

SPECIAL REPORT

HOW TO
WRITE
A BOOK



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Are you an aspiring author who wants to know how to publish a book?

Well you've come to the right place. Because we are in the business of helping people make their dreams come true; Angels Press would love to help you create a professional book.

There are many reasons that people would like to write a book. What's yours? Defining why you would like to write a book is important on several levels. First, it helps you figure out how dedicated you will be to getting it into print.

Writing a book is like working on a project. It can be a "short-term" or a "long-term" project. Many people have started such projects but were side-tracked because of unethical people who have led them down the wrong path.

Whether you're allowing a traditional publisher to produce your book, or you're striking out on your own to self-publish, becoming an author can be a rewarding experience if you allow it to be.

This will also be the time to reevaluate your talents. What other talents do you have that will help you get this book into print? Do you have the necessary skills involved in writing a book or do you need to seek assistance from a ghostwriter or others? A ghostwriter is a person who writes one or numerous speeches, books, articles, etc., for another person who is named as or presumed to be the author.

To get started let's look at what it takes to write a book.

Good Luck,

Cathy Harris - Publisher & CEO, Angels Press



It's unfortunate that people have had to build new careers to take care of their families. Because of the economy, many people are writing books. Writing a book can be very therapeutic to many people, but there are other benefits of writing a book. You also need to think about marketing, speaking, and giving seminars.

Some mid-sized publishers are Milligan Books out of Los Angeles and Third World Press out of Chicago. There are many other mid-sized or smaller publishers out there that can help you put out a professional book. You just need to seek them out if you chose to go that route.

I consider myself to be a "Self-Publishing Expert." I formed my own publishing company called Angels Press (<http://www.angelspress.com>). Now I am an author-publisher. There are several tax deductions available to an author-publisher than there are to the author. Remember, writing a book is a creative act and selling it is a business. Some people can do both while others are more creative than business savvy.

Initially, until I decide to hire employees, I will be hiring outside contractors. These persons will be signing "work-for-hire" contracts. They will include book cover designers, editors, proofreaders, copywriters, typesetters, indexers, book designers also called interior designers, etc.

Most writers open their own companies and publish their own books so they can keep most of their earnings. This is called self-publishing.

Most bookstores want 40 percent of your profits, so it's best to sell your books through your lectures, seminars, workshops or other outlets. I also plan to hold mini-seminars instead of just book signings.

Set Up Your Writing Space

Once you've made the decision to work on your book, it's imperative that you create a peaceful writing space at home. In this writing space you will enter into your "writing mode." It's great if you have your own office, but if you don't, your bedroom or another room will do. Ask family members to try to limit the noise level when you are in your "writing mode."

Think about the various things you might have in that space to inspire you. Begin gathering the tools you will need: pens and pencils, a computer (desktop or laptop), typewriter, dictionary, thesaurus, etc.

After setting up the writing space, the next steps include naming the book and drafting an outline of your chapters. Remember the title of the book and chapter titles will probably change by the time you finish the book. You can then start writing from front to back or back to front. Your goal is to fill in each chapter.

Make sure you put everything in a binder so you can carry it with you everywhere. Then you can write when you get a break at work or wherever. Before you know it, you will have a finished book also called a "finished product."

Set Realistic Writing Goals

As with many other careers, writers must set realistic goals for themselves. Some writers write in the middle of the night while others are more creative at the break of dawn. Make sure you save the book on the computer and on disk, so you won't lose or misplace your valuable material. I have heard

horrible stories of people losing their entire books on computers when their hard drives crashed. So protect your work!

Some writers commit to writing for a certain period of time every day. Others set a goal of a certain number of pages to produce at one time. Either method will work. Just make sure your goal is attainable so you don't feel as if you are consistently falling short.

Many people write for one or two hours a day depending on their schedules – full time or part time job. The goal is to keep writing. You will probably feel more creative on some days than others, but don't let that stop you from writing. Sit down and get something –anything—on paper. Even if the writing is not wonderful, at least you will have something to rewrite.

Study The Market

One of the very first things you should also do is study the market. Subscribe to Writer's Digest Magazine. Do your homework and know your subject. When selecting topics or subjects to write about, find everything you can on the topic and research extensively.

