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## FINDING MY WAY

BY LISA MILDON ([HTTP://COFFEEHOUSEWRITERS.COM/AUTHOR/LISA-MILDON/](http://coffeehousewriters.com/author/lisa-mildon/)) / AUGUST 20, 2018 / 31 / 0

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When I started this journey into becoming a full-time writer, I have to admit, I didn't really have a real direction or purpose other than to write. I had grown increasingly tired (fed up) with my career choice in information technology as I felt stagnate. This stagnation was the catalyst to finally switch gears and explore the other passion in my life: writing. Don't get me wrong, I'll always love technology. I love gadgets, new software and hardware, and yes, even programming, but doing this kind of work for as many years as I have, it's magical spark had lost its luster. As I've grown older, I have come to realize I really don't have that hunger to get in there and fight for a higher position. I'd accomplished most of what I had wanted in my IT career, and the only other real options were in management. Yuck! You don't get to play with technology wearing a suit. No thanks!



via GIPHY (<https://giphy.com/gifs/foxxhomeent-3owyoUHuSSqDMEzVRu>)

To combat some of that lack of interest and drive in IT, I went back to college. I enrolled in a cybersecurity degree plan and had a bit of excitement in my heart for this new endeavor. However, after a couple of courses, it soon became very clear that I was one, too experienced and overqualified for the coursework, and two, bored to tears. The classes didn't excite me, except when I completed one. I struggled for two years to enjoy each class. Yes, I did well grade-wise, but I hated every moment of it.

Then, one day, a little reminder popped into my head. A fellow security colleague told me some useful and life-changing advice that I had recalled in the most interesting time. He knew I hadn't finished my degree and wanted to. (I was lured away from college with a very well-paying programming job.) He gave me the simplest and yet best advice I'd had. *Just get any degree. It doesn't matter in what. Most companies just want you to have a piece of paper.*



via GIPHY (<https://giphy.com/gifs/idea-7G6xPNmCS0kta>)

Hmmm, as I was so close to quitting again, I revisited this advice and did the unthinkable. I switched colleges and degree programs completely. I always had a love of writing, so I found Southern New Hampshire University which had so many writing programs to choose from. I looked at their technical writing program and was about to apply for it when that little voice in my head told me not to. *“Don’t do it. You’ve been a technical writer as long as you’ve been an IT professional. Do something new, something fresh and exciting. Something to stimulate your mind and creativity.”*

So, I figured if I was going to invest all of this time and money for “just a piece of paper” I’d at least have some fun with it. I excitedly began my educational journey into creative writing by enrolling in SNHU’s Creative Writing and English program. I know my family (minus the hubby) thought I was nuts for wasting my time and money, but I knew deep down this was the right choice. It felt good. I was really excited for the first time in a long time. And besides, I wasn’t leaving my long-time career as an IT professional.



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At least that wasn't my original plans. As I got deeper into my degree program and had numerous professors telling me that I was a good writer (wait what?) it soon became apparent it was time to change careers. I loved and excelled in writing. I could write about any topic with fervor, enthusiasm, and authority (with a bit of research sometimes). People seemed to enjoy reading what I wrote. It was truly one of those "Aha!" moments. At this point in my life, I was in desperate need of change. However, at my age, it could be very difficult.

Age be damned, I told myself as I kept plowing through each course with gusto and success. Each professor gave me so much encouragement and help to get a leg up in the industry. They really helped build up my confidence and were instrumental to my success.



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I graduated Summa Cum Laude in May and haven't looked back since. Now, I won't tell you that I'm not insecure or unconfident as I apply for different writing jobs. I'm like every writer out there, uncertain I have the chops to do the job. I just keep reminding myself of all of those professors who actually gushed or marveled at

my writing; always telling me that I should do this type or that type of writing as a professional as I was “that good.”



via GIPHY (<https://giphy.com/gifs/rodneydangerfield-rodney-dangerfield-I4HoeVtb6LMTRfJlI>)

With all of that encouragement, it caused a rare (and yes, blessed) quandary. Where do I take these writing skills? What kind of writing should I do? I had so many options (well, still do) that I didn't have a clue which way to go. Honestly, at this point, I just wanted a writing job that paid me something. I wasn't feeling too picky. So, I applied for just about any job that remotely involved writing. And this technique worked. I have landed 3 solid and completely different writing gigs.

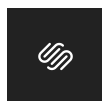
What have these jobs told me? Exactly what kind of writing and where to take my career going forward. While I will keep writing for these companies to keep the lights on, for now, I know the perfect solution for writing jobs for me. Taking my love of technology, gadgets, nerdy/geeky stuff and writing about it. Not technical writing, but consumer level technology how-to's, geeky news, etc. I get to flex my techy side with my creative side. The perfect marriage of both careers I have/had. While this isn't my end goal or ultimate career, it certainly pays decently yet gives me the time to work on the more "special" projects I have lined up. What are those projects? I might tell ya in another story. Stay tuned.



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**Lisa Mildon**

**(http://coffeeshousewriters.com/author/lisa-mildon/)**

Quirky and offbeat geek girl who loves the magic that words and stories bring. I'm an experienced technical writer and IT professional that is finally reaching for the stars by getting my creative writing degree. I've been an avid reader since an early age. I love to play PC games and obsessed with traveling. My husband and I have two adorable rat terriers and 2 kitties (all rescues).

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