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In the video above, Alexa tells you all about writing her proposal inside my course and how quickly she got requests from agents. (UPDATE: Less than 24 hours after filming, she got her first offer, followed by another just a couple of days later. She's now represented by Folio Literary Management.) Zoe Landed a Lucrative Book Deal for 2024!Before working with Tiffany, I had almost given up hope of securing traditional publishing for my memoir. Tiffany held my hand through the process of creating a polished proposal. She helped me find the best agents for my project, and cheered me on when the proposal requests and offers came in. After two days of querying, I landed the perfect agent for me...and then a lucrative book deal. Dr. Zoe Shaw, therapist, podcaster, author of Reckon With Her (forthcoming 2024, Simon & Schuster) Scott's Book is in Brick-and-Mortar Bookstores Working with Tiffany is amazing on so many levels. She helps writers gain so much power and purpose through their words. She provides needed insight and experience based on her own incredibly successful writing career. And, maybe most of all, she fosters the authentic sense of confidence that ALL writers need. Tiffany is the best! Scott Simon, non-profit founder, author of Scare Your Soul: 7 Powerful Principles to Harness Fear and Live Your Most Courageous Life (Hachette Book Group) Thanks to Tiffany, I had seven agents reading my manuscript! Before working with her, I queried agents and gotten no response despite having the opening chapter of my book published in a major journal. I thought my query and synopsis were good but thanks to Tiffany, they are SO much stronger. Robert Kerbeck, award-winning author of Rise: Lying the Dream, Out Hollywood to Wall Street, and Topend Agent and Book Deal! Tiffany broke my gift project into weekly goals and encouraged me to keep going until I was able to complete it. She understood what I needed to do and did not get annoyed by the whole process. I was thrilled to be sending out my query letter and book proposal. Two of the agents I queried quickly asked for the whole proposal and one of them is now representing my book! When I was stuck in the middle of a partially completed manuscript, Tiffany got me to The End. I feel lucky to have worked with a published author who really understands storytelling. My work is richer and more nuanced as a result. Dr. Liz Alexander, author of Lies That Blind, (Penguin Random House) I was incredibly honored to be part of this anthology edited by Jason Y. Ng & Susan Blumberg-Kason. To be alongside such incredible writers, bringing characters to life in one of my favorite cities! Just before it changed in more ways they'd even imagined when writing these pieces. HONG KONG NOIR, AKASHIC BOOKS/You Deserve More! At forty-one, I'm probably too old to be elbowing my way through the crowds moving up Dugular Street toward the ex-pat bars and clubs of Lan Kwai Fong. Im certainly too married to be sneaking around like this, and God knows Im far too sweaty and jet lagged to make the impression Id hope to. Sweat rolls down my temples, pools between my breasts and at the back of my knees, yet I breathe in the humid air and car exhaust as if returning to this city can bring me back to life. Id almost forgotten the world could be so vibrant and bright and alive. Its been a long and bitter winter back home in Fairfax, Virginia. No leaves on the trees, no people on the streets, nothing but dirty snow covering the ground. Even at the best of times, the DC area is a dark and paranoid place, where everyone seems to work for the government and youre never more than ten feet from someone wearing black sunglasses and a cold-tea eardrape. In this free guide, Im revealing the exact framework I use to help my clients get literary agents and book deals. Let me show you how to: Develop your IRRESISTIBLE hook Showcase your books sales potential, even if youre not sure your PLATFORM is big enough WOW agents with your pitch! When authors ask me, How can I write a book proposal? or, Do I need a proposal if I write a how-to book? I often say, You only need a proposal if you want to get your book published. Its true and editors don't want to see a completed fiction book most of the time. They dont have time to read a complete book. They want to see a proposal that sells your book idea and gets them excited to work with you. The #1 thing literary agents, acquisitions editors, and publishers must know before deciding whether or not to publish a nonfiction book will tens of thousands of readers buy this? Thats what matters, and so thats the information publishing gatekeepers need to do their jobs well. They cant answer that question just by reading the book; they have to understand who the author is, what their goals are, and what their marketing plans are. Thats why you have to write a book proposal, even if youve been asked to also include the complete manuscript. Note: You can download our free book proposal template and book proposal sample to see exactly how all this will look on the page. What Makes a Good Book Proposal? The main purpose of the book proposal is to convince literary agents and publishers that there is a market for your book and that you are the best person to write the book and help them sell it. The proposal is the key to making your book really come to life for your publishing partners. Not only is a proposal the first step in gaining the positive attention of an agent or acquisition editor, but a book proposal also helps you in many other ways: A proposal keeps you right on track because it contains the theme, table of contents, chapter-by-chapter synopsis, as well as a sample chapter. The book proposal is your marketing plan. It shows you and others who the book is for, how it will help them, how it differs from other books, and how you will market your book so that you and your publisher will make money. A good book proposal proves to everyone in the industry that you know what youre doing and take yourself seriously. That means theyll take you more seriously, and your chances for getting a deal will be much, much higher. Convinced? Lets dig into what should be in a proposal for a non-fiction book. Note: Different rules apply to writing a book proposal for fiction books, so make sure to do more research if youre writing a book proposal for a fiction book. How to Write a Book Proposal A book proposal has a title page (also called a cover page), a table of contents for the proposal, several sections: about the book (the content, the market, and the author), about the promotion, and a sample chapter. Lets dig deeper into each section. 1. Cover Page The cover page shows the books title, the authors name, their contact information (including phone, email, and websites), as well as the date and a copyright notice. Youll also see the words A book proposal for Stretch Marks How to live freely using the A.M.B.E.R. Mindsets Submitted by Amber Trueblood - Street, CA 90230 Work: 000-000-0000 Home: 000-000-0000 emailprotected@www.yourwebsite.com Submitted on May 6, 2018. 2. Table of Contents Heres Ambers Table of Contents for the proposal: PROPOSAL CONTENTS The Content 3 The Market 6 The Author 10 Promotion 11 Chapter-by-Chapter Synopsis 14 Sample Chapters Chapter 2 Sorry To Be Gross 26 Embrace Your Flaws, Focus Forward and Double-Down Pro Tip: Dont put the page numbers in until you lock down the final version of the proposal. I guarantee the page numbers will change as you write, rewrite, and revise. 3. The Content The Content section has several elements. The Idea This element briefly explains what the book is about. Use one or two paragraphs to hook the reader and make them want to read the rest of the proposal. Dont worry about leaving out material. Youll have ample opportunity to describe the book in greater detail in other parts of the proposal. Heres Ambers Idea: Stretch Marks is a self-development book for 35-55 year-old college-educated women, emerging from the other-focused world of raising young children, who are struggling with how to figure out what they want to do and dont know how they can make it happen. Stretch Marks are an emotional, visual and psychological concept meant to represent growth, expansion and pushing past ones limits. Women will live more freely, become better parents and have a healthy relationship with money when they apply the A.M.B.E.R. Mindsets. What makes these women miserable on the inside when it looks like they have everything theyve always wanted on the outside? The disconnect. The disconnect between what is truly most important to them, and how they use their time, resources and energy. Once they figure out what they value most and then line it up with what they do and how they act every day, the clouds begin to clear and they will feel alive again. Using The A.M.B.E.R. Mindsets, readers will learn the tricks and tools necessary to stop living the life they are told by others that they should be living, and start living freely. The Unique Selling Proposition (USP) This section shows how readers will benefit from reading the book. Amber wrote her USP based on a formula created by Michael Hyatt: After purchasing this book, readers will be able to: (list several benefits in bullet