

The Forward Motion Writers' Community

By Holly Lisle

I created and for about half a dozen years I ran a free online writers community called Forward Motion. I don't anymore, but Forward Motion is huge, growing, still free, and still wonderful. It's now owned and run by my friend Lazette Gifford. Check it out.

- Main Community Discussion Board
- Community Directory
- What Is Forward Motion?
- Why I Wholeheartedly Recommend the Community
- And Why I'm No Longer There

It is entirely possible to become a writer completely on your own. A lot of writers go this route. It can be slow, it can be damned hard, it can be lonely. You can end up making the same mistakes over and over because the lack of feedback makes it tough to figure out what you're doing right, and what you're doing wrong. But it can be done.

It's equally possible to find out everything you need to know from reading books, or taking classes led by professional writers, or attending a select few workshops led by professional writers. This route can be expensive. And no matter what classes you take, or what degrees you get, results are no more guaranteed than if you did it yourself.

You can also join a writers' group. Or a community. I've done both, and as long as you get a good group or community, I recommend either one.

Forward Motion is a good community where full-time professional writers, complete beginners, and everyone in

between, gather to discuss the ins and outs of publishing in a friendly, helpful fashion. But they don't just talk. They also do. Writing your first novel and sending it off is a sort of rite of passage there; I cannot count the number of "someday I'm going to do this" writers who became "have written and submitted first novel, working on second one now" writers while I was there. And the numbers just keep growing.

People there treat each other well. There are few flamewars, and those are short-lived. Flames get the flammers kicked out. Writing is the core around which every other discussion circles. It's a very focused place, though an awful lot of fun, too. If you have something you need to know, you can spend a couple of weeks looking your answer up in books, or God only knows how long taking classes or attending workshops until you find your answer, or you can go to the main FM board and just ask. Usually within an hour or two, and sometimes within a couple of minutes, you'll have a handful of useful answers from people who have already done what you want to do.

The community operates on the Pay Forward principle, which is that, in exchange for the help you get there, you then go out and help others. The members are some truly wonderful people. The place is fun. It's inspiring. People there **accomplish** things. They write books, submit them, sell them.

And it's FREE. Completely free. Just remember to pay forward.

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