In addition to reading, interviewing and talking to people, you should listen to audios of established experts in order to get experience in the field on the issues you will write about.

People with a passion for literature can be found in every community. Find out who they are and strike up a professional friendship. Build relationships with these persons. They may be writers, librarians, bookstore owners, or teachers.

Remember, a reference librarian is the most important person in the writing and publishing industry. They are full of information on a wide variety of topics.

Join Writer's Groups

Join writer's groups on the Internet and in the community. You can join poetry, playwriting, fiction, and non-fiction writing clubs or support groups. The discussions, emotional support, and tales of experience from the members may be the best source of help you will ever receive. Some of these writers will be working on books and you will be able to critique each other.

Some other avenues for authors are book clubs, libraries, associations, and service organizations, which often have authors' forums.

To get ideas on what to write about, collect old writing projects. Many persons take their previous writing projects such as freelance articles, e-mail messages, postings on yahoo groups, blogs and other materials along with research material and publish them in the form of books.

Fiction vs. Non-Fiction

You have to decide what kind of writing you will do. Decide what age group (children and adults) you will target. Will you write non-fiction and/or fiction? Fiction is entertainment – the writer makes things up. But often fiction can be based on real events. Non-fiction is information that people buy that will save them time, money, increase their knowledge, or improve their lives. The best non-fiction books have subjects on how-to, money, health, self-improvement, hobbies, sex, and psychological well-being.

People need non-fiction books. They need reference books, how-to guides, self-help, histories, directories, cookbooks, travel books and manuals. They want to know how to make more money, how to keep themselves healthy, how to operate computers, etc. They want to know more about current events and world affairs.

Self Publishing vs. Major Publishing Companies

Research the differences in self-publishing versus major publishing companies. Self-publishing means the author deals directly with the printer and handles as much of the editing, proofing, book cover, page production, promotion, and distribution jobs as he can. What you can't do, you "farm out" or use "work-for-hire" contractors.

If you publish yourself (become a self-publisher), you will get to press sooner, and maintain control of your book. There is little monetary risk in self-publishing.

Unless you are a movie star, noted politician or have a recognizable name, it might be hard to attract a major publisher. Most major publishers prefer to work through agents, but it is also difficult to attract agents.

You can submit a query letter or proposal to literary agents or large publishing companies. The query letter is addressed to a specific person with his/her name spelled correctly. It can be as short as one page, but no longer as five. It should be precise and to the point, and you should follow it with a well-written, concise description of the book.

Proposals are used by freelance and professional writers. A proposal usually consists of an outline for a book rather than a completed manuscript, even if the book is already written. The proposal should be as well-written and professionally prepared as your book, contain a few chapter summaries, and identify the intended audience. It should describe what needs it meets for the target audience and list all aspects of your expertise, especially if the work is non-fiction. A book proposal is very much like a sales proposal.

If major publishers (usually located in New York) choose to accept your book, they will require you to sign a contract giving them total control over editing, rewriting, and marketing. This control might result in your message being completely turned around. Within six months, a major publisher could shelf your book. Because of the contract that you signed, you will have no say-so over the book.

When you self-publish, you can keep your book readily available for the public. You should exercise caution when dealing with major publishers. Just make sure you work with an attorney before you sign anything with a major publisher, mid-size publisher, smaller publisher or anything in the publishing industry.

If you self-publish your book, a major publishing company might pick the book up after it's been self-published professionally.

Other Publishing Avenues

Other avenues for publishing your book are to utilize internet websites. You can contact these companies and ask for submission guidelines. It usually costs between \$500 to \$900 or more to get your books published through

these internet companies. Email these companies and they will send a packet to you if you chose to go that route. These internet companies usually take roughly 20 percent of the earnings from your books. The good news is some of these internet companies are affiliated with Barnes and Noble, so it might be fairly easy to get your books in these stores. But do your research because most of the internet sites deal with Print on Demand (POD). POD means ordering one book at a time. Using POD's makes it hard for authors to keep a supply of books on hand for book signings and other events.

After using these options, many turn to self-publishing for their second book. Do your research! Educate yourself before using these internet options. Join writer's groups both online and in the community and talk to others who have used them and get the pros and cons of going that route. Many persons have published books through these companies and their final products (books) have ended up with many typographical errors which reflect back on the author. Make sure you are part of every process to ensure you end up with a professional book.