form) Because this book will: (list several processes you will use) Heres how Amber put flesh on those bones. The Unique Selling Proposition: After purchasing this book, readers will be able to: Determine what areas of their lives need the most change/identify what is stopping them from making those changes Learn the A.M.B.E.R. to overcome each roadblock so they can break through to the next level Use advanced techniques like gratitude, forgiveness and intention to flow through life peacefully and happily. Because this book will: Lay out a unique, proven framework for identifying individual mindset blocks Teach original techniques like The 333 Method and G.O.O.D.I.E. Visualizing Provide scientific explanations in simple-to-understand terms Offer tactics specific to the readers personality and particular mindset blocks The Competition What other books are in this genre? Dont say None. My book is unique. Every agent will throw your proposal away if you say that! Why? First, it isnt true. Your book is not unique. This shows you havent done your homework. Second, if no publisher ever published a book on that topic, chances are there is a reason why: There is no market for it! Dont make this rookie mistake. Instead, show that true bestsellers exist in this market, and that there is room for your book because if people buy one book, they will buy another book. Look at your reading habits. Do own only one book on dieting? Or health? Or business? Or sales? Or, you get the idea. I like to say that books are like bananas. People buy books in bunches. You need to show them why your book is different. You should list five competing books and show your point of view and how your book is different. Use a paragraph for each book. Heres how Amber sized up her competitors: Competition: This book competes in very popular categories: self-development, personal transformation, psychology, motivation, meditation, and happiness. You Are A Badass, Jen Sincero, Running Press 2013. Hardcover, \$19.67. Like You Are A Badass, Stretch Marks contains great ideas about what to do in order to be happy. Author Jen Sincero encourages readers to take action, listen to your intuition and follow your fantasies. Stretch Marks, however, specifically offers readers information on how to do it in a way that will work for your individual personality, lifestyle, and value system. The Market Who is the target buyer for the book? What are their demographics (characteristics such as age, sex, education, and financial status) and psychographics (their attitudes, aspirations, and psychological makeup)? Why will they want to read this book? How will it help them? Also included are affinity buyers of the book in large volume, such as book clubs, companies, and associations. Heres how Amber described her audience: The Market Characteristics: The audience for this book is 35-55 year-old college-educated women, emerging from the other-focused world of raising young children. Their busy lives teeter between the repetitive, tedious, obligatory responsibilities of life and emergency-mode when you need to drop everything to deal with an immediate problem (i.e., the school calls to say Sarah has just vomited in her room or a pipe just burst in the garage and now boxes of keepsakes are in jeopardy of water damage.) This book gives women the psychological permission to follow their dreams free from shame or guilt while still feeling good about the other roles they assume in their lives. Motivations: These women are intelligent and ambitious. Having spent years focused on the care of others, they often end up feeling frustrated, lost, and left-behind. Once their children no longer need the same degree of attention, many women find themselves without a place to direct their energies, skills, and experiences. This book provides them the support and insight to uncover what they truly want and the encouragement and tools to create it in their lives. Affinity Groups: Women applying for advanced degrees/ Women looking to re-enter the job market Parents of middle school and high school children Parent Teacher Organizations (Amber listed about 10 others). This is one section of the proposal that you should make as long as possible. If youre struggling with this section, learn more about how to do book market research. The Chapter-by-Chapter Overview Now you can go into more detail by showing the synopsis of each chapter. This helps the publisher get a birds eye view of the book, and it will keep you on track as you start to write the book. Dont worry about getting locked into a rigid outline. You can change anything when you write the book. Publishers know that elements can change once you dig in. In fact, some publishers might want to give you advice on topics to write about. Also, publishers will want to see a sample chapter so they can judge your writing style. However, that chapter goes at the end of the proposal, not at the end of this section. Please note that other proposal guides put this section near the end of the proposal after the promotion section and before the sample chapter. Heres one chapter from Ambers synopsis. CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER SYNOPSIS STRETCH MARKS How to live freely using the A.M.B.E.R. mindsets Amber Trueblood Chapter 1. I Might Be Drowning Busy is a decision! If we are too busy, it is shorthand for not important enough. Debbie Millman Key Topics: Balancing Reason with Intuition Identifying Your Seeds of Frustration Eradicating the Shoulds and Distractions Being Too Busy Excerpt: The crap truly hit the fan when my youngest started walking. I woke up to the glaring fact that I now had four sons and a husband, no career, two worthless masters degrees, a perpetual extra 10 pounds (and then guilt about being so vain), and an intense feeling that I had no individual identity. Major first world problem, I get it. I had been through a divorce in my early 20s, bankruptcy, a brief eating disorder but none of that hit me like this hit me. Do you want to read more? So do I! And Im not a woman. Thats a winning paragraph. The Manuscript This is the physical description of the book. How many words or pages will the book be? Is the manuscript completed? Or started? Theres no right or wrong answer. Publishers want to know where the book stands right now. Then they want to know when you expect to complete it so they can put it in their production schedule. Let them know if there are special features, like pictures, charts, graphs or other elements that will require special care in production and add to the cost. Point out your relevant accomplishments, like blogging, article writing, and other books youve published, so they know you are qualified. Share your mess-to-success story so they can get to know, like, and trust you. If you have a story of how you completed a big project, share it. This will let them know you are a doer, not a quitter. Publishers want to see that you can have the ability to write and complete a book. Youd be surprised to find how many people start writing books, but dont finish writing them. Publishers dont want to be burned by people who have a good idea, but who dont have the follow through. 4. Marketing and Promotion Plan The first thing publishers want to know about your marketing plan is the size of your platform. Simply defined, a platform is the number of people whom you can contact directly and easily via email, social media, speaking engagements, or other media you have earned. Think about all the ways you can get your message out to more people and make an impact: You might speak to tens of thousands of people at conferences. You might be appearing on TV, radio, and podcasts that reach large numbers of target buyers. Some of my clients are paid sponsors for big companies that book them to speak at major events or do publicity for them so they appear in large circulation magazines and newspapers. You might be part of a large group that could buy the book in bulk (i.e., professional associations, hobby groups, and political organizations). The more marketing tactics you put in and implement, the better. The more you can quantify each activity with numbers, the better (i.e., I speak to 100,000 people a year. I will be on the XYZ Podcast which reaches 50,000 people). More is better. Dont hold back. This section could easily decide whether a publisher buys your manuscript or passes. Or offers a large advance of a small one. Here are some other marketing ideas you should consider: Do you blog? How many readers do you have? Will you hire a PR firm or a book launch firm? How much will you budget for marketing? Will you be paying for advertisements or specific marketing campaigns? At the very least, the answers to these questions will show publishers that you are thinking in the right direction. Are there any groups that will buy large numbers of your books, such as corporations, associations, libraries or groups you speak to? If you arent a professional speaker who addresses hundreds or thousands of people at a time, there are still opportunities to speak at local groups where people will buy books, such as Meetups Library events Service groups (i.e., Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, Junior League) Chambers of Commerce by now you might realize marketing is a numbers game. The more numbers you have, the better off you will be and the happier the prospective publisher will be. Whenever you can, quantify the numbers for everything from the listeners who will hear you on a podcast; to the number of readers your blog or guest column will reach. Numbers will help you sell your book to the publisher. 