Career Profile of Medical Writer, Katherine DeBruin, PhD

What is your current title and how long have you worked in your current job?
President, and I've had my own company for just over 2 years.

Where did you get your PhD and what discipline was it in?
Duke University, Biomedical Engineering, 1999

Did you do a postdoc? Where?
Yes. GlaxoSmithKline and UNC School of Pharmacy

What are your main daily responsibilities?
Writing (including editing and referencing) 80%; project meetings 10%; administration 10%

What are the keys to success in your career field?
Good writing skills, meticulous attention to detail, ability to meet tight deadlines on a near-daily basis, and more interest in communicating research findings than in actually doing the research.

What were the most important factors in choosing your career path?
Didn't love research; enjoyed writing; got to stay "in science" without having to do the science

What 1 or 2 pieces of advice do you have for people who want to land a job like yours?
Write early and write often: experience is a necessity.

Links for more information on this career path:

Starting a Career in Science Writing:
http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_magazine/previous_issues/articles/2005_05_20/noDOI.190329214099627359

The Medical Writing and Corporate Intelligence Career Tracks:
http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_magazine/previous_issues/articles/2010_05_21/caredit.a1000053