

Getting Your Foot in the Door



New to medical writing? Check out these links

“How did you get into the medical writing field?” is a question I often hear. This is a fairly easy question for me to answer. I saw a job advert back in 2005 in Germany, I applied for the position, I got the job, and I became a medical writer in 2006. I had a PhD degree in science, I had high English proficiency in a non-English speaking country, and I liked to write. I was at the right place at the right time with the right skills.

“How does one get into the medical writing field these days?” is a question far more difficult to answer. A lot of things have changed in the last 14 years. Online job applications, illustrated, even animated resumes, and web-based job interviews are just a few new-fangled job search and recruiting tools in a highly digitised world.

In this issue of *Medical Writing* on digital health, I'd like to share with you some digital resources that will hopefully answer this question:

1. The EMWA Career Guide 2016 edition (<https://www.emwa.org/training/a-career-in-medical-writing/>). This document is 3 years old so maybe it's time for an update. **If you are interested in collaborating with me on this project, please let me know.**
2. The Spring 2019 issue (Volume 28, Issue 1) of *Medical Writing* on Careers in Medical Writing (<https://journal.emwa.org/careers-in-medical-writing/>) presents a view of the medical writing career trajectory, from getting a foot in the door to retirement, and all that can happen in between. Just in case you missed this!
3. The MedComms Network “getting started” guides (<https://firstmedcommsjob.com/>) can be downloaded for free and provide lots of information on different types of communications jobs, including medical com-

munications, regulatory, and market access writing.

4. The Spring 2014 issue (Volume 29, Issue 1) of the *AMWA Journal* featured several articles for newbies to the field. The articles are 5 years old but still highly relevant. https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.amwa.org/resource/resmgr/journal/Issues/2014/2014v29n1_online.pdf.
5. The Cheeky Scientist Career platform (www.cheekyscientist.com) helps PhD graduates transition into industry careers. It is not specific for medical writing and communications but it has a very strong medical writing contingent (<https://cheekyscientist.com/mwo-learn-more/>). I was privileged to be invited to be part of a webcast panel earlier this year (thank you, Evguenia Alechine and Clare Chang!). Check out their list of alternative careers for PhD graduates (<https://cheekyscientist.com/top-10-list-of-alternative-careers-for-phd-science-graduates/>) and their industry transition ebooks. Not to mention the inspiring testimonials from members who succeeded in making the transition.
6. The Nature careers platform (<https://www.nature.com/careers>) features blogs and news items on careers for science graduates, again not specifically in the communications fields. But medical writing is definitely part of it. Check out Matt Edmonds' journey <http://blogs.nature.com/naturejobs/2017/11/03/an-evidence-based-career-change-my-move-into-medical-writing/>
7. Finally, don't forget about good old LinkedIn. Use the career advice and career interests options that are available even for a basic, free LinkedIn profile.

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I continue to collect links and other digital resources for Getting Your Foot in the Door so if you have anything to add to this list, please contact me.

Finally, I would like to congratulate three first-time attendees whom I met at the Spring Conference in Vienna in May. Great to hear that you have landed your first industry jobs! Please share with us your stories.