5. The Sample Chapter The sample chapter can be any chapter, not necessarily chapter 1. Publishers want to see your writing style. Theyll learn a lot from this chapter. Pay attention to the content and tone as well as mechanics like grammar and punctuation. How to Improve Your Book Proposal No matter how wonderful your book idea is, the proposal wont get past the slush pile if it isnt well written or if it has grammatical errors. At the very least, run the proposal through a spell checker. At the very best, hire a professional copy editor or proofreader to review your proposal (this is what the pros do). Book Proposal Template You can download our free book proposal template and use it as you write your own book proposal. This template is in .docx (Microsoft Word) format. Book Proposal Sample You are welcome to download our free book proposal sample that was contributed by author Amber Trueblood who followed the book proposal guidelines detailed in this blog post and received a book deal from a major publisher. Submit Your Book Proposal Once youve done the hard work of writing your proposal, its time to send it off to publishers or agents. Dont be shy! But before you hit send, review our tips on how to submit a book proposal so you can increase your chances of success. Get the Book Amber used this book proposal template to get a book deal, and her book is now available for pre-order at Amazon and Barnes & Noble. Book Proposal Coach Dan Janal has written 13 books including, Write Your Book in a Flash. As a book coach, developmental editor, ghostwriter, and book proposal writer, he shapes stories and strategies that can transform a career or a business. For information, go to www.WriteYourBookInAFlash.com Did you find this post helpful? Let us know in the comments below! If you enjoyed this post, then you might also like: Tom Corson-Knowles is the founder of TCK Publishing, and the bestselling author of 27 books including Secrets of the Six-Figure author. He is also the host of the Publishing Profits Podcast show where we interview successful authors and publishing industry experts to share their tips for creating a successful writing career. Posts in Book proposals Are You Ready to Write a Nonfiction Book? Heres What It Takes. (Its probably not what you think.) Most aspiring authors come to me worried about time, platform, and writing experience, but often, what they REALLY need isnt even on their radar. Read More How to Write a Knock-out Book Proposal (+ Template & Strategy) Create a watertight book proposal that will convince literary agents and publishers that the world needs your book and needs it now. When and why you need a proposal, a detailed template, 5 biggest mistakes, plus proposal FAQs. Read More When authors ask me, How can I write a book proposal? or, Do I need a proposal if I write a how-to book? I often say, You only need a book proposal if you want to get your book published. Its true. Agents and editors dont want to see a completed nonfiction book most of the time. They dont have time to read a complete book. They want to see a proposal that sells your book idea and gets them excited to work with you. The #1 thing literary agents, acquisitions editors, and publishers must know before deciding whether or not to publish a nonfiction book is: Will tens of thousands of readers buy this? Thats what matters, and so thats the information publishing gatekeepers need to do their jobs well. They cant answer that question just by reading the book; they have to understand who the author is, what their goals are, and what their marketing plans are. Thats why you have to write a book proposal, even if youve been asked to also include the complete manuscript. Note: You can download our free book proposal template and book proposal sample to see exactly how all this will look on the page. What Makes a Good Book Proposal? The main purpose of the book proposal is to convince literary agents and publishers that there is a market for your book and that you are the best person to write the book and help them sell it. The proposal is the key to making your book really come to life for your publishing partners. Not only is a proposal the first step in gaining the positive attention of an agent or acquisition editor, but a book proposal also helps you in many other ways: A proposal keeps you right on track because it contains the theme, table of contents, chapter-by-chapter synopsis, as well as a sample chapter. The book proposal is your marketing plan. It shows you and others who the book is for, how it will help them, how it differs from other books, and how you will market your book so that you and your publisher will make money. A good book proposal proves to everyone in the industry that you know what youre doing and take yourself seriously. That means theyll take you more seriously, and your chances for getting a deal will be much, much higher. Convinced? Lets dig into what should be in a proposal for a non-fiction book. Note: Different rules apply to writing a book proposal for fiction books, so make sure to do more research if youre writing a book proposal for a fiction book. How to Write a Book Proposal A book proposal has a title page (also called a cover page), a table of contents for the proposal, and several sections: about the book (the content, the market, and the author), about the promotion, and a sample chapter. Lets dig deeper into each section. 1. Cover Page The cover page shows the books title, the authors name, their contact information (including phone, email, and websites), as well as the date and a copyright notice. Youll also see the words A book proposal for Stretch Marks How to live freely using the A.M.B.E.R. Mindsets Submitted by Amber Trueblood - Street, CA 90230 Work: 000-000-0000 Home: 000-000-0000 emailprotected@www.yourwebsite.com Submitted on May 8, 2018. 2. Table of Contents Heres Ambers Table of Contents for the proposal: PROPOSAL CONTENTS The Content 3 The Market 6 The Author 10 Promotion 11 Chapter-by-Chapter Synopsis 14 Sample Chapters Chapter 2 Sorry To Be Gross 26 Embrace Your Flaws, Focus Forward and Double-Down Pro Tip: Dont put the page numbers in until you lock down the final version of the proposal. I guarantee the page numbers will change as you write, rewrite, and revise. 3. The Content The Content section has several elements. The Idea This element briefly explains what the book is about. Use one or two paragraphs to hook the reader and make them want to read the rest of the proposal. Dont worry about leaving out material. Youll have ample opportunity to describe the book in greater detail in other parts of the proposal. Heres Ambers Idea: Stretch Marks is a self-development book for 35-55 year-old college-educated women, emerging from the other-focused world of raising young children, who are struggling with how to figure out what they want to do and dont know how they can make it happen. Stretch Marks are an emotional, visual and psychological concept meant to represent growth, expansion and pushing past ones limits. Women will live more freely, become better parents and have a healthy relationship with money when they apply the A.M.B.E.R. Mindsets. What makes these women miserable on the inside when it looks like they have everything theyve always wanted on the outside? The disconnect. The disconnect between what is truly most important to them, and how they use their time, resources and energy. Once they figure out what they value most and then line it up with what they do and how they act every day, the clouds begin to clear and they will feel alive again. Using The A.M.B.E.R. Mindsets, readers will learn the tricks and tools necessary to stop living the life they are told by others that they should be living, and start living freely. The Unique Selling Proposition (USP) This section shows how readers will benefit from reading the book. Amber wrote her USP based on a formula created by Michael Hyatt: After purchasing this book, readers will be able to: (list several benefits in bullet form) Because this book will: (list several processes you will use) Heres how Amber put flesh on those bones. The Unique Selling Proposition: After purchasing this book, readers will be able to: Determine what areas of their lives need the most change/identify what is stopping them from making those changes Learn the A.M.B.E.R. to overcome each roadblock so they can break through to the next level Use advanced techniques like gratitude, forgiveness and intention to flow through life peacefully and happily. Because this book will: Lay out a unique, proven framework for identifying individual mindset blocks Teach original techniques like The 333 Method and G.O.O.D.I.E. Visualizing Provide scientific explanations in simple-to-understand terms Offer tactics specific to the readers personality and particular mindset blocks The Competition What other books are in this genre? Dont say None. My book is unique. Every agent will throw your