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Thank you for purchasing my formula **How to Get a Book Published**. It contains everything you need to get started on the journey towards achieving publication of your writing output. Study the material carefully on the first reading and then read it all over again, cross-referencing as required by using the built-in search engine to switch back and forth from one page to another. Do it this way and you will get the best out of my formula.



Jim Green

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Extracted from '**How to Get a Book Published**'
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Preface

I took up writing on a part time basis fifteen years ago and to date have churned out 37 traditionally published titles, all of which have attained bestseller status.

What possible interest could this statement hold for you?

Just this: what I have achieved so too can you (perhaps even more) if you apply yourself diligently to the tenets of *How to Get a Book Published*.

Most of the skills you need *you already possess* and the remainder you will pick up effortlessly as you travel through the pages of these pragmatic pages, which constitute a much more fulsome adaptation of previous digital home study programs I devised over the years for writers aspiring to become published authors. These original versions have been downloaded hundreds of times and assisted many students to manifest their creative writing ambitions.

Perhaps right now you consider this to be too steep a curve to negotiate but by the time you finish studying the modules, listening to the audios and watching the videos, you will realize that you can and will (if you put your mind to it) write your book, become a published writer, and a bestselling author.

All you need do is to follow the bite size strategies revealed; strategies that are as timeless as they are tried and tested by a succession of published authors down the ages.

*

Nothing ever happens unless you make it happen and everything that does happen and **materialize** starts first as a thought in the mind. You will have many thoughts as you prepare to start writing

your book and among these thoughts will be stumbling blocks you will require to eradicate before you get underway.

Let's kick off with an intriguing quotation from a world famous author; a quote that crystallizes this humble scribbler's attitude to creative writing...

"What work I have done I have done because it has been play. If it had been work I shouldn't have done it"

Mark Twain

If you spend all of your time either working or whooping it up you will soon burn yourself out. What you need is a catalytic approach to turning the fleeting existence on this turbulent planet into a **new** lease of life because *when you love what you do*, you never have to work at creating fulfillment.

There are many options for crafting the idyllic approach but for this author and many others, creative writing is the catalyst to enrichment of mind, body, and spirit.

- It keeps the mind firing on all cylinders;
- It excites the senses;
- It animates the imagination;
- It helps the body find its own levels of well-being;
- It engenders youthful energy;
- It stretches innate abilities

...and if you apply yourself diligently to the timeless strategies you are about to absorb, it could attract additional income to boost your income - without working for it.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT BE ASKING RIGHT NOW

- How can I tell if I have what it takes to be a writer?
- Isn't it a bit late to be finding out now?

- Wouldn't this impose disciplines that conflict with my lifestyle?
- Where would I look for ideas?
- What do I know that could fill a book?
- How could I add to what I already know?
- How would I structure my expertise?
- How do I convert it into a book?
- What are the chances of my book ever getting published?
- What are the options?
- What gives a book bestseller potential?
- Should I opt for fiction or non-fiction?

Resolving these issues is something you must absolutely do before you attempt to write a single word of your book

You will find the answers to these and many other questions as you course through these pages...



Capitalizing on Your Expertise

You are a walking compendium of learned life skills; not just those skills you acquire in your career but the aggregated knowledge of a lifetime: work, hobbies, general interests, specialist interests, child bearing/ raising/educating, and so on. The list is endless. And in one or more of these areas you are an expert.

You find this difficult to believe?

TAKE A TEST AND PROVE IT FOR YOURSELF

Make a list in random order of topics that interest you.

1. Isolate the one topic you instinctively feel you know more about than any of the others. Start jotting down in tabular form every aspect relating to your *conscious* knowledge of the topic as it springs to mind; one word per aspect will suffice. Keep on adding as the thoughts tumble out.
2. Repeat this exercise for the next topic in order of perceived interest.
3. Repeat it for the next again.
4. Leave your lists aside and come back to them a few days later.

