

# FREELANCE WRITERS ACADEMY

HELPING FREELANCE WRITERS EARN WHAT THEY DESERVE

## Episode 16 - Lauren Tharp:

*Be A Freelance Blogger's Pitchfest*

*(and What Editors Look for in Writers' Pitches)*

*Welcome to The Freelance Writer's Academy Podcast, helping fellow freelance writers earn what they deserve.*

**Valerie Bordeau:** Hello, and welcome to The Freelance Writers Academy podcast. I'm Valerie Bordeau and joining me today is [Lauren Tharp](#), Associate Editor and Community Manager at [BeAFreelanceBlogger.com](#)!

Lauren is here today to share the exciting details of an upcoming contest where freelance writers can perfect their pitches and earn what they truly deserve.

Welcome, Lauren. I'm so glad to have you back on the show [again](#) today!

**Lauren Tharp:** Hi, Valerie! It's great to be back!

**Valerie:** So, this contest is called "Pitchfest." So...what is Pitchfest? And how did it get started?

**Lauren:** Well, in December of 2013, Sophie Lizard – the owner of *Be A Freelance Blogger* – hosted a blogging event leading up to the first anniversary of her website ([BeAFreelanceBlogger.com](#)) and, for 28 days, each blog post that was published had an accompanying contest. And, the post that I wrote for the event was called "[Why Your Guest Post Keeps Getting Rejected](#)" and it detailed the nine biggest reasons why we reject a writer's pitch.

The contest that went with [that blog post] invited readers to pitch a guest post idea in the comments section. If they won, they got their guest post published – and they also won one-hundred dollars in cash. *[Note: "Cash" as in prize money, not literally cash – winners are paid via PayPal].*



And, Sophie and I responded to each entry personally. Then, Sophie realized the incredible value the contest gave not only the entrants, but the lurkers who were reading all the comments. So, come 2014 – this year – she made it a regular thing.

That's Pitchfest!

**Valerie:** How often do these Pitchfests run?

**Lauren:** It's quarterly, so, there was one in February, there was one in April, there's this month (June), and then there's going to be another one in a few months... *[Correction: Currently Pitchfest runs during February, April, June, August, October, and December; however, that schedule is subject to change in the coming year].*

**Valerie:** So when is Pitchfest *currently* running?

**Lauren:** The next one is going to run from June 21<sup>st</sup> to June 26<sup>th</sup>. So that's a very short window. Only five days! So writers are encouraged to just [drop all their fears](#) and doubts and go for it. If they want to pitch a guest post, now's the time to do it!

**Valerie:** So how has the response been to the contests so far? How many Pitchfests have you run so far to date?

**Lauren:** This is going to be the fourth one. The original one was the one I described from back in December 2013. Then we had another one in February 2014, and again in April.

And...since it's done via comments... There've been just shy of 700 comments [in total] on those. So...there's been a pretty big response!

**Valerie:** So how many contest entries would you say you get *per* Pitchfest?

**Lauren:** Well, the first one was pretty low. It was about 60. And then the next one, immediately after that, in February, was over 300 comments... And then the one we just had in April was just shy of 300.

But, some of that is our replies to people. So... around 100 per contest?

**Valerie:** So it's getting to be a pretty fierce competition in growing the number of people who are entering?

**Lauren:** Yeah! [laughs]. It's getting to be pretty popular!

But that's very indicative of how it is behind-the-scenes as well. Because there's so many people writing in each week. Not just to *Be A Freelance Blogger*, but to all these [popular] blogs! Some editors get hundreds of e-mails per week! And writers don't always realize that. They think they're the only pitch in the inbox and they go "Why are you taking so long to reply to me?!"

But, with Pitchfest... Pitchfest is my inbox made public.

**Valerie:** It's really a fascinating contest! Have you received any feedback so far from bloggers about Pitchfest?

**Lauren:** So far everyone's been really excited and supportive. It's been an amazing experience.

The writers always seem to put their best foot forward for these contests. They try harder when they know evvvvvvvvvvveryone's reading it! [laughs].

**Valerie:** So what are the contest rules for Pitchfest?

**Lauren:** Oh, all right. Well, the rules are pretty simple...

There will be a blog post announcing the latest Pitchfest. You click on it and scroll down to the comments' section and...you write a pitch!

Each writer may only enter once. So, make it a good one!