proposal away if you say that! Why? First, it isnt true. Your book is not unique. This shows you havent done your homework. Second, if no publisher ever published a book on that topic, chances are there is a reason why: There is no market for it! Dont make this rookie mistake. Instead, show that true bestsellers exist in this market, and that there is room for your book because if people buy one book, they will buy another book. Look at your reading habits. Do own only one book on dieting? Or health? Or business? Or sales? Or, you get the idea. I like to say that books are like bananas. People buy books in bunches. You need to show them why your book is different. You should list five competing books and show your point of view and how your book is different. Use a paragraph for each book. Heres how Amber sized up her competitors: Competition: This book competes in very popular categories: self-development, personal transformation, psychology, motivation, meditation, and happiness. You Are A Badass, Jen Sincero, Running Press 2013. Hardcover, \$19.67. Like You Are A Badass, Stretch Marks contains great ideas about what to do in order to be happy. Author Jen Sincero encourages readers to take action, listen to your intuition and follow your fantasies. Stretch Marks, however, specifically offers readers information on how to do it in a way that will work for your individual personality, lifestyle, and value system. The Market Who is the target buyer for the book? What are their demographics (characteristics such as age, sex, education, and financial status) and psychographics (their attitudes, aspirations, and psychological makeup)? Why will they want to read this book? How will it help them? Also included are affinity buyers of the book in large volume, such as book clubs, companies, and associations. Heres how Amber described her audience: The Market Characteristics: The audience for this book is 35-55 year-old college-educated women, emerging from the other-focused world of raising young children. Their busy lives teeter between the repetitive, tedious, obligatory responsibilities of life and emergency-mode when you need to drop everything to deal with an immediate problem (i.e., the school calls to say Sarah has just vomited in her room or a pipe just burst in the garage and now boxes of keepsakes are in jeopardy of water damage.) This book gives women the psychological permission to follow their dreams free from shame or guilt while still feeling good about the other roles they assume in their lives. Motivations: These women are intelligent and ambitious. Having spent years focused on the care of others, they often end up feeling frustrated, lost, and left-behind. Once their children no longer need the same degree of attention, many women find themselves without a place to direct their energies, skills, and experiences. This book provides them the support and insight to uncover what they truly want and the encouragement and tools to create it in their lives. Affinity Groups: Women applying for advanced degrees/ Women looking to re-enter the job market Parents of middle school and high school children Parent Teacher Organizations (Amber listed about 10 others). This is one section of the proposal that you should make as long as possible. If youre struggling with this section, learn more about how to do book market research. The Chapter-by-Chapter Overview Now you can go into more detail by showing the synopsis of each chapter. This helps the publisher get a birds eye view of the book, and it will keep you on track as you start to write the book. Dont worry about getting locked into a rigid outline. You can change anything when you write the book. Publishers know that elements can change once you dig in. In fact, some publishers might want to give you advice on topics to write about. Also, publishers will want to see a sample chapter so they can judge your writing style. However, that chapter goes at the end of the proposal, not at the end of this section. Please note that other proposal guides put this section near the end of the proposal after the promotion section and before the sample chapter. Heres one chapter from Ambers synopsis. CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER SYNOPSIS STRETCH MARKS How to live freely using the A.M.B.E.R. mindsets Amber Trueblood Chapter 1. I Might Be Drowning Busy is a decision! If we are too busy, it is shorthand for not important enough. Debbie Millman Key Topics: Balancing Reason with Intuition Identifying Your Seeds of Frustration Eradicating the Shoulds and Distractions Being Too Busy Excerpt: The crap truly hit the fan when my youngest started walking. I woke up to the glaring fact that I now had four sons and a husband, no career, two worthless masters degrees, a perpetual extra 10 pounds (and then guilt about being so vain), and an intense feeling that I had no individual identity. Major first world problem, I get it. I had been through a divorce in my early 20s, bankruptcy, a brief eating disorder but none of that hit me like this hit me. Do you want to read more? So do I! And Im not a woman. Thats a winning paragraph. The Manuscript This is the physical description of the book. How many words or pages will the book be? Is the manuscript completed? Or started? Theres no right or wrong answer. Publishers want to know where the book stands right now. Then they want to know when you expect to complete it so they can put it in their production schedule. Let them know if there are special features, like pictures, charts, graphs or other elements that will require special care in production and add to the cost. Point out your relevant accomplishments, like blogging, article writing, and other books youve published, so they know you are qualified. Share your mess-to-success story so they can get to know, like, and trust you. If you have a story of how you completed a big project, share it. This will let them know you are a doer, not a quitter. Publishers want to see that you can have the ability to write and complete a book. Youd be surprised to find how many people start writing books, but dont finish writing them. Publishers dont want to be burned by people who have a good idea, but who dont have the follow through. 4. Marketing and Promotion Plan The first thing publishers want to know about your marketing plan is the size of your platform. Simply defined, a platform is the number of people whom you can contact directly and easily via email, social media, speaking engagements, or other media you have earned. Think about all the ways you can get your message out to more people and make an impact: You might speak to tens of thousands of people at conferences. You might be appearing on TV, radio, and podcasts that reach large numbers of target buyers. Some of my clients are paid sponsors for big companies that book them to speak at major events or do publicity for them so they appear in large circulation magazines and newspapers. You might be part of a large group that could buy the book in bulk (i.e., professional associations, hobby groups, and political organizations). The more marketing tactics you put in and implement, the better. The more you can quantify each activity with numbers, the better (i.e., I speak to 100,000 people a year. I will be on the XYZ Podcast which reaches 50,000 people). More is better. Dont hold back. This section could easily decide whether a publisher buys your manuscript or passes. Or offers a large advance of a small one. Here are some other marketing ideas you should consider: Do you blog? How many readers do you have? Will you hire a PR firm or a book launch firm? How much will you budget for marketing? Will you be paying for advertisements or specific marketing campaigns? At the very least, the answers to these questions will show publishers that you are thinking in the right direction. Are there any groups that will buy large numbers of your books, such as corporations, associations, libraries or groups you speak to? If you arent a professional speaker who addresses hundreds or thousands of people at a time, there are still opportunities to speak at local groups where people will buy books, such as Meetups Library events Service groups (i.e., Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, Junior League) Chambers of Commerce by now you might realize marketing is a numbers game. The more numbers you have, the better off you will be and the happier the prospective publisher will be. Whenever you can, quantify the numbers for everything from the listeners who will hear you on a podcast; to the number of readers your blog or guest column will reach. Numbers will help you sell your book to the publisher. 