The reason the books end up with typographical errors is that the authors thought companies would proofread their books and correct the errors. They did not know that when they submitted the books to the internet sites, the books were already suppose to be proofread. So make sure you have an understanding of all the steps the companies are suppose to take to make sure you put out a professional book. So many people are so desperate to put out a book that they don't bother to do their research and learn the entire process and just submit their books. Again the results are an awful product with many typos.

Once you put out a book that is not professional, whether you self-publish or go with another publishing company, you will get a reputation in the writing industry and the public will not forget it.

Stay away from vanity or subsidy publishers. They are only interested in manufacturing the book and will charge you for this. They are not concerned with editing, promotion, sales, or distribution. They usually get your name and address when you start submitting your information to others in the writing industry about publishing your book.

Now is the time to start looking at other books in bookstores, libraries, and other places. Do you see a book that interests you? You might even see a book in the same size and shape that you desire your book to be. This is called a model book. It might be on the same topic or subject that you want to write about. If this is the case, you can contact the publisher of the model book and ask them to help you publish your book. Make it a point to start looking closely at other books from time to time in these different places. They will inspire you to write.

Look at the front matter (everything before the first chapter). If you have a large back matter (appendices, bibliography, index, glossary, etc.), your book will be more attractive to libraries. The library market is a huge one that you shouldn't ignore. Many people check books out from libraries then go out and buy the book so you don't want to ignore this market. If you don't have any back matter, libraries and some book stores may not be interested in your book, so make sure you include it. Always include an order form in the back of each book. This form can enable many sales.

Read Books On Marketing

You can also buy used books on the Amazon.com website. Search Amazon for books and titles that might interest you. If there is a book on the subject you are interested in, it should be on the Amazon website. I strongly recommend that you buy and read everything you can on traditional publishers, self-publishing, and other ways to put out a book and especially on marketing.

I advise everyone to read books on marketing before they decide to write a book. Remember that writing a book is five percent (5%) and marketing it is ninety-five (95%). You should not write a book unless you have a plan on how to distribute your book. I know several people with over 2,000 to 3,000 books in their garages because they have never read books on marketing. You should try to set aside 30 minutes or more to read every night. Make books on marketing a priority on your reading list especially before your book is completed.

Additionally, if you are going to write a book, you need to know how to communicate with people. I advise you to join Toastmasters International. You can easily find a group in your neighborhood. Just go on the website and put in your zip code and find a group or start your own group. You might also want to join the National Speakers Association.

After conducting your research, it should be pretty clear about what direction you want to take. Whether it's self-publishing, sending out proposals and query letters to major publishers or agents, asking mid-sized or smaller

publishers for help, or self-publishing yourself, you will have the answer. Remember Angels Press (<http://www.angelspress.com>) is always here to help!

Don't forget to view the list of books on writing, speaking and marketing in the bibliography of my 10-part series book "[How To Take Control of Your Own Life: A Self-Help Guide to Moving Forward](http://www.HowToTakeControl.com)" (<http://www.HowToTakeControl.com>). You can order my book off my website, on <http://www.amazon.com> or ask for it in bookstores.

Cathy Harris is available for Lectures, Seminars and Workshops. She is available to travel to your city and give "***Empowerment Seminars***" on "***How To Write a Book***" which focuses on: 1) How to Self-Publish Successfully and Keep All Your Profits, 2) How to Open Your Own Publishing Company, 3) How to Market Your Book, and 4) How to Become a Ghostwriter.

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Cathy Harris (<http://www.cathyharrisspeaks.com>) is the author of "How to Take Control of Your Own Life" (<http://www.howtotakecontrol.com>), "The Cathy Harris Story" (<http://www.thecathyharrisstory.com>), "The Failure of Homeland In-Security" (<http://www.HomelandIn-Security.com>), "How To Interact Safely With Law Enforcement Officers" (<http://www.policeinteractions.com>) and "Discrimination 101" (<http://www.discrimination101.com>)

This report is copyrighted and was written by Cathy Harris, Publisher & CEO of Angels Press, P.O. Box 870849, Stone Mountain, GA 30087 Phone: (800) 797-8663, Fax: (678) 254-5018 Website: <http://www.angelspress.com> Email: info@angelspress.com