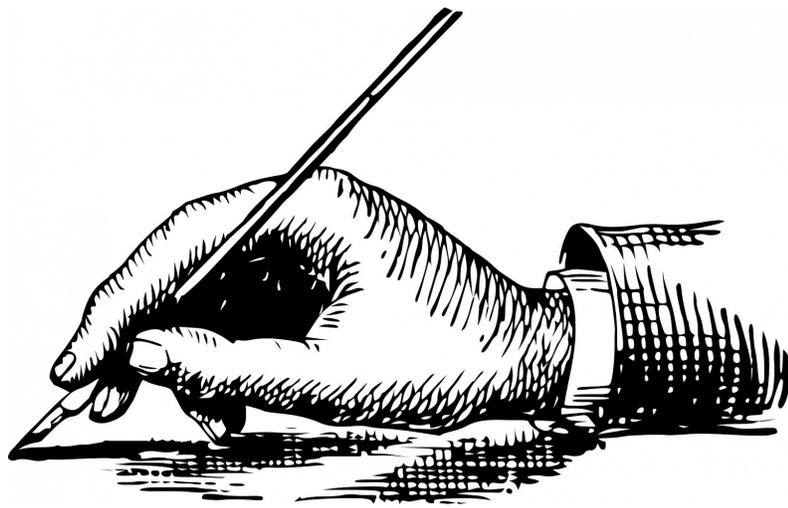


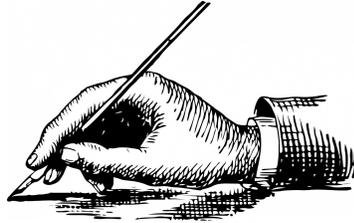
# 10 STEPS

## TO DEVELOP A SUCCESSFUL BOOK & BUILD YOUR BUSINESS AROUND IT



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Our approach to writing books has been fine-tuned over a few decades, and we continue to fine tune it just as one would any craft. But the foundation of our writing is built on a series of steps that have evolved in working with a variety of publishers and editors. Most of our publishers agree that these steps are necessary to develop a successful book and to build a business around that book. These steps focus on writing a book to meet an important need with a clearly defined niche that reputable publishers will want to publish. The end result is a book that adds value to the audience and serves as the fulcrum around which a business revolves.

**Here are the ten steps to a successful book.**



## **#1 Define your niche.**

Defining the niche that you want to pursue is your starting point. The niche is the focus of your book and the focus of your business. This niche represents your passion, experience, and capability. Ideally, it is something that others have not explored, or at least not explored in the way you are exploring it. Most people have a passion for one or more topics or issues. Defining your niche is the start to developing a concept, refining it, and exploring its potential as a book.

## **#2 Identify your market.**

The book must be one that is needed by potential purchasers. The market should be as broad as possible. Ideally, there should be limited direct competition from other publications. This step requires thorough market research which goes beyond considering currently available books. It includes assessing what the future market holds for your book. In addition to identifying the market for the book, it is important for you to consider how you will market to your target audience.

## **#3 Develop a compelling proposal.**

The proposal secures the contract. The proposal must be interesting, compelling, and persuasive in making the case for the book. It usually includes a query letter that will entice the publisher to read the proposal. The proposal should respond to every issue that is important to publishers, including a description of the book, the market for the book, the competitor analysis, and your marketing approach. Publishers want to know your platform for marketing the book and your intent on becoming a partner in promoting and selling your book.

## **#4 Secure a contract.**

Securing a contract with a major publisher requires identifying the right publisher and submitting a compelling proposal to the right person. From there, you collaborate with the acquisition editor to settle on the right contract arrangement for your new book.

## **#5 Do your research.**

Book development requires research. An important part of developing your niche and understanding the market, your research examines the competition, explores issues important to your concept, and delves into the work of others who may be important to your content. The output of the research may include trends, ideas, tables, case studies, examples, stories, charts, and other information, which will be fully referenced, giving proper credit to the originator. Completing your research and securing appropriate figures, charts, and tables prepares you for the most important tactical issue—writing.

## #6 Create a writing system.

Every writer must have a system for how to get the words into print. Whether it includes using keyboard, voice recognition system, transcription, or some other method, the important point is to use a system that works best for you. Then, create a discipline, structure, and place that will enable you to get it done.

## #7 Write an engaging book.

The book must create interest and hold the attention of your readers. Relevant examples, stories throughout each chapter, and dialogue among key stakeholders bring your book to life and engage readers from beginning to end.

## #8 Deliver your book on time.

Publishers understand delays, but they have a production schedule to meet. Your partnership with the publisher should be one where both sides agree on process, timelines, and outcomes. Create or use a project management system to keep it on schedule. A pleasant surprise for any publisher would be for an author to deliver their book not only on time, but early. Constant delays and schedule slips erode the confidence your publisher has in your work.

## #9 Promote your book.

In today's publishing market, the author has to take the lead in promotion. Yes, major publishers will contribute by providing resources and support, but marketing is really up to the author. Having a good platform and a compelling and thorough marketing plan is not only part of your commitment to the publisher, but is essential if you want your book to receive proper attention.

## #10 Build the business around your book.

Maybe you have a business and want to improve its success, or maybe you want to write a book and then build a business around it. In either case, the book should drive the business. Workshops, consulting, ancillary tools, and other processes will support the book and the business. The business is your major income. Book royalties are nice, but unless the book is a best seller, the royalties will be minimal compared to the revenue from the business. Define your niche, do your research, write your book and build your business around it.