5. The Sample Chapter The sample chapter can be any chapter, not necessarily chapter 1. Publishers want to see your writing style. Theyll learn a lot from this chapter. Pay attention to the content and tone as well as mechanics like grammar and punctuation. How to Improve Your Book Proposal No matter how wonderful your book idea is, the proposal wont get past the slush pile if it isnt well written or if it has grammatical errors. At the very least, run the proposal through a spell checker. At the very best, hire a professional copy editor or proofreader to review your proposal (this is what the pros do). Book Proposal Template You can download our free book proposal template and use it as you write your own book proposal. This template is in .docx (Microsoft Word) format. Book Proposal Sample You are welcome to download our free book proposal sample that was contributed by author Amber Trueblood who followed the book proposal guidelines detailed in this blog post and received a book deal from a major publisher. Submit Your Book Proposal Once youve done the hard work of writing your proposal, its time to send it off to publishers or agents. Dont be shy! But before you hit send, review our tips on how to submit a book proposal so you can increase your chances of success. Get the Book Amber used this book proposal template to get a book deal, and her book is now available for pre-order at Amazon and Barnes & Noble. Book Proposal Coach Dan Janal has written 13 books including, Write Your Book in a Flash. As a book coach, developmental editor, ghostwriter, and book proposal writer, he shapes stories and strategies that can transform a career or a business. For information, go to www.WriteYourBookInAFlash.com Did you find this post helpful? Let us know in the comments below! If you enjoyed this post, then you might also like: Tom Corson-Knowles is the founder of TCK Publishing, and the bestselling author of 27 books including Secrets of the Six-Figure author. He is also the host of the Publishing Profits Podcast show where we interview successful authors and publishing industry experts to share their tips for creating a successful writing career. Posts in Book proposals Are You Ready to Write a Nonfiction Book? Heres What It Takes. (Its probably not what you think.) Most aspiring authors come to me worried about time, platform, and writing experience, but often, what they REALLY need isnt even on their radar. Read More How to Write a Knock-out Book Proposal (+ Template & Strategy) Create a watertight book proposal that will convince literary agents and publishers that the world needs your book and needs it now. When and why you need a proposal, a detailed template, 5 biggest mistakes, plus proposal FAQs. Read More When authors ask me, How can I write a book proposal? or, Do I need a proposal if I write a how-to book? I often say, You only need a book proposal if you want to get your book published. Its true. Agents and editors dont want to see a completed nonfiction book most of the time. They dont have time to read a complete book. They want to see a proposal that sells your book idea and gets them excited to work with you. The #1 thing literary agents, acquisitions editors, and publishers must know before deciding whether or not to publish a nonfiction book is: Will tens of thousands of readers buy this? Thats what matters, and so thats the information publishing gatekeepers need to do their jobs well. They cant answer that question just by reading the book; they have to understand who the author is, what their goals are, and what their marketing plans are. Thats why you have to write a book proposal, even if youve been asked to also include the complete manuscript. Note: You can download our free book proposal template and book proposal sample to see exactly how all this will look on the page. What Makes a Good Book Proposal? The main purpose of the book proposal is to convince literary agents and publishers that there is a market for your book and that you are the best person to write the book and help them sell it. The proposal is the key to making your book really come to life for your publishing partners. Not only is a proposal the first step in gaining the positive attention of an agent or acquisition editor, but a book proposal also helps you in many other ways: A proposal keeps you right on track because it contains the theme, table of contents, chapter-by-chapter synopsis, as well as a sample chapter. The book proposal is your marketing plan. It shows you and others who the book is for, how it will help them, how it differs from other books, and how you will market your book so that you and your publisher will make money. A good book proposal proves to everyone in the industry that you know what youre doing and take yourself seriously. That means theyll take you more seriously, and your chances for getting a deal will be much, much higher. Convinced? Lets dig into what should be in a proposal for a non-fiction book. Note: Different rules apply to writing a book proposal for fiction books, so make sure to do more research if youre writing a book proposal for a fiction book. How to Write a Book Proposal A book proposal has a title page (also called a cover page), a table of contents for the proposal, and several sections: about the book (the content, the market, and the author), about the promotion, and a sample chapter. Lets dig deeper into each section. 1. Cover Page The cover page shows the books title, the authors name, their contact information (including phone, email, and websites), as well as the date and a copyright notice. Youll also see the words A book proposal for Stretch Marks How to live freely using the A.M.B.E.R. Mindsets Submitted by Amber Trueblood - Street, CA 90230 Work: 000-000-0000 Home: 000-000-0000 emailprotected@www.yourwebsite.com Submitted on May 8, 2018. 2. Table of Contents Heres Ambers Table of Contents for the proposal: PROPOSAL CONTENTS The Content 3 The Market 6 The Author 10 Promotion 11 Chapter-by-Chapter Synopsis 14 Sample Chapters Chapter 2 Sorry To Be Gross 26 Embrace Your Flaws, Focus Forward and Double-Down Pro Tip: Dont put the page numbers in until you lock down the final version of the proposal. I guarantee the page numbers will change as you write, rewrite, and revise. 3. The Content The Content section has several elements. The Idea This element briefly explains what the book is about. Use one or two paragraphs to hook the reader and make them want to read the rest of the proposal. Dont worry about leaving out material. Youll have ample opportunity to describe the book in greater detail in other parts of the proposal. Heres Ambers Idea: Stretch Marks is a self-development book for 35-55 year-old college-educated women, emerging from the other-focused world of raising young children, who are struggling with how to figure out what they want to do and dont know how they can make it happen. Stretch Marks are an emotional, visual and psychological concept meant to represent growth, expansion and pushing past ones limits. Women will live more freely, become better parents and have a healthy relationship with money when they apply the A.M.B.E.R. Mindsets. What makes these women miserable on the inside when it looks like they have everything theyve always wanted on the outside? The disconnect. The disconnect between what is truly most important to them, and how they use their time, resources and energy. Once they figure out what they value most and then line it up with what they do and how they act every day, the clouds begin to clear and they will feel alive again. Using The A.M.B.E.R. Mindsets, readers will learn the tricks and tools necessary to stop living the life they are told by others that they should be living, and start living freely. The Unique Selling Proposition (USP) This section shows how readers will benefit from reading the book. Amber wrote her USP based on a formula created by Michael Hyatt: After purchasing this book, readers will be able to: (list several benefits in bullet form) Because this book will: (list several processes you will use) Heres how Amber put flesh on those bones. The Unique Selling Proposition: After purchasing this book, readers will be able to: Determine what areas of their lives need the most change/identify what is stopping them from making those changes Learn the A.M.B.E.R. to overcome each roadblock so they can break through to the next level Use advanced techniques like gratitude, forgiveness and intention to flow through life peacefully and happily. Because this book will: Lay out a unique, proven framework for identifying individual mindset blocks Teach original techniques like The 333 Method and G.O.O.D.I.E. Visualizing Provide scientific explanations in simple-to-understand terms Offer tactics specific to the readers personality and particular mindset blocks The Competition What other books are in this genre? Dont say None. My book is unique. Every agent will throw your proposal away if you say that! Why? First, it isnt true. Your book is not unique. This shows you havent done your homework. Second, if no publisher ever published a book on that topic, chances are there is a reason why: There is no market for it! Dont make this rookie mistake. Instead, show that true bestsellers exist in this market, and that there is room for your book because if people buy one book, they will buy another book. Look at your reading habits. Do own only one book on dieting? Or health? Or business? Or sales? Or, you get the idea. I like to say that books are like bananas. People buy books in bunches. You need to show them why your book is different. You should list five competing books and show their point of view and how your book is different. Use a paragraph for each book. Heres how Amber sized up her competitors: Competition: This book competes in very popular categories: self-development, personal