Checklist for Editorial Appointments

1. Pray about the meeting. (How often we all forget to do that!) Pray for yourself and the editor.

2. Study the submission guidelines for the editor's magazine or publishing house ahead of time. If you don't have the guidelines or a current writer's market, look on the company's website.

3. Prepare multiple copies of your manuscript. If you write articles, don't bring a 20-pager! If you are writing a book, bring a chapter, a partial chapter, and/or a book proposal. Be sure to bring something that you've put some work into; otherwise, you're wasting the editor's time. Do not try to show an editor a rough, sketchy outline of a book or article; it's very difficult to comment on something that vague.

4. Prepare a short biography of yourself, with accomplishments, education, writing credits — anything that explains your interest in the topic you are writing about and your expertise, if any, in the subject. Include contact information and, if possible, a photo of yourself (faces are often so much easier to remember than names). Make multiple copies so that the editor can keep the material. (Who knows, even if the editor chooses not to take your manuscript, he or she may think of you when the next writing project comes around!)

5. Bring paper and pen to write down the editor's brilliant suggestions. Bring extra paper and pen for the editor, who may forget to bring his or her own (they can be just as scatterbrained as the rest of us!).

6. Come with an open mind, and decide ahead of time that you will not argue or become defensive. On the other hand, while you need to be open to suggestions for revision, you should also have a clear vision of what you want the book or article to be, and be ready to convey that vision to the editor. If the editor misunderstands the intended thrust of your idea, he or she may not give you the correct advice.

7. Afterward, pray about the advice you are given, and ask the Lord to give you wisdom to take the wheat and leave the chaff. Ask for diligence to work on the revisions you need to do.