

Preparing For Your First Audience

The Query Letter - your first pitch.

The Checklist

- I have prayed about this project and have asked others to pray

- I have established my credibility in this field and can provide other documentation if needed.

- I have researched the subject thoroughly and determined there is indeed a book here.

- I have completed the first two or three chapters. They have been edited and are ready to be seen by a publisher.

- I have researched the market and can pinpoint other books that are similar. I know how my ms. is different and similar.

- I have researched the publishers and selected a few who are publishing in this area. I have studied their guidelines and have followed them exactly.

- I have done a complete synopsis, chapter by chapter.

- I have thought long and hard about the title, have done a search for duplicate or similar titles.

- I have researched the market and know who will buy my book. I know my niche. I know why this book is needed by that audience.

- I have a clear vision of what this book will look like and have effectively articulated that vision in a concise pitch.

- I have worked long and hard on the cover letter. Next to the query letter, this is perhaps the most important part of the proposal package.

- I have designed a Title Page and double checked to make sure all the information is included and is correct

- I have a marketing plan and have provided a clear outline of it.

- I have packaged the proposal in an appropriate format.

- I have enclosed a SASE and/or contact information.

- I have had the entire proposal proofed and edited.

- I have Prepared a Table of Contents

I have included one to three sample chapters

I have worked hard on my bio

I have set up a data base to log submissions.

A Few common dos and don'ts

Don't submit your first draft – always send polished work.

Don't submit a pdf. – no-one is going to steal it.

Don't submit your only copy

Don't bind the ms. in any way, or punch holes on side.

Don't use coloured or heavy paper – plain white 20lb. stock is best

Don't tell the publisher you expect xx amount of money

Do

Format with one inch margins

Include a SASE if you want all or part of the proposal back – make sure postage is adequate – use U.S. stamps for returns.

Double space the proposal except for the synopsis

Use a standard 12 point font – Times Roman is common

Resources

Book Proposals that Sell by Terry Whalin (www.right-writing.com)
How to Write a Book Proposal by Michael Larsen (*Writers' Digest Books*)
Nonfiction Book Proposals Anybody can Write by Elizabeth Lyon
The Fast Track Course on How to Write a Non-Fiction Book Proposal by Stephen Blake Mettel
The Insider's Guide to Getting Published by John Boswell
How to Write Attention-Grabbing Query & Cover Letters [Paperback] by Wood, John
Write the Perfect Book Proposal; 10 Proposals that Sold and Why by Jeff Herman and Deborah M. Adams; published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
Books in Print published by R.R. Bowker & Co.
Writers' Market, Where & How to Sell What You Write, published by Writer's Digest Books each year - get the most recent edition.

Web –

CDs from Inscribe's Fall Conference 2006 by Larry Willard – what it takes to get a book published – lots of great info. www.inscrib.org

CDs from Write Canada Conference 2005 by Janet Kobobel Grant –Razzle Dazzle Titles; How Big Concepts add up to Big Sellers – www.thewordguild.com

Manus & Associates – Speech by Jillian Manus at a San Diego State university Writers' Conference –www.manuslit.com/flash/index.html

Tell Me About Your Book – by J Mark Bertrand - about pitching
http://tpr.typepad.com/themastersartist/2006/10/talking_yo.html#more

tele-seminar with Terry Whalin –www.bookproposals.ws

Seven Vital Elements of a Successful Book Proposal –
www.spawn.org/marketing/bookprop.htm

Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia –www.writers.ns.ca/booknfc.html

Moira Allen – articles on queries, proposals etc.www.writing-world.com/moira/queries.shtml; www.writing-world.com/publish/samples.shtml

Marcia Yudkin – Why proposals fail –www.yudkin.com/rejection.htm

How to write Queries and Proposals –www.fonerbooks.com/query.htm

Studio B for Authors – www.studiob.com/authors/winning_proposals.cfm
Writers' Information Network (WIN) www.christianwritersinfo.net - publishes an excellent newsletter (The WIN Informer) with current industry info.