

What to do AFTER You Get Home From a Writing Conference

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by Edie Melson @EdieMelson

I'm still coming down off the high of the 2016 Blue Ridge Mountains Christian Writers Conference, and while not all of you were there with me, I think there's some info here you can use. We all need to know how to prioritize our time after an event where we've met new folks. To help, I'm sharing this post to help you get organized.

The 2016 BRMCWC Conference gave us a great opportunity to network with professionals in our industry. I'm sure you all came home with a stack of business cards (I know I did). But you may be wondering how—or even if—you should keep the connections current. Here are some basic guidelines to help you on your way.

WHAT TO DO AFTER YOU GET HOME FROM A #WRITING CONFERENCE

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First, I'd spend some time on Facebook and Twitter. Take time to friend and follow those you met during the week. This is often the first line of getting to know someone. I don't know of anyone who doesn't want more friends or fans on Facebook or followers on Twitter. This is also a good way to network with your fellow attendees.

Second, Get ready to write...thank you notes and emails. If you met with someone or took a class or if they helped you, and you have their snail mail address, send them a note of thanks. If all you have is email, sent them a quick thank you that way. This will immediately help you stand out in their memory, and your grandmother would be proud!

Next, I'd look over my list of who asked me to submit something. Then, I'd take time to incorporate the things I learned at the conference. Then—and only then—I'd start sending requested material. Let me repeat—TAKE YOUR TIME SENDING THINGS IN. The biggest mistake writers make is submitting something before it's ready.

You don't have to worry about that editor or agent sitting at his desk with nothing to do. They have plenty to keep them busy and they're not counting the hours until your submission comes in. As a matter of fact, I know of several who have turned down a submission because it was sent too soon

after the conference because they didn't think the writer had time to incorporate what they'd learned.

Important tips on sending submissions:

Make sure you spell the name of the person you're sending the submission to correctly. I know it sounds basic, but you'd be surprised what we've heard.

If you're sending an email put "Requested Material from 2016 BRMCWC Conference" in the subject line. This will keep your email submission from getting pushed into the slush pile.

If you're mailing the submission write, "Requested Material: 2016 BRMCWC Conference" on the envelope for the reason mentioned above.

If you're including a cover letter with a mailed submission or a brief email with an attachment, be sure to remind the editor/agent a little about your material. Many of the faculty meet with hundreds of new writers every conference season and there is no way they can remember everyone. So save us all a little embarrassment and include some history.

After you've sent your submission be ready to be patient. Don't expect to receive a confirmation email or postcard, although some will do this. Don't expect to hear back sooner than about three months. This is the busiest part of the conference season and many editors and agents are on the road more than they're in the office. Give them some time to wade through all the paper work.

If you still haven't heard anything after three months send a polite email inquiry. If they don't answer, assume no. DO NOT call them and DO NOT risk being labeled a pest. This is a small industry and people talk.

Follow these tips and you'll be able to navigate the minefields of industry etiquette.

What tips do you have for after the conference?



Edie Melson—author, blogger, speaker—has written numerous books, including [While My Soldier Serves](#), [Prayers for Those with Loved Ones in the Military](#). She's also the military family blogger at [Guideposts.org](#). Her popular blog for writers, [The Write Conversation](#), reaches thousands each month, and she's the Director of the [Blue Ridge Mountains Christian Writers Conference](#). [Connections: Social Media & Networking Techniques for Writers](#) is a print expansion of her bestselling ebook on social media. She's the Social Media Mentor at [My Book Therapy](#), the Social Media Director for [Southern Writers Magazine](#), and the Senior Editor for [NovelRocket.com](#).