transformation, psychology, motivation, meditation, and happiness. You Are A Badass, Jen Sincero, Running Press 2013. Hardcover, \$19.67. Like You Are A Badass, Stretch Marks contains great ideas about what to do in order to be happy. Author Jen Sincero encourages readers to take action, listen to your intuition and follow your fantasies. Stretch Marks, however, specifically offers readers information on how to do it in a way that will work for your individual personality, lifestyle, and value system. The Market Who is the target buyer for the book? What are their demographics (characteristics such as age, sex, education, and financial status) and psychographics (their attitudes, aspirations, and psychological makeup)? Why will they want to read this book? How will it help them? Also included are affinity buyers of the book in large volume, such as book clubs, companies, and associations. Heres how Amber described her audience: The Market Characteristics: The audience for this book is 35-55 year-old college-educated women, emerging from the other-focused world of raising young children. Their busy lives teeter between the repetitive, tedious, obligatory responsibilities of life and emergency-mode when you need to drop everything to deal with an immediate problem (i.e., the school calls to say Sarah has just vomited in her room or a pipe just burst in the garage and now boxes of keepsakes are in jeopardy of water damage.) This book gives women the psychological permission to follow their dreams free from shame or guilt while still feeling good about the other roles they assume in their lives. Motivations: These women are intelligent and ambitious. Having spent years focused on the care of others, they often end up feeling frustrated, lost, and left-behind. Once their children no longer need the same degree of attention, many women find themselves without a place to direct their energies, skills, and experiences. This book provides them the support and insight to uncover what they truly want and the encouragement and tools to create it in their lives. Affinity Groups: Women applying for advanced degrees/ Women looking to re-enter the job market Parents of middle school and high school children Parent Teacher Organizations (Amber listed about 10 others). This is one section of the proposal that you should make as long as possible. If youre struggling with this section, learn more about how to do book market research. The Chapter-by-Chapter Overview Now you can go into more detail by showing the synopsis of each chapter. This helps the publisher get a birds eye view of the book, and it will keep you on track as you start to write the book. Dont worry about getting locked into a rigid outline. You can change anything when you write the book. Publishers know that elements can change once you dig in. In fact, some publishers might want to give you advice on topics to write about. Also, publishers will want to see a sample chapter so they can judge your writing style. However, that chapter goes at the end of the proposal, not at the end of this section. Please note that other proposal guides put this section near the end of the proposal after the promotion section and before the sample chapter. Heres one chapter from Ambers synopsis. CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER SYNOPSIS STRETCH MARKS How to live freely using the A.M.B.E.R. mindsets Amber Trueblood Chapter 1. I Might Be Drowning Busy is a decision! If we are too busy, it is shorthand for not important enough. Debbie Millman Key Topics: Balancing Reason with Intuition Identifying Your Seeds of Frustration Eradicating the Shoulds and Distractions Being Too Busy Excerpt: The crap truly hit the fan when my youngest started walking. I woke up to the glaring fact that I now had four sons and a husband, no career, two worthless masters degrees, a perpetual extra 10 pounds (and then guilt about being so vain), and an intense feeling that I had no individual identity. Major first world problem, I get it. I had been through a divorce in my early 20s, bankruptcy, a brief eating disorder but none of that hit me like this hit me. Do you want to read more? So do I! And Im not a woman. Thats a winning paragraph. The Manuscript This is the physical description of the book. How many words or pages will the book be? Is the manuscript completed? Or started? Theres no right or wrong answer. Publishers want to know where the book stands right now. Then they want to know when you expect to complete it so they can put it in their production schedule. Let them know if there are special features, like pictures, charts, graphs or other elements that will require special care in production and add to the cost. Point out your relevant accomplishments, like blogging, article writing, and other books youve published, so they know you are qualified. Share your mess-to-success story so they can get to know, like, and trust you. If you have a story of how you completed a big project, share it. This will let them know you are a doer, not a quitter. Publishers want to see that you can have the ability to write and complete a book. Youd be surprised to find how many people start writing books, but dont finish writing them. Publishers dont want to be burned by people who have a good idea, but who dont have the follow through. 4. Marketing and Promotion Plan The first thing publishers want to know about your marketing plan is the size of your platform. Simply defined, a platform is the number of people whom you can contact directly and easily via email, social media, speaking engagements, or other media you have earned. Think about all the ways you can get your message out to more people and make an impact: You might speak to tens of thousands of people at conferences. You might be appearing on TV, radio, and podcasts that reach large numbers of target buyers. Some of my clients are paid sponsors for big companies that book them to speak at major events or do publicity for them so they appear in large circulation magazines and newspapers. You might be part of a large group that could buy the book in bulk (i.e., professional associations, hobby groups, and political organizations). The more marketing tactics you put in and implement, the better. The more you can quantify each activity with numbers, the better (i.e., I speak to 100,000 people a year. I will be on the XYZ Podcast which reaches 50,000 people). More is better. Dont hold back. This section could easily decide whether a publisher buys your manuscript or passes. Or offers a large advance of a small one. Here are some other marketing ideas you should consider: Do you blog? How many readers do you have? Will you hire a PR firm or a book launch firm? How much will you budget for marketing? Will you be paying for advertisements or specific marketing campaigns? At the very least, the answers to these questions will show publishers that you are thinking in the right direction. Are there any groups that will buy large numbers of your books, such as corporations, associations, libraries or groups you speak to? If you arent a professional speaker who addresses hundreds or thousands of people at a time, there are still opportunities to speak at local groups where people will buy books, such as Meetups Library events Service groups (i.e., Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, Junior League) Chambers of Commerce by now you might realize marketing is a numbers game. The more numbers you have, the better off you will be and the happier the prospective publisher will be. Whenever you can, quantify the numbers for everything from the listeners who will hear you on a podcast; to the number of readers your blog or guest column will reach. Numbers will help you sell your book to the publisher. 5. The Sample Chapter The sample chapter can be any chapter, not necessarily chapter 1. Publishers want to see your writing style. Theyll learn a lot from this chapter. Pay attention to the content and tone as well as mechanics like grammar and punctuation. How to Improve Your Book Proposal No matter how wonderful your book idea is, the proposal wont get past the slush pile if it isnt well written or if it has grammatical errors. At the very least, run the proposal through a spell checker. At the very best, hire a professional copy editor or proofreader to review your proposal (this is what the pros do). Book Proposal Template You can download our free book proposal template and use it as you write your own book proposal. This template is in .docx (Microsoft Word) format. Book Proposal Sample You are welcome to download our free book proposal sample that was contributed by author Amber Trueblood who followed the book proposal guidelines detailed in this blog post and received a book deal from a major publisher. Submit Your Book Proposal Once youve done the hard work of writing your proposal, its time to send it off to publishers or agents. Dont be shy! But before you hit send, review our tips on how to submit a book proposal so you can increase your chances of success. Get the Book Amber used this book proposal template to get a book deal, and her book is now available for pre-order at Amazon and Barnes & Noble. Book Proposal Coach Dan Janal has written 13 books including, Write Your Book in a Flash. As a book