

GrowYourSideHustle-DianeFaulkner-Feb7-2023

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SPEAKERS

Jennifer Roland Cadiente, Diane Faulkner



Diane Faulkner 00:00

It's what is it that people come to you for? About the most? Because I haven't thought about doing classes before. You know, teaching writing or what it because I you know, I'm good at writing obviously I've been doing it for a long time, or teaching editing. I've been doing it for a long time, right? But then just the thought of that bored me to tears



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

Hello, and welcome to the Grow your side hustle Podcast, the podcast for entrepreneurs who want to grow a side hustle into a second stream of income, or their full time gig. I'm your host, Jennifer Roland Cadiente. Today, we're joined by Diane Faulkner, a freelance writer who's diversifying your income streams not only through taking on different types of writing projects, but also by creating some new courses. Hi, man, thanks for joining us on The grow your side hustle podcast today.



Diane Faulkner 00:52

Thanks for having me here.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

So let's start by letting people know a little bit about what you do as your your main hustle, so to speak.



Diane Faulkner 01:02

Okay, well, my main hustle is writing and editing. I've been doing this for it'll be 24 years. May 7.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

Season. Crazy how how fast those years add up?



Diane Faulkner 01:16

Yeah. I didn't realize that I had been in business for over 20 years until it was past 20 years. Somebody asked me, you know, when I started and I'm like, Well, they say it was back in 1999. Okay.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

Okay, so what type of writing do you do?



Diane Faulkner 01:34

Okay, I do I mainly do writing that has something to do with labor law, human resources, leadership, that that type of thing. That's, that's the bulk of it. But I also do other writing I do. HR Tech, I do fin tech Mar tech. Tech Tech. I just finished a a technology article yesterday, and then another article on them. What is it? Content Strategy? So I seem since I since I started the content lady newsletter,



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

I seem to be getting strategy assignments now. So yeah, yeah. But uh, you just you put something out there? And then, you know, then it just draws you in? Yeah. But so did you. Did you work in HR? Before you went?



Diane Faulkner 02:39

I did. I did. I was a VP HR for Coastline Federal Credit Union here in Jacksonville, Florida for years. And I this is this is, you know, before the internet. When the internet came, and we got these executive chat rooms, there was one that was for our senior executives and our, the editors to our, our journals, or our trade journals, were in those those chat rooms. And one of them had posed a question in the chat room and my my president came into the office to my office and said, I want you to answer this for me. And I'm like, okay, he said, just make me look good. And I'm like, Alright, I can do that. So the way that the editor had posed the question was like, what, you know, typical bad journalists? would do they pose the question in such a way that you have to answer it in a certain way. And then they can, you know, they have their own idea of what the story is going to be. So she asked the question, and then I just start out answering her with, I know that this is the answer that you want. However, you have to go through 18 months of X, Y, Z before you can get to that. And I so I wrote her this huge, long email. And she next day, answered back and said, This sounds great. Would you like to write a

feature for us? And I said, Sure, what's a feature? I don't know what that is. So I started writing for trade journals while I was still in HR. And then when I had to know this is back when Family Medical Leave Act first came back in 1996. They did not cover it did not cover key men in in an organization. So when I had to when I my dad had to be taken care of I had to make the decision to leave work to take care of my dad because I wasn't covered under FMLA. So that's when I started calling I had more ideas for for articles. And I started calling that editor not knowing that you're not supposed to call editors and pitching her stories. And she finally you know, let me know just email her the stuff and and then I went to a Writers Conference and learned how to how to approach editors and learned how to pitch and it's, you know, it's 24 years later here I am. Yeah, so, so that started as a side hustle, too. It did it started as a side hustle, it just became my main thing. I never, I never went back into corporate, I still did some HR consulting on the side. And I still do HR consulting on the side, I have a company called Human Resources made easy. And I that's like a side side hustle. I only have like two or three clients. Because I can't handle any more than that, with all the writing and editing that I do. Right. Right. So



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

now you're starting up a new side hustle, can you tell us a little bit more about what you're going to be doing?



