

Non-Fiction Books: Moving From Passion to Process

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Strategy

Passion, 3Qs, Audience, Concept, Premise, Theme, Research, Structure

Style, Content

Self-editing

Weasel words, Christianese, Clichés, Writing tight

Queries and Proposals

Session 1: Strategy:

“The only book that should ever be written is one that flows up from the heart,
forced out by the inward pressure.” ~ A.W. Tozer

Passion

Purpose → why are you writing this book?

Three Critical Questions

1.

2.

3.

Concept

Premise

Theme

Research

Structure

Front matter

Back Matter

Style, Content

“Any good book is the result of inspiration, followed by hours of grueling work.”
~ Dave Fessenden

Style: Didactic vs. inductive

Didactic

Inductive

“We approach the topic we’re writing about as fellow travelers,
instead of judges ordering readers around.” ~ Joyce K. Ellis

Content

Beginning

Middle

End

Principle, Illustration, Application

The Power of Story: Narrative Non-fiction

Self-Editing

“Write to communicate, not to impress. Justify every word and every sentence.”
~ Cecil Murphey

Revise

Polish

Cut Out Fat

Simplify multiple-word phrases

Eliminate unnecessary words

Eliminate weak words

Eliminate redundant modifiers

Reduce adverbs

Ferret Out Weasels

Get Active!

Kick Out Clichés

What are they?

Why do we use them?

How to avoid?

Kick Out Christianese

Show vs. Tell

Submissions: Query and Proposal

Book projects

Approaching traditional publishers and agents

Query

Goal:

Format:

Components:

Hook

Synopsis

Qualifications

Word count & completion date

Close

“The proposal process helps you nail down the book, whether it’s fiction or nonfiction
....When it comes time to sit down and write the book, your proposal is your blueprint.”
~ Wendy Lawton

Book Proposal

Cover letter

Title page

Sell sheet

Overview/Synopsis

Author bio

Comparative analysis

Marketing plan

Chapter outline

Sample chapters

Recommended resources:

Books:

Christian Writers Market Guide

Christian Writer's Manual of Style

Writing the Christian No-fiction Book: From Concept to Contract, Dave Fessenden

Proofreading Secrets of Best-Selling Authors, Kathy Ide

Writer to Writer, Cecil Murphey

Unleash the Writer Within, Cecil Murphey

Websites:

Books & Such Literary Management: <http://www.booksandsuch.com/blog/>

The Steve Laube Agency: <http://www.stevelaube.com/blog/>

The Write Conversation: <http://thewriteconversation.blogspot.com/>

Word Weavers International: <https://word-weavers.com/>