If you've entered Pitchfest before [in a previous month's contest], you may enter again. You can even try a revised version of your original pitch.

But the most important rule to follow is: Follow the pitching guidelines. And those will be written *on* the Pitchfest blog post. So, all you have to do is read them. It's very easy.

And, if you win, you get one-hundred dollars. Plus, your guest post gets published on the blog. *[Note: Winners are paid upon publication].*

There are also two runners-up! And they each receive a ticket to one of Sophie's [group mentoring sessions](#). And they *also* get published on the blog.

And we sometimes approach other entrants who didn't win – but who still had great pitches – to see if they'd like to post on the blog at a later date.

So, even if you don't win, we're paying attention to what you've got and sometimes we'll approach you anyway! [laughs].

**Valerie:** Well, because you still pay for pitches outside of Pitchfest, right?

**Lauren:** No.

**Valerie:** No?

**Lauren:** No. *Be A Freelance Blogger* no longer pays for guest posts *unless* they win Pitchfest. So, if you want to get paid, you have to win.

**Valerie:** So, how is pitching publicly different from pitching privately?

**Lauren:** The main difference is that everyone can see it! So, if you screw up, it's no longer between just you and the editor. *Everyone* can see it. It encourages you to really think it through before hitting that “send” button.

That said, your successes are *also* publicly visible! So, if you write an amazing pitch, whether you win or not, the editors and the blogging community – anyone who happens to be there reading it – will all rush to praise you. And that's pretty neat.

**Valerie:** What I found interesting though – because I've seen Pitchfest and I've seen the comments that have gone on through that blog post – and what I've

found that's so fascinating is that instant feedback that you and Sophie both give back... And, so, when people are pitching, maybe they don't have the best pitch in the whole world, and it could be improved, but you *show* people *how* to improve that pitch right then and there! And then other bloggers get the idea of what you guys are kind of looking for and how they can improve their own pitch so that their pitch to you is successful during Pitchfest!

**Lauren:** Absolutely. It's one of the reasons why we encourage people to follow along whether they're actually planning to pitch for the contest or not.



**Valerie:** And I think that's a fascinating thing because a lot of times when writers are, say, pitching to other editors somewhere else they may not get that feedback right away. Their pitch may have been just rejected and they don't get the feedback to say "Well, this is how you could improve..." or "This is *why* we rejected it..."

Or, they pitch and just don't get back *any* feedback whatsoever. And, so, this is a great way to learn how to approach an editor and how to approach a blog with your pitch, with your [query](#), with your idea so that you *can* get it published.

**Lauren:** Yes.

**Valerie:** So, if you pitch publicly, there's always the concern that your idea might be stolen by another writer. Is there a chance that could happen during Pitchfest?

**Lauren:** There's a chance, yes; but it's unlikely. Even if your pitch "inspires" another writer, the chance that they'll write the exact same final post as you is a million to one.

I mean, think about it: *Be A Freelance Blogger* has published over one-hundred articles *all* on freelance blogging...and yet they're all different.

So, suppose you pitch an article titled “Talents for Going Freelance.” One writer might make that into a list of jobs that utilize common skills...while another writer could write about talents all freelancers share, like perseverance.

No matter what you pitch, your writing is unique. How *you* turn that pitch into a post is going to be unique to *you*. So even if someone “steals” the idea, their post is not going to be the same as yours.

**Valerie:** Have you had that ever happen?

**Lauren:** Not that I know of!

**Valerie:** No one’s said anything to you or Sophie about “Oh, I pitched this idea and then I found it somewhere else” ...?

**Lauren:** No? I mean, I have seen pitches that were *similar* ideas to what I’d seen on other blogs, but, like I said, what the writer was bringing forward was a fresh spin on that idea...

It’s all the same topic. So we’re all going to have “similar” ideas. Because, you know, there’s only so many ways you can describe a potato. [laughs]. That’s just the way it is.

**Valerie:** And no one’s going to write an article just like you will.

**Lauren:** No. No. Every writer has their own style and their own take [on a topic]. And, as long as they’re bringing something fresh to the table, that’s going to make it interesting for the people who come and read those articles.

Because, every time, it’s going to be about freelance blogging...but the way the writers come up with ideas to make that same old topic *fresh* is very exciting!

**Valerie:** So, during Pitchfest, all center around freelance blogging and freelance writing...or can writers pitch another idea?