Diane Faulkner 06:01

Sure. There are two side hustles one side hustle, I decided to start because over the years, I've been contacted by people who want to be writers or have done a little bit of writing and want to grow their business. And I'll get contacted through LinkedIn, I get contacted through my website, and sometimes even phone calls. But I thought, well, actually, I was talking to a business coach, and he said, why don't you start a course to teach these people so that you don't have to, you know, take a take up your time where you could be working and they could be going on on your site and just learning how to grow their business. And I thought, Okay, well, that's good. That's a good idea. And then the other one is actually for, for small business owners, because I do a lot of content writing. And, you know, really small business owners who want to



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

have content on their sites often can't afford a writer, or at least a good writer, you know, right, or content strategist or anything like that. So this second side hustle is to teach them content strategy, and how to write effective articles. That's great. And I know, um, you know, a lot of people are afraid sometimes to put something out there that tells you know, behind the curtains of what they do, yeah, but it sounds like you're serving the people that wouldn't be able to hire you anyway.



Diane Faulkner 07:42

Yeah, they wouldn't be able to hire me anyway. So I you know, I'm and even if they could hire me I would still share the information because there's there's enough work out there you

me, I would still share the information because there's there's enough work out there you know, for all this stuff. Yeah, they can't they can't afford to hire me. So or any one else that I you know, that I know of? Other than Newby, Newby, Newby writers, and they wouldn't be getting the quality that they need. Right.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

So yeah. And I think, also, you know, sometimes people take the course. And you know, they, they learn from it, and they do what they need to do until they can afford someone else to come in. Because as a small business owner, you can only do everything yourself for so long.



Diane Faulkner 08:27

Yeah, exactly. Right.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

So you mentioned that a business coach helped you, you know, work toward this idea. What made you decide it was time to hire a coach.



Diane Faulkner 08:41

I didn't hire him. He was part of, he's part of a of a mastermind. I'm in. So free information. That's why I'm putting out "free" free with my information. Because, you know, you didn't you never know who it's going to help. You never know who it's going to inspire. And, and he really just kind of turned the light bulb on for me when he said, Why, why are you spending so much time helping these other people when you could, you could distill all of that into a course and they could do this at their leisure. And if they have questions, they can contact you. Right? Like, okay, that'll and the alternative would be, you know, just ignoring those requests. That's true. That's hard to do.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

I know.



Diane Faulkner 09:35

People get ignored on those requests, because I've been there. You know, we've all been there and just wishing that we had someone who was successful, who would mentor us in some way, shape or form and I never had the mentors throughout my my career, even in HR. I never had the mentors. And in HR, I never had the mentors It was always me by happenstance running into somebody or picking up a book or you know, finding out that there's a long standing

writers conferences out at the beaches here and in Jack's Well, Neptune Beach, which is was part of Jacksonville at one time. They had had that thing there for 20 years. I never knew about it.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

I know it's it's so funny until you're ready. You just don't see the things that are out there.



Diane Faulkner 10:36

Nope, that's very true. Yeah.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

So when you when this business coach, Coach said, you know, you should be doing courses? How did you decide what, you know what these two courses needed to be?



Diane Faulkner 10:51

Well, when he said that, within a week or two, I was, can't remember how I got connected with oh, it was in another mastermind that I'm in a fellow who teaches people how to create these courses. Had a course. And it was a 10 week course. And by the end of the 10 weeks, you would have the the basically the outline for everything that you that you need to do and you would have something set up so that within a couple of weeks, depending I mean, I I like my stuff to be prettied up. So yeah, it's not gonna be a couple of weeks. For me, it's, it's gonna be a couple of weeks from now, before I lost everything, but he just happened to come into my life at the same time, or just, you know, near that same time. When all that happened. And I I was able to take his course and, you know, knock on wood, I had the money to take his course, because he was very expensive. Right. But it was it was worth it.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

Yeah, and sometimes it can feel scary to invest in, you know, in an expensive course, because you can find \$7 and \$17 horses out there. Yeah. But sometimes you get what you pay for. Yeah, that's true. That's true. And so you know, the seven and \$17 courses might be great, you know, forgetting that the idea germinated or things like that, but something that can really take you step by step where you're gonna come out with, with what you need to actually make it happen.