coach, developmental editor, ghostwriter, and book proposal writer, he shapes stories and strategies that can transform a career or a business. For information, go to www.WriteYourBookInAFlash.com Did you find this post helpful? Let us know in the comments below! If you enjoyed this post, then you might also like: Tom Corson-Knowles is the founder of TCK Publishing, and the bestselling author of 27 books including Secrets of the Six-Figure author. He is also the host of the Publishing Profits Podcast show where we interview successful authors and publishing industry experts to share their tips for creating a successful writing career. Posts in Book proposals Are You Ready to Write a Nonfiction Book? Heres What It Takes. (Its probably not what you think.) Most aspiring authors come to me worried about time, platform, and writing experience, but often, what they REALLY need isnt even on their radar. Read More How to Write a Knock-out Book Proposal (+ Template & Strategy) Create a watertight book proposal that will convince literary agents and publishers that the world needs your book and needs it now. When and why you need a proposal, a detailed template, 5 biggest mistakes, plus proposal FAQs. Read More When authors ask me, How can I write a book proposal? or, Do I need a proposal if I write a how-to book? I often say, You only need a book proposal if you want to get your book published. Its true. Agents and editors dont want to see a completed nonfiction book most of the time. They dont have time to read a complete book. They want to see a proposal that sells your book idea and gets them excited to work with you. The #1 thing literary agents, acquisitions editors, and publishers must know before deciding whether or not to publish a nonfiction book is: Will tens of thousands of readers buy this? Thats what matters, and so thats the information publishing gatekeepers need to do their jobs well. They cant answer that question just by reading the book; they have to understand who the author is, what their goals are, and what their marketing plans are. Thats why you have to write a book proposal, even if youve been asked to also include the complete manuscript. Note: You can download our free book proposal template and book proposal sample to see exactly how all this will look on the page. What Makes a Good Book Proposal? The main purpose of the book proposal is to convince literary agents and publishers that there is a market for your book and that you are the best person to write the book and help them sell it. The proposal is the key to making your book really come to life for your publishing partners.

experts to share their tips for creating a successful writing career. When authors ask me, How can I write a proposal? or, Do I need a proposal? I often say, You only need a proposal if you want to get your book published. I true. Agents and editors don't want to see a completed proposal most of the time. They don't have time to read a complete book. They want to see a proposal that sells your book ideaand gets them excited to work with you. The #1 thing literary agents, acquisitions editors, and publishers must know before deciding whether or not to publish a nonfiction book is: Will tens of thousands of readers buy this?Thats what matters, and so thats the information publishing gatekeepers need to do their jobs well. They cant answer that question just by reading the book; they have to understand who the author is, what their goals are, and what their marketing plans are. Thats why you have to write a book proposal, even if youve been asked to also include the complete manuscript. Note: You can download our free book proposal template and book proposal sample to see exactly how all this will look on the page. What Makes a Good Book Proposal?The main purpose of the book proposal is to convince literary agents and publishers that there is a market for your book and that you are the best person to write the bookand help them sell it. The proposal is the key to making your book really come to life for your publishing partners. Not only is a proposal the first step in gaining the positive attention of an agent or acquisition editor, but a book proposal also helps you in many other ways: A proposal keeps you right on track because it contains the theme, table of contents, chapter-by-chapter synopsis, as well as a sample chapter. The book proposal is your marketing plan. It shows you and others who the book is for, how it will help them, how it differs from other books, and how you will market your book so that you and your publisher will make money. A good book proposal proves to everyone in the industry that you know what youre doing and take yourself seriously. That means theyll take you more seriously, and your chances for getting a deal will be much, much higher. Convinced? Lets dig into what should be in a proposal for a non-fiction book. Note: Different rules apply to writing a book proposal for fiction books, so make sure to do more research if youre writing a book proposal for a fiction book. How to Write a Book ProposalA book proposal has a title page (also called a cover page), a table of contents for the proposal, and several sections: about the book (the content, the market, and the author), about the promotion, and a sample chapter. Lets dig deeper into each section. 1. Cover PageThe cover page shows the books title, the authors name, their contact information (including phone, email, and websites), as well as the date and a copyright notice. Youll also see the words A book proposal for at the top of the page so readers know what they are looking at. No, it isnt obvious. After all, this could be a white paper, a complete novella, or a proposal to steam clean their carpets. Lets not make anyone guess what theyre reading. Let them know you are submitting a book proposal right away. Heres a sample cover page from one of my clients, Amber Trueblood: A book proposal for Stretch MarksHow to live freely using the A.M.B.E.R. Mindsets Submitted by Amber Trueblood- Street, CA 90230 Work: 000-000-0000 Home: 000-000-0000 www.yourwebsite.com Submitted on May 8, 20182. Table of ContentsHeres Ambers Table of Contents for the proposal: PROPOSAL CONTENTS The Content 3 The Market 6 The Author 10 Promotion 11 Chapter-by-Chapter Synopsis 14 Sample Chapters Chapter 2 Sorry To Be Gross 26 Embrace Your Flaws, Focus Forward and Double-Down Pro Tip: Dont put the page numbers in until you lock down the final version of the proposal. I guarantee the page numbers will change as you write, rewrite, and revise. 3. The ContentThe Content section has several elements: The IdeaThis element briefly explains what the book is about. Use one or two paragraphs to hook the reader and make them want to read the rest of the proposal. Dont worry about leaving out material. Youll have ample opportunity to describe the book in greater detail in other parts of the proposal. Heres Ambers Idea: Stretch Marks is a self-development book for 35-55 year-old college-educated women, emerging from the other-focused world of raising young children, who are struggling with how to figure out what they want to do and dont know how they can make it happen. Stretch Marks are an emotional, visual and psychological concept meant to represent growth, expansion and pushing past ones limits. Women will live more freely, become better parents and have a healthy relationship with money when they apply the A.M.B.E.R. Mindsets. 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The Unique Selling Proposition: After purchasing this book, readers will be able to: Determine what areas of their lives need the most change Identify what is stopping them from making those changes Learn the A.M.B.E.R. to overcome each roadblock so they can break through to the next level Use advanced techniques like gratitude, forgiveness and intention to flow through life peacefully and happily. Because this book will: Lay out a unique, proven framework for identifying individual mindset blocks Teach original techniques like The 333 Method and G.O.O.D.I.E. Visualizing Provide scientific explanations in simple-to-understand terms Offer tactics specific to the readers personality and particular mindset blocks The CompetitionWhat other books are in this genre? Dont say None. My book is unique. Every agent will throw your proposal away if you say that! Why? First, it isnt true. Your book is not unique. This shows you havent done your homework. Second, if no publisher ever published a book on that topic, chances are there is a reason why: There is no market for it! Dont make this rookie mistake. Instead, show that true bestsellers exist in this market, and that there is room for your book because if people buy one book, they will buy another book. Look at your reading habits. Do own only one book on dieting? Or health? Or business? Or sales? Or, you get the idea. I like to say that books are like bananas. People buy books in bunches. You need to show them why your book is different. You should list five competing books and show their point of view and how your book is different. Use a paragraph for each book. Heres how Amber sized up her competitors: Competition: This book competes in very popular categories: self-development, personal transformation, psychology, motivation, meditation, and