**Lauren:** No...it’s all going to be centered around freelance blogging. Because you’re pitching an idea to *Be A Freelance Blogger*. It’s like...you know...you don’t go to a fitness magazine with your recipe for jellybean cheesecake.

**Valerie:** But you can write on topics like productivity perhaps, right? Or dealing with work. Or dealing with clients. Things like that maybe?

**Lauren:** Only as it pertains to freelance blogging.

Because you have to consider that you're not just showing off how you write a pitch...you're actually pitching to *Be A Freelance Blogger* to get published on that venue! So, you have to consider who the audience is, what the topics are. And, for this particular website, we are *only* interested in topics having to do with freelance blogging.

So, if you pitch a productivity article, it would be "Productivity for Freelance Bloggers."

**Valerie:** I just want to make that clear so that people have an idea that these are the topics that are needed during Pitchfest and are looked at so that you don't make those mistakes such as pitching an idea that's just going to be rejected automatically. It's important to pay attention to what topics [the editors] are looking for, that [the editors] want to promote, and what is specific for [that publication's] target audience and what resonates with the audience of BeAFreelanceBlogger.com!

**Lauren:** That's very important no matter where you pitch a guest post to!

So many of the people who e-mail in write in about stuff that's just completely irrelevant to what we're looking for. And if they'd only *read the guidelines*, they would've known that! But, I'll get into that more later. [laughs].

**Valerie:** Yeah. We'll talk about [where you can find those guidelines](#) in just a little while...

But are there any benefits to following along with the contest even if you don't enter?

**Lauren:** Oh yeah! Absolutely.

Pitching is something that all writers need to do to succeed, and yet it's something that many fail miserably at.

I get tons of e-mails each week at my job as Associate Editor and I have to reject *most* of them. And...it's tough! I think that's mainly because of two things:

One, because pitching is typically done privately, we as writers don't see many real-life examples from our fellow writers – good *or* bad – so we don't really know what a pitch *looks* like.

And, two, we've never really seen how editors react behind-the-scenes. So there's that fear of the unknown... And sometimes that fear is so strong that we don't pitch at all!

But, with Pitchfest, anyone who's following along gets a peek behind the curtain and they get to see both sides: They get to see what a pitch looks like and how the editors respond.

**Valerie:** And that's what I like about our own community – called [The Kingdom of Paidalot](#). Sophie Lizard is a [Royal Court member](#), and she shows people, inside of The Kingdom of Paidalot, how to write those pitches to get accepted.



And so, if you don't know how to write a pitch, or how to write a letter of introduction, or how to write *any* of that stuff...it's highly recommended that you either take Sophie Lizard's [Client Hunting Master Class](#)\*, or, that you join The Kingdom of Paidalot and

learn how to do that inside the scenes. Because Sophie Lizard will show you *how* to write those pitches that will help you get accepted.

\*Lauren Tharp's affiliate link for the class.

And, by following the Pitchfest, you'll also see all of those things that Sophie and both Lauren have to say that "Nope. This is not okay. This is okay. This could be tweaked. This could be improved. I don't think you're quite on the right wavelength with this article." Things like that.

So there's plenty of benefits of following along with Pitchfest – even if you don't enter! Because you're going to learn what editors, and what blog owners, look for when they're looking for writers to submit pitches to them.

So, what makes a pitch really stand out for you at [BeAFreelanceBlogger.com](http://BeAFreelanceBlogger.com)...? Describe a little bit about some of the *best* pitches that you've gotten.



**Lauren:** All right. Well... Whenever someone follows the guidelines, they stand out and are a yard ahead of 80% of the competition. [laughs].

And...addressing me by name also stands out. That goes for pretty much any editor! Addressing them by name shows that you're paying attention and know what you're doing.

And writing a pitch like a human being helps as well. Stiff robotic writing might *feel* "professional" when you're writing it, but it's [boring to read](#). And if the editor is bored reading your pitch, they're going to imagine how boring your article writing is. So, whether it's true or not, it doesn't really matter. You might be a great article writer with loads of personality, but if you can't *prove* that in your pitch...then you won't be able to get that first foot in the door.

Of course, that applies to pitching at *Be A Freelance Blogger*. It's a blog with loads of personality! So...if you want to pitch a boring article to a boring blog then go ahead and make your pitch as stiff as possible! [laughs].