Diane Faulkner 12:38

Yeah. See, I just happen to have known a writer who took his course two years ago, well, now three years ago, because 2023 took his course three years ago, at the at the time, she took the course, she was making, bringing in around 50 \$70,000 a year with her with her writing. And

she was stuck. You know, she couldn't get over that. That right and get to that \$100,000 A year mark. She took his course, in two years, she made over 2 million. Wow. Yeah. And that's what just, you know, made me decide, okay, she took his course, which was \$3,000. Because that was a huge investment. For me. I've never paid \$3,000 for training. And I thought, okay, the return is going to be greater than \$3,000. I'll at least make my money back, if not more in a little more than that. But a lot more than that. But he he showed, and she showed her her books, she opened her books to us, and showed us just exactly, you know, how the students came in how much she made, how she and how little time she had to spend, once she created the course how little time she had to spend with the students.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

So yeah, that's the thing is, so many business owners get gets stuck. Because there's only again, there's only so much you can do when you're one person. Yep. And so you have to look at something different. Whether it's, you know, as a writer going to an agency model, where you're doing the marketing and getting the gigs and hiring other writers to do it, or doing something like this, where it's a course where you do at one time, and people can continue to benefit.



Diane Faulkner 14:41

Yeah, yeah. Yeah, I had I had thought about the agency model. I was trying that a couple of years ago, along with another friend of mine who's in a very small mastermind, where there are three of us who who meet every Monday. We've met every Monday now for over four years. Wow. Never missed a Monday. All right, you know, even if it's a holiday, we still meet for our hours on on Monday. But she and I were at the pretty much at the same point in our writer writing careers. And we both kind of came around at the same time that you know, maybe we should try agency model. So we were we worked together to do she did her agency, I did my agency, and it's just so much work to do an agency model. It really is. So, I kind of let that die, die down. But when I let that die down, this idea came in. Okay, so I am curious about who teaches this course? That sounds like a pretty good one. Yeah. Rick Valentine? Is the guy's name Rick Valentine. I can send you his information.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

Great. Yeah. And so we can put a link to that in the show notes. Okay, for other people who are interested in creating courses? Yeah. Because it really, you know, it's, it's so important to invest in the right things. And I, you know, I think that's why a lot of us take the lower cost courses, because the investment is small. So if we don't get anything out of it, you know, 70, and that's \$27. You know? Yeah, not, not a big a big deal. But then when you invest on something that is \$3,000, you're probably going to put a lot more work into it. Oh, yes. You're like, I will make the money back on this thing.



Diane Faulkner 16:37

Yes, I will make the money back.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

You know, if someone is thinking that courses might be the right, the right thing for them to, to do to diversify their income, what should they be thinking about?



Diane Faulkner 16:51

They really need to think about what it is that not only that they it isn't? It isn't that you think about what it is that you do best? It's what is it that people come to you for? About the most? And because I hadn't thought about doing classes before, you know, teaching writing or what it because I you know, I'm good at writing, obviously, I've been doing it for a long time, or teaching editing. I've been doing it for a long time. Right. But that just the thought of it bored me to tears. And that business coach, I was talking, talking about earlier. He had said, you know, what intrudes in your day, most or what intrudes in your your workday the most. And that was, you know, the people contacted me about wanting to expand their careers or wanting to get into a career like this. That's what I get, you know, emails and people coming through my even even with my newsletter, the content lady. About 40% are writers. And the content lady is specifically for small business owners. Right. But I've got a lot of writers who are, they're trying to learn how to do content.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

Yeah, and I mean, we are all small business owners. Yeah. When we're working as freelance writers. So it's, it's good that they're thinking of themselves that way.



Diane Faulkner 18:34

Yeah, that's, it's wonderful that they're starting to think of themselves that way. Because you know, you really, you really are a business you have to, you're not just writing or and or editing, you are keeping your books, you are keeping schedule. You are your marketing. You're figuring out how to market where to market. Marketing takes up most of the time seems like, Yeah, but you know, and organizing your stuff. You're doing all of your admin, it's is a business you have to spend, I really only spend Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Those are my writing days and editing days, Mondays, Mondays are meetings, and phone calls, Fridays admin. Yep.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

Yep. And if you don't set boundaries like that, then you're going to end up doing all the admin on the weekend or at night, and then you're going to be too tired to work the next day.