happiness. You Are A Badass, Jen Sincero, Running Press 2013. Hardcover, \$19.67 Like You Are A Badass, Stretch Marks contains great ideas about what to do in order to be happy. Author Jen Sincero encourages readers to take action, listen to your intuition and follow your fantasies. Stretch Marks, however, specifically offers readers information on how to do it in a way that will work for your individual personality, lifestyle, and value system. The MarketWho is the target buyer for the book? What are their demographics (characteristics such as age, sex, education, and financial status) and psychographics (their attitudes, aspirations, and psychological makeup)? Why will they want to read this book? How will it help them? Also included are affinity groups of people who are likely buyers of the book in large volume, such as book clubs, companies, and associations. Heres how Amber described her audience: The Market Characteristics: The audience for this book is 35-55 year-old college-educated women, emerging from the other-focused world of raising young children. Their busy lives teeter between the repetitive, tedious, obligatory responsibilities of life and emergency-mode when you need to drop everything to deal with an immediate problem (i.e., the school calls to say Sarah has just vomited in homeroom or a pipe just burst in the garage and now boxes of keepsakes are in jeopardy of water damage.) This book gives women the psychological permission to follow their dreams free from shame or guilt while still feeling good about the other roles they assume in their lives. Motivations: These women are intelligent and ambitious. Having spent years focused on the care of others, they often end up feeling frustrated, lost, and left-behind. Once their children no longer need the same degree of attention, many women find themselves without a place to direct their energies, skills, and experiences. This book provides them the support and insight to uncover what they truly want and the encouragement and tools to create it in their lives. Affinity Groups: Women applying for advanced degrees Women looking to re-enter the job market Parents of middle school and high school children Parent Teacher Organizations (Amber listed about 10 others. This is one section of the proposal that you should make as long as possible.) If youre struggling with this section, learn more about how to do book market research. The Chapter-by-Chapter OverviewNow you can go into more detail by showing the synopsis of each chapter. This helps the publisher get a birds eye view of the book, and it will keep you on track as you start to write the book. Dont worry about getting locked into a rigid outline. You can change anything when you write the book. Publishers know that elements can change once you dig in. In fact, some publishers might want to give you advice on topics to write about. Also, publishers will want to see a sample chapter so they can judge your writing style. However, that chapter goes at the end of the proposal, not at the end of this section. Please note that other proposal guides put this section near the end of the proposal after the promotion section and before the sample chapter. Heres one chapter from Ambers synopsis. CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER SYNOPSIS STRETCH MARKS How to live freely using the A.M.B.E.R. mindsets Amber Trueblood Chapter 1. I Might Be Drowning Busy is a decision! If we say we are too busy, it is shorthand for not important enough. Debbie Millman Key Topics: Balancing Reason with Intuition Identifying Your Seeds of Frustration Eradicating the Shoulds and Distractions Being Too Busy Excerpt: The crap truly hit the fan when my youngest started walking. I woke up to the glaring fact that I now had four sons and a husband, no career, two worthless masters degrees, a perpetual extra 10 pounds (and then guilt about being so vain), and an intense feeling that I had no individual identity. Major first world problem, I get it. I had been through a divorce in my early 20s, bankruptcy, a brief eating disorder but none of that hit me like this hit me. Do you want to read more? So do I! And Im not a woman. Thats a winning paragraph. The ManuscriptThis is the physical description of the book. How many words or pages will the book be? Is the manuscript completed? Or started? Theres no right or wrong answer. Publishers want to know where the book stands right now. Then they want to know when you expect to complete it so they can put it in their production schedule. Let them know if there are special features, like pictures, charts, graphs or other elements that will require special care in production and add to the cost. Point out your relevant accomplishments, like blogging, article writing, and other books youve published, so they know you are qualified. Share your mess-to-success story so they can get to know, like, and trust you. If you have a story of how you completed a big project, share it. This will let them know you are a doer, not a quitter. Publishers want to see that you can have the ability to write and complete a book. Youd be surprised to find how many people start writing books, but dont finish writing them. Publishers dont want to be burned by people who have a good idea, but who dont have the follow through. 4. Marketing and Promotion PlanThe first thing publishers want to know about your marketing plan is the size of your platform. Simply defined, a platform is the number of people whom you can contact directly and easily via email, social media, speaking engagements, or other media you have earned. Think about all the ways you can get your message out to more people and make an impact: You might speak to tens of thousands of people at conferences. You might be appearing on TV, radio, and podcasts that reach large numbers of target buyers. Some of my clients are paid sponsors for big companies that book them to speak at major events or do publicity for them so they appear in large circulation magazines and newspapers. You might be part of a large group that could buy the book in bulk (i.e., professional associations, hobby groups, and political organizations). The more marketing tactics you put in and implement, the better. The more you can quantify each activity with numbers, the better (i.e., I speak to 100,000 people a year. I will be on the XYZ Podcast which reaches 50,000 people). More is better. Dont hold back. This section could easily decide whether a publisher buys your manuscript or passes. Or offers a large advance of a small one. Here are some other marketing ideas you should consider: Do you blog? How many readers do you have? Will you hire a PR firm or a book launch firm? How much will you budget for marketing? Will you be paying for advertisements or specific marketing campaigns? At the very least, the answers to these questions will show publishers that you are thinking in the right direction. Are there any groups that will buy large numbers of your books, such as corporations, associations, libraries or groups you speak to? If you arent a professional speaker who addresses hundreds or thousands of people at a time, there are still opportunities to speak at local groups where people will buy books, such as: Meetups Library events Service groups (i.e., Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, Junior League) Chambers of Commerce By now you might realize marketing is a numbers game. The more numbers you have, the better off you will be and the happier the prospective publisher will be. Whenever you can, quantify the numbers for everything from the listeners who will hear you on a podcast, to the number of readers your blog or guest column will reach. Numbers will help you sell your book to the publisher. 5. The Sample ChapterThe sample chapter can be any chapter, not necessarily chapter 1. Publishers want to see your writing style. Theyll learn a lot from this chapter. Pay attention to the content and tone as well as mechanics like grammar and punctuation. How to Improve Your Book ProposalNo matter how wonderful your book idea is, the proposal wont get past the slush pile if it isnt well written or if it has grammatical errors. At the very least, run the proposal through a spell checker. At the very best, hire a professional copy editor or proofreader to review your proposal (this is what the pros do). Book Proposal TemplateYou can download our free book proposal template and use it as you write your own book proposal. 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For information, go to www.WriteYourBookInAFlash.com Did you find this post helpful? Let us know in the comments below! If you enjoyed this post, then you might also like: Tom Corson-Knowles is the founder of TCK Publishing, and the bestselling author of 27 books including Secrets of the Six-Figure author. He is also the host of the Publishing Profits Podcast show where we interview successful authors and publishing industry experts to share their tips for creating a successful writing career.

How to write a book proposal. Book proposal. How to write a proposal cambridge. How to make a book proposal. How to write a good book proposal. How to write a business book. How to write a book proposal example. Write a proposal. How to write a proposal example.