But, that goes back to being relevant and knowing what audience you're writing for.

**Valerie:** How does a writer get your attention in a pitch? What kind of things can they do, or what kind of tips do you have, to help them *really* stand out to get your attention?

**Lauren:** Well... follow the guidelines. [The guidelines are on the website](#). They're easy to find – they're right there on the top navigation bar. So there's no excuse not to read them.

And...addressing me by name always catches my attention. It stands out from the loads of “Dear Editor” or “Dear Sir/Madam.” [laughs]. “To Whom It May Concern...”



**Valerie:** Yeah, you never wanna do that stuff. You never wanna write “Dear Sir or Madam.” Because if you write “Dear Sir” and the blog owner, like Sophie, is a female...that’s really offensive right off the bat!

Or, two, if you write “Dear Editor,” you’re [not doing your research](#) of who that person is.

**Lauren:** Yeah... I’m not offended when people think I’m a man, but it does show that they’re not paying attention! [laughs].

**Valerie:** Well, some people do get offended and some people don’t. I’m not saying that Sophie or you would get offended, I’m just saying that there are some blog owners that would!

And so you really have to be careful of making sure that you know who you’re talking to, that you know who your target audience is, and that you know your idea in and out!

**Lauren:** Yeah... I mean, it doesn’t really matter too much if you’re new, or if you’re ESL – we just had a post go up last week that was on [how ESL writers can still succeed as freelance bloggers](#) and make money even though English isn’t their first language! – those little things don’t matter too much.

But, you do need to follow the directions. And the intro helps. Even if you just say “Hey there!” it’s better than “Dear Sir.”

**Valerie:** Right. Just find a way to *connect* with the people you’re pitching to.

**Lauren:** Yes. And, of course, make sure that the topic that you’re pitching is, you know, *relevant* for the [publication] that you’re pitching it to.

**Valerie:** What are some of the biggest no-no’s? Tell me about some of the *worst* pitches you’ve gotten!

**Lauren:** Well, I’d say not following the editor’s guidelines is *the* biggest no-no. The reason is because [the editor] has taken the time to write up those guidelines, so, if you don’t follow them, why should the editor take the time to read your pitch? You didn’t read what *they* wrote. Why should they read what *you* have written?

As for some of the worst pitches I’ve gotten... I actually just posted a few – with the writers’ names blurred – on my blog at [LittleZotz.com](http://LittleZotz.com).

The article’s called “[How NOT to Get Your Guest Post Published.](#)”

It showcases several real-life pitches – I screencapped them straight out of my inbox! – that I received at my job at *Be A Freelance Blogger* and there’s everything from attempting to bribe me to downright insulting me!

**Valerie:** We should put that link in the show notes!

**Lauren:** Absolutely.

**Valerie:** That way writers can look at some of those things that are absolutely no, no, no, no, no *do.not.do!*

**Lauren:** Yeah.

**Valerie:** Because there are so many mistakes that some writers make. Especially when they’re new. Or when they’ve been trying to do this freelance writing bit for a while and not getting anywhere and they’re kinda spinning their wheels... Maybe taking a good look at some of these things might uncover some of the

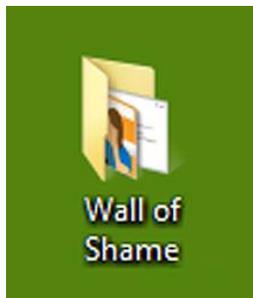
mistakes you're making in your own writing and help you be able to advance your career a little bit better so that you're not continuing to make those mistakes, and continuing to maybe upset editors or just being plain ignored because you're not doing things appropriately.

**Lauren:** Absolutely.

I had actually written about this subject [three times previously](#)...before this last article. And people were like "Yeah, yeah, yeah. I get it. I get it." But, then, you know...why were there pitches still so terrible??

But as soon as I started screencapping actual e-mails and posting them... Then suddenly people were like, "Oh my God! I *get* it." [laughs].

**Valerie:** You're going to make people afraid to pitch to you!!



**Lauren:** [laughs]. They might end up in my "Wall of Shame" folder!

**Valerie:** We don't want to *discourage* anyone from pitching... But we want to make sure that you know that these are the types of things that editors cringe at.