Diane Faulkner 19:37

Yep. A couple of years ago, I stopped working on weekends. And I stopped working on holidays. So whenever there's a like a bank holiday, that's my holiday to now you know, will I do

something about you know, with work on a holiday? It depends. I mean, did I get behind on something maybe I'll do something else, but if it's not absolutely critical, crucial, whatever, I don't work on a holiday don't work on a weekend. And I try it. I don't think I ever write on a Monday. I just got too many things that that need to be done. I'm done on Fridays. But four o'clock, I'm out. Yeah.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

Yep. Okay. Well, I wanted to talk a little bit about masterminds, because that sounds like it's been such an important part of your career growth. So, you say you have a small mastermind that is, you know, a group of you that just get together every Monday, how did that get set up?



Diane Faulkner 20:46

I actually, it was through the freelance writers den, I took the den to x growth. I can't remember what the accelerator programs Yeah, that's right. I just have D 2x. G. That's all over the place. I can't remember what it stands for. But dental X. We just randomly got paired. There. We clicked, and we have stuck together through thick and thin ever since. And we've seen our all of our careers grow, you know, because of it. Because we, you know, it's it's really an accountability group as much as a as a mastermind. We write, we, every Monday, we go over what we did the week before we go, what we're going to achieve this week, we talk about marketing, we talk about, you know, just business stuff, and then help each other out and share resources and share people and



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

you know, right. And it's so funny, you know, you will break a promise to ourselves like that. Yes. But when you get somebody else involved, that you have to say, oh, no, I didn't do that. You're just you're not going to do it. You're not going to let that other person down?



Diane Faulkner 22:12

No. Well, it's not necessarily that I don't want to let that other person down. I don't want to be embarrassed. Yes. Or that. I want to be embarrassed.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

I didn't do not want to be the only one on the call that didn't do the things.



Diane Faulkner 22:25

Right. Right. I took a nap instead of doing this. Yeah.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

And so what other types of masterminds Are you part of?



Diane Faulkner 22:35

There's another mastermind that is just writers that's it's, it's through freelance success. I've been a part of that for maybe 20 years. And they used to be an invitation only, I think, I think if you're a writer, you can you can pay to get in. It used to be \$99 a year and I think it's it's more so it's it's changed hands, but it's it's people who have who have they're not they're not beginners. Yeah, they're definitely not beginners. They're, you know, people, these are seasoned people. And, and just we share a lot of information and we'll also kind of recruit people to come in and and talk. And like, like Rick Ballantine. He was he was part of that. Okay. Okay.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

And are you part of any other mastermind groups or others that you've been part of in the past?



Diane Faulkner 23:43

See, now those are those really okay. Well, no, I take that back. You pot and I have, I cannot tell you what you pod stands for. I joined that. Not too long after I started writing. So probably for 22 years I've been a part of you pod is not just writers, it's screenwriters and script writers and Hollywood people. And there are names in there that you would that you would know. It was an invitation only. I don't know how I got invited. I, I kind of think I know how I got invited. But I really I couldn't tell you how I got invited. But I got invited in into that. And I've gotten a lot of work from from them. I think three of my clients right now are directly because I was and am in new cod. Because they were editors there who were saying, you know, I need a writer who can do this. And I'm like, hello, I can do that. Even if I've never done something before I'm still like, I can do that. Yep. So yeah. Oh, and I also write books. I forgot to tell you that I do I write I go straight book. So that's another writing thing that I've got into.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

Alright, what kind of books? business books?



Diane Faulkner 25:07

Yep.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

Okay, so for like a CEO type who just doesn't have the time to do it themselves?



Diane Faulkner 25:14

Yep, business owners and I got that through. I had, I had been writing for a few years and realized that I was lonely. I didn't know anybody. And I didn't know any other writers in the area. So I had a, I just took my, my portfolio. I put it in a binder, I drove myself downtown to the Jacksonville Business Journal, which is part of the Business Journal's family. I walked in, I asked to see the editor with my huge three inch binder, and I said, Listen, I'm a writer, this is what I've been doing. I don't know any of the writers I'm lonely. Can you use a stringer? I don't care. Okay, it just needed I, I just need some camaraderie. And I started getting assignments from them. And one of the sites well, and I actually started, they asked me to be an editor there. And I was one of the editors that started up the strategy section of the of the Business Journal, which is where the you go out into the community, and you interview CEOs and business owners and everything and do profiles on them. And I was doing a profile on this couple who had an international company out at the beach. And while they were gathering their staff to meet me, they took me aside and said, you know, for the past couple of years, we've been trying to get this book written and we just cannot, cannot seem to get past you know, chapter one. Yeah. Do you go strike books? And I said, I can do that.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

Yes, I do.



