up by what has happened, what they've seen, what they've experienced. They've got some depth to it.

It's not just me taking a shot in the dark and hoping something sticks, right? And so those have all been very valuable—your answers, their answers and just sharing that dialogue between all of us.

ED GANDIA: Yeah, I'm glad you mentioned that, because that's one of the things that I really like about this experience for me is just seeing you guys interact. And then seeing, for instance, not a real person, but let's say her name is Betty—Betty has a really interesting situation she just came across. So she posts it in the forum, right? What do you guys do? Everyone starts contributing their suggestions and answers and you may not have had that situation come up yet, but it's kind of neat to see everyone's kind of light bulbs go off and say, "Wow, when that happens to me, now I know how I can address it." It hasn't happened yet, but when it does, right?

JOSEPH COLE: Yeah, absolutely and having the group involved gives us quicker answers, a quicker turnaround time. I know that you don't have the time to stay on

Facebook constantly in this group, this forum that we have. But the other members, between all of us, somebody's looking within the next hour and typically, I mean, you get an answer to a question very quickly and they're just really good answers.

I have lots of great friends that I talk to, but when it comes to this particular business, copywriting specifically, I don't have friends in my life that can really talk with me about that. So this has been really great for that.

ED GANDIA: Yeah, yeah, it's so cool. I go in there once or twice a day and usually by the time I go in there, one to three people have already commented or responded. It's a very active group, I agree. So I'm curious about something. You've kind of alluded to some of this, but I'm curious if you've given this some thought, if this has even come up as you're thinking about the program.

You had a choice, right, when I first presented this idea to you about working with me. You had a choice, you could have continued doing what you were doing on your own—and you were getting some success, right? Or you could have decided to work collaboratively with me and with a group of peers like you chose to do. So I'm curious and, of course, we're just guessing here, but if you had stayed the course, if you had stayed on the path that you were on and not done this, where do you think you'd be right now?

JOSEPH COLE: Well, I think I'd be exactly where I was earlier because my growth was very slow. It was steady, but it was very, very slow and I wouldn't say that it was growth that built on top of itself. It was just a project here or a project there, but it wasn't consistent work. I might go a month or two before the next project came along. And when I got the next project, it was

basically, I did a spec project for them first and then I finally got work that paid.

And so it was a lot of work that I was doing to show my value to be extravagant and generous towards these prospects because for one thing, I was just going after the wrong market for me. Some people succeed in the market I was going after because I've been a nonprofit professional for about ten years now. I was strictly focusing on nonprofit and I know copywriters that have done that and they're very successful.

For me, I don't know, maybe it's just my network or something, but the nonprofits that I was engaging with as prospects just didn't see the value of an outsourced writer. They had internal staff that did the bulk of their writing and they were very content with the people that they had.

So, coming into this coaching program, you helped me really craft my unique selling proposition, position myself in a better way to another market, so now I'm positioning myself toward companies that want to sell to nonprofits. And I've had really good success with that. In fact, I don't know if it was maybe two months into the program I landed a corporate client, and that's another goal that I've had for three years that I had never attained. I've always wanted to land a corporate client and get into that world.

All of my clients previously were either small businesses or smaller nonprofits. And so this is the largest client in terms of their revenue, not the revenue that came through the profit but their revenue that I've ever had. So that happened right after our sessions on warm-emailing new prospects. As soon as you taught those classes, I put it into practice and I sent those warm e-mails out and positioning myself as a copywriter for companies that want to sell to nonprofits, right, and I got work.

Like it was amazing to me how easy that process was. I didn't have to, I don't know, stand on my head and do acrobatics to show them my value. They knew what I did, they understood the value, they needed help writing, they have a ton of work, they have a ton of things to write about, and I knew the potential customer so well, because I am that customer, that no other writer that they had ever hired had what I had.

And so that's the niche I need to really pursue because I just have that unique advantage. And so I think if I hadn't done this coaching program, I wouldn't have repositioned myself in this way and I wouldn't have landed that client. I know for sure I would not have landed that client had I not gone through the coaching program.

ED GANDIA: Well, you know, Joseph, one of the things that I admire about you is that you take immediate and massive action. You run with an idea. You don't just write it down and study it and over think it. You're very motivated to take action and get results and it's paid off for you. So part of it I think is obviously the new way of thinking and the ideas, the tips, the strategies and techniques, the step-by-step stuff but none of that works if you don't take action, action repeatedly and consistently, which you have.

So I guess one final question to kind of cap this off, can you think of any benefit that you've received from working together that you probably weren't expecting?

JOSEPH COLE: Well, I mentioned it earlier, but it was unexpected for me. Coming into the coaching program, I was already familiar with your philosophies on the business and how to run a good copywriting business, read your books, listened to the podcasts. I even bought a course from you months ago before doing this coaching program. So I was very familiar and I knew I

needed a change in my business. I knew that I needed to reposition myself. I kind of had a diagnosis already that my problem was a positioning issue and I just didn't know how to fix that. So all of those benefits I was expecting.

The unexpected one probably is just the interaction from the group that we had talked about earlier because they're the unknown factor in this for me. I don't know them. I don't listen to any of their podcasts. They don't have any, I don't think, but I haven't read any of their books. So they were the unknown factor and to have their interaction, their answers, their input, and even the kind of good natured accountability has been an unexpected benefit for me.

I've been very pleasantly surprised at the level of expertise that they have and the amount of interest that they take in my personal success. I can sense it very clearly in the forum and in our talks together. They really want to see me succeed in my goals and that was unexpected and I've just really appreciated it very much.

ED GANDIA: Well that's wonderful to hear and I appreciate you taking the time today, Joseph, to share this with me and yeah, this has been fantastic, so thank you for opening up.

JOSEPH COLE: Hey, you're welcome, thank you for allowing me to share this story.

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