**Lauren:** Oh yeah. Absolutely. And we get letters like that every week!

**Valerie:** So if you pitch during Pitchfest and you don't win, can you still send your idea in later?

**Lauren:** Absolutely. *Be A Freelance Blogger* accepts pitches year-round.

**Valerie:** If you pitch during Pitchfest, say, this time... and it's not accepted, maybe, as a winner, [but] you've given the improvements and tweaks, can you use that same pitch for a Pitchfest again [in the future]?

**Lauren:** Yes. If you pitched an idea during Pitchfest and it was relevant to the topic but it didn't win – if it needed a few tweaks – then so long as you didn't cause a scene, throw a hissy fit, or insult us then you're absolutely welcome to come back to the next one and try again!

Or, if you come up with a *new* idea, then you can pitch that instead! Up to you.

**Valerie:** So don't be discouraged if your pitch isn't accepted because you can always tweak it and enter it again. And, sooner or later, you might win!



**Lauren:** Absolutely.

That's the thing about getting rejected as a writer in general... One of the biggest no-no's is throwing a hissy fit and [burning all your bridges](#) just because you were rejected.

One rejection does *not* mean that you can never pitch again.

It just means “not this time.” And usually we'll give you the reason why. Well, we *always* give you the reason why – just sometimes our explanations are a little shorter than other times.

But there's absolutely no reason to throw a fit and declare that you're “never going to pitch again!”

Rejection happens to *all* writers. I get rejected all the time! But I'm still out there.

**Valerie:** Right! I think that's something important that we kind of need to cover a little bit. Because, Writers: This is a *business*. It's called the *business* of writing. And it's important, as a business, not to take rejection personally.

I know we're still going to – because we're human beings! – and rejection is something that we automatically just react to, but it's important to kind of keep that under control a little bit. And realize that sometimes a rejection of the pitch is not a rejection of *you*. It's a rejection of that idea right now. That doesn't mean that the idea is no good; it just means that maybe the timing isn't right for it,

maybe it needs to be looked at a little bit deeper, and maybe it's something that's appropriate for someone else.

You need to make sure that you handle yourself professionally. Because that editor is not attacking *you* by saying "no." They are just rejecting that idea. And, if you can't handle rejection as a writer...you're not going to make it very far! Would you agree?

**Lauren:** Oh, I agree *absolutely*. I mean, I sent in 30 pitches last week and only 12 of them were accepted. That's less than half! [laughs]. And even that was pretty good!

**Valerie:** And even if they're accepted, sometimes they still need to be worked on!

**Lauren:** Absolutely. Yeah. We work with writers all the time who send in things and we're like "Well, it's almost there. Can you tell me a little more?"

**Valerie:** Mm-hmm. So even though your pitch is accepted it's still going to get tweaked. Because I know Lauren is very particular – and Sophie is too! – about what goes on [BeAFreelanceBlogger.com](http://BeAFreelanceBlogger.com) so, even in Pitchfest, when you win that hundred dollars, your pitch might be tweaked several times during that process before it's published.

**Lauren:** Yeah... Not so much the *pitch*, but the actual *post* once it's finished.

**Valerie:** Right. Right. That's what I'm trying to get to. You're going to have to go through this process even if you skip the initial rejection and you get accepted, you might have to go through "Hup. Nope. This is not right. You need to fix this. Nope. That's not right. You have to fix this."

This is a natural progression in freelance writing. And, if you're new to this, this is something that you've got to get used to and accept as part of your own business.

**Lauren:** Absolutely. Edits and rewrites are just a part of the process. Even for writers who have written for us *several* times.

Just last week there was one who has a post coming up on *Be A Freelance Blogger* and she had to rewrite her intro about three times. Because we were like “Well, no; it’s not *quite* right...”

And she’s a wonderful writer. We’ve published her several times. But, even she had to go through the editing and rewriting process. It’s just part of what goes on behind-the-scenes in order to get published. And it’s nothing to freak out over.

**Valerie:** Right. Because real writers – even the most advanced writers – can take sometimes even months to make the perfect post!

**Lauren:** Well, hopefully not *months*. [laughs]. But, yeah.

**Valerie:** Some posts do! Not all. But there’s that small majority that might even take that long. But most posts may not take that long. It depends. I mean, you could go through several revisions – one revision, two revisions – which depends upon, I think, the idea and how well-developed it is.