Diane Faulkner 27:08

Before, and I got a three book deal out of that. Nice. Yeah. So and that's also where I started editing, they asked me to edit the books. So calm, yeah, Dev editing. And that just, you know, turned into more and more books and editing, editing, writing and editing of the books. So and I've gone from there to working for publishing houses. So



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

what I love about this story is, it's not that, you know, you're like, Oh, I'm gonna do this thing. So it'll lead me to something. But you're open to the opportunities when they're there. Yep. I don't turn up down. Yeah.



Diane Faulkner 27:55

Unless I just get a bad feeling from some I have tried out some some books. But it's just because something creeped me out about the people.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

You know, you've got to listen to your gut. Yeah, yeah. And I'm working on a book project is a lot of interaction with the person that you're ghostwriting for, so you have to feel good about. Yeah, meeting with that person.



Diane Faulkner 28:20

Yeah, you can, you can work up to up to a year. For me, it's usually run seven to nine months, or business book,



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

but you're with that person all the time. And it right. If you your skin crawls when you're just talking to him at the beginning, there's no way that you're going to have a good relationship with them. Right, and you're not going to enjoy the work. No. And, and I always feel like, if I'm working for someone that I don't feel good about, that you can you can hear it in the quality of my writing. You know, if I'm not on board with the mission, then it's really hard for me to provide good work. Yeah. It's it's a must be it's a credit union thing. To mission driven. That's right, exactly. So where can people find out more about your courses?



Diane Faulkner 29:18

They can contact me through my website at Diane at Diane faulkner.com. Or that's my email, but they can they can do my email. But Diane faulkner.com is my website. And I've got a contact page there that they can if they're interested, they can just tell me that they're interested and I'll get some information to them.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

All right. All right. So by the time this goes goes live this podcast, they should be able to to get the courses.



Diane Faulkner 29:48

Yeah. Yeah, I'm waiting on my website people to get back with me on they just changed change some some personnel there, and I've been having little difficulty getting through. And I've been, you know, asking what is this page can be done? Right. Done? No one's getting back with me.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

Mm hmm. Yeah, I know, we always have to be prepared for all of these little things that we have no control over. Yeah,



Diane Faulkner 30:23

exactly. But, you know, I've got my website and, and people can contact me through there if they can't, if that. I mean, I have a regular contact page to that they can write that they can contact me through.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

What are the names of the courses? I don't have names yet. Okay. So people should ask you, Hey, I'm interested in that writing course. Or, hey, I'm interested in that content strategy? Course then. Yeah. Perfect. All right. All right. Well, thank you, Diane, this has been a ton of fun. And I think that people who are, you know, looking at new looking for new ways to, to grow into different side hustles, I think will really enjoy learning about what you've been doing.



Diane Faulkner 31:16

Cool. Wonderful. Let's, thanks for asking me.



Jennifer Roland Cadiente

In here, today's top takeaways. First, follow your inspiration. When the universe sends you opportunities, follow them. Second, be willing to invest in the right things. Sometimes it can be hard to decide which are the right ones. But you can use your gut. Or you can just think real hard about what it is you're trying to build, and focus on the resources that will get you there. But investing will definitely help you improve your income, then be willing to drop things that aren't working. That can also be really hard. Because if something is bringing in money, you don't want to you don't want to stop doing it right. But you can open yourself up to room to start earning money doing the things that you love, when you get rid of those things that are not bringing you happiness. And finally, connect with like minded professionals so that you can bounce your ideas off of them. And you can all inspire each other to keep growing. Would you like to be featured on the Grow your side hustle podcast? If so, leave me a voice message. You can either click the button for the message or you can use the link depending on what podcast player you're using. So if you are just hoping to start a side hustle and you want some coaching, or you're already growing your own side hustle, or you've already grown it to be your full time business, I want to hear from you. So leave me a message and tell me about yourself in your business. Thanks so much for joining us today. Don't forget to subscribe so you won't miss any of our future episodes. I'd also love it if you could share this episode with any of your friends that you think would be interested and leave a review and a rating in your podcast app. See you next week.