**Lauren:** Absolutely. We encourage the writers to take their time and try to get it “right” the first time around. Because, even as editors, we don’t really like the editing process that much either. [laughs].

So, take your time and if you can put your best foot forward on the first try, then that’s great. But, if you don’t, then there’s nothing to worry about. If you’re *most* of the way there, then we can help you get the rest of the way there. That’s no problem.

**Valerie:** Yeah, because editors don’t want to be the people who feel like they’re mean and say “no.” They realize that writers’ livelihoods are on the line. If they say “yes” or they say “no,” it makes the difference whether that writer is earning income this week or they’re not. So it’s a very difficult position to be in!

**Lauren:** Absolutely it is. Even for a publication that doesn’t usually pay, [the editor] is still controlling whether this writer gets [a clip for their portfolio](#) or not. And, especially for new writers, that can sort of “make or break” their career because you’ve gotta get your samples going!

**Valerie:** Yeah, it's very tough, I know. When I've gotten pitches myself through [Freelance Writers Academy](#), I realize that these people are pitching to me and even though I don't necessarily pay for guest posts, it's very difficult for me to go and give them criticism. Even if it's constructive – and it's not attacking or anything like that!

Of course, giving constructive criticism is a tough thing to do because you don't know how that writer's going to react back to you. You have to worry about your reputation as [an editor] and as a blog owner. Whether or not people are going to be nasty and post nasty things about you. Things like that. Just because you're in control of that pitch!



**Lauren:** Yeah... It's very tough.

But, I think having a background as writers ourselves helps to have that empathy – to *know* how much this means to a person...

But, on the other hand, as writers, we also know when they're just goofing off and sending in nonsense. It's like "Ugh. They

should've known better." [laughs]. I mean, are they a professional writer or not?!

**Valerie:** Right. I don't understand why writers have a difficult time sometimes with just *reading the guidelines* and actually pitching something that *makes sense* to a blog. Why are you wasting your time?

If my blog is about freelance writing, and you send me a post about Christmas trees... I'm not going to post that!! So why did you waste the time that it took to write that article and send it to me?

It's very important to manage your time appropriately, know who you're writing to, know who that target audience is, and handle yourself in such a way that you can earn what you truly deserve...and not spend time spinning your wheels!

**Lauren:** Right. [Writers who don't read](#) just completely baffle me.

There was one writer in particular... I rejected his pitch because he wanted to write about babies or whatever and it was like “That has *nothing* to do with freelance blogging, but if you come up with something that *does* have something to do with freelance blogging then feel free to come back!”

And he just kept e-mailing me over and over and over just to say how *wrong* I was to reject him. All these pages and *pages* of e-mails that he was sending me... He could have been using that time for sending pitches to other editors at, like, baby magazines! [laughs]. You're completely wasting your time, Dude! What are you *doing*?



**Valerie:** Right. And I don't know if there's something behind a self-sabotage, perhaps? Where writers are doing this and self-sabotaging themselves maybe to prove to themselves that they can't be a freelance blogger or freelance writer? I don't know if that's behind the scenes of some of that... Or if it's just something else entirely!

But we would appreciate it if you would *read the guidelines*, figure out who the editor's name is...

And, during Pitchfest, one of the most fantastic things that I've seen is – I know some writers have posted their intro. Like maybe the first paragraph of how they *think* that they would write the blog post... And then they go on for a little bit about the idea. And then maybe some bullet points! And then maybe a little concluding paragraph.

That's going to stand out a little more than just pitching the idea! Would that be correct?

**Lauren:** That's correct...

What you just described is usually a part of the guidelines. It's what we want to see – and what we ask to see.

But, in general, for our blog or any other blog, you can do a lot of things “wrong.” Like I said earlier: We're writers ourselves so we understand that you're probably nervous. So, even if you get everything else wrong, if your idea is something that's just so *solid* and so great for the audience – if you have that idea that we *can't* say “no” to – then we'll pretty much let everything else slide.

**Valerie:** And I think another important point for a lot of writers who are interested in this Pitchfest is to take a look around [BeAFreelanceBlogger.com](http://BeAFreelanceBlogger.com) and look at all the articles that are already there.

**Lauren:** Yes! That's another thing that makes pitches stand out. Not just with us, but with any publication!

If you already know what's on there...and you can prove it – like, ah, “I saw Francesca's article on [what the Spice Girls taught her about blogging](#)” – and you say that in your pitch...that makes us go “Wow! Somebody was paying attention! Somebody's been lurking.”

We get that feeling like “Ah. Maybe this person knows what we're looking for and they're not just coming here out of the blue like ‘Buhhh I heard there was a contest so let's pitch whatever!’ This person might actually know what we're about here!”

**Valerie:** It also helps you to not pitch an idea that's already been done!

**Lauren:** Yeah. That's another one of the things that I outlined in [the original Pitchfest article](#) on how not to get your guest post rejected... Don't give us déjà vu!

Don't pitch us something we've seen a million times. Or have even published ourselves once or twice! We don't want it because we've *done* it.

**Valerie:** Right. So, where can people find out more information about Pitchfest and how to submit their pitches?

**Lauren:** The next Pitchfest starts on June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014. And you check out



[BeAFreelanceBlogger.com](http://BeAFreelanceBlogger.com) on that day and there will be a blog post that'll say "Welcome to Pitchfest" or something similar.

You click on that blog post, you scroll down to the comments' section, and you follow the guidelines and leave your pitch!

But [don't sit around thinking for too long!](#) A lot of writers sit around dwelling on what they "think" they're going to pitch...and then they don't get back on time.

**The contest ends on June 26<sup>th</sup>.** So only five days later!

If you want to pitch, get on it right then and there.

**Valerie:** And you have some of those writer guidelines on the page [beafreelanceblogger.com/paid-blogging-contest](http://beafreelanceblogger.com/paid-blogging-contest), right? I saw the post earlier today and I'm not sure if that's going to continue to be there before Pitchfest starts or if there's going to be something brand new...?

**Lauren:** [confused]. Uhhhhh... I think you're talking about the Pitchfest page from April, right?

**Valerie:** I believe so?

**Lauren:** [flustered]. Uh. Okay. Yeah.

Well, that's going to be on there because, uh, it's a blog post. So, um, if someone wants to see how the *last* Pitchfest...go and check that out...and, um, that was the one from April. Which was the last one [before the current one].

**Valerie:** And that would give them some ideas of what the writers' guidelines are, and some of the pitches that have already been done, and some of those comments and tweaks that you have given out.

**Lauren:** Yeahhhhhhh... But don't make the mistake of putting your pitch on *that* contest page because it'd be the wrong one!

**Valerie:** Yeah. Don't put your pitch on that page, but at least it would give you a little bit of a research what they're kind of looking for, and what's been pitched, and what went wrong with those pitches, and what went right with those pitches. So that when you *do* enter the contest, you'll enter the contest on the right page – it's going to show up June 21<sup>st</sup> on [BeAFreelanceBlogger.com](http://BeAFreelanceBlogger.com) – and you're gonna submit your pitch there and you'll be all ready to go and hopefully your pitch wins that contest!

**Lauren:** Yeah!

**Valerie:** So I think that pretty much covers it for today's show. Unless you have some more tips that you'd like to offer...?

**Lauren:** Um, nah... I will provide links for people to go to for your, ah, Links section on your podcast page. So that people can read that post that I mentioned earlier that has the [screencaps of people's rejected pitches](#)...and [the original Pitchfest](#) blog post...and all that good stuff!

**Valerie:** So I think many freelance writers will be excited to enter this contest. So, for those who are listening, get your pitches and your ideas ready! On June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014, you're going to have that chance to enter Pitchfest win one-hundred dollars! And that's some pretty good money for a blog post!

**Lauren:** It is. Especially if you're new!

**Valerie:** So I want to thank you so much, Lauren, for sharing the details for this awesome contest and coming on the show [again](#) today...

**Lauren:** Thank you for having me, Valerie. It was great to be back.

**Valerie:** And I also want to thank everyone listening for being such awesome loyal listeners. I appreciate all the support you give to *Freelance Writers Academy*.

But, if you haven't already, I'd encourage you to head on over to [FreelanceWritersAcademy.com](https://www.freelancewritersacademy.com) and sign up for our free newsletter where each and every week you'll receive up-to-date information, resources, and freelance writing opportunities so you can take action and earn what you truly deserve.

And don't forget to head on over to [BeAFreelanceBlogger.com](https://www.beafreelanceblogger.com) on June 21<sup>st</sup> and enter your pitch!

Take action. And *earn what you deserve!*