Unless you are brain dead something has been occurring in the interim. Your little exercise has sparked off the interest of your subconscious and it is enthused about the outcome. It has been carrying this stuff around for years and is desperate to disclose the extent of your collective intelligence, to tell you how much you *really* know.

Given the opportunity, it could have conveyed this information a long time ago.

But you never asked – until now...

Review each of your lists again individually and at the prompting of the second level of your consciousness keep on adding until you have exhausted the deepest recesses of your memory bank. Upon completion you may be shocked to discover that the topic you thought you knew most about is in fact the one about which you know the least. One of the others may have grabbed the Number 1 Spot thanks to power of recall of your helpful friend.

There's enough information on the winning topic to write a book, right?

WRITING A BOOK ON YOUR KNOW-HOW

I've done it many times over; it's fun, it's therapeutic, and it can lead to streams of residual income if you do it correctly. The subject matter doesn't have to be related to what you did for a living.

Perhaps a hobby interest came top of your list of 'expert' topics; perhaps it was something else that took you completely by surprise when you realized just how much you know about the subject. It makes no difference. If you are interested other people are too, and they will want to know what you know.

Allow me to illustrate what I mean...

Practical example from my own experience

I was self-employed for the greater part of my working life and in the process learned a great deal about business and small business in particular. This cumulative commercial intelligence prompted me to embark on my first writing assignment in the autumn of 1994 as I was approaching retirement age. The result was *Starting Your Own*

Business (How To Books ISBN 1845280709) first published in November 1994 and still a bestseller fifteen years on.

Not bad for first time out of the trap but it gets even better when you make your lifetime knowledge work for you...

HOW TO CRAFT A SERIES OF TITLES FROM A SINGLE TOPIC

This early success persuaded me to forge ahead on another project relating to small business; a project where I had been soaking up information to keep pace with ever-evolving information technology: online marketing. *Starting an Internet Business at Home* was published by Kogan Page in 2001 and followed by a batch of similar titles the latest of which is *How to Grow Small Business Rapidly Online* (How To Books ISBN 1857033057) which hit the bookstores in December 2006.

Although considerable mileage still remains in the first topic, I decided some years ago to research a second topic for its potential and the result was *Your Retirement Masterplan* (How To Books ISBN 1857039874) published in October 2004.

This title currently ranks No.7 out of 3328 competitive titles on Amazon.co.uk and was republished as a 2nd upgraded edition in August 2006. Add to that *How to Earn Money in Retirement* (How To Books ISBN 1845281128) published in April of the same year.

But the potential in this second topic is only just beginning to emerge and I have a batch of other titles in the melting pot.

In point of fact during the past decade or so I have authored sixteen traditionally published niche non-fiction books, all of which have achieved bestselling status in their respective genres.

Here's the thing though; I have used only 2 topics to produce 16 bestsellers.

How do you do that; craft a series of titles from a single topic?

It's a little-known technique that dates back to the dawn of literature and is used by all bestselling authors either consciously or unwittingly.

And when you know the secret...

YOU CAN ALSO USE THIS TECHNIQUE FOR FICTION

I purposely set about mastering niche non-fiction before I attempted to write fiction and when I did, I began by revisiting the mental exercise which kicked off this module. Three specific areas topped the list from my introspection and these were:

1. My almost encyclopaedic knowledge of tramcars

As a child during the early years of World War 2 I became fascinated with the old-fashioned tramcars of the era; travelling to and fro to school, memorizing the routes, raiding my local public library for data on their history, observing passengers and crew and listening in on their conversations.

2. My years of national service in the RAF

In common with many armed forces veterans I have a vivid recollection of my two years as a conscript; happy days; camaraderie, football, my first pint of beer at *The Farmers Arms*, dancing at the *Carlton Club* on Saturday evenings (it's still in business 60 years on) and above all the 23 young men who billeted with me at Hut 29. Even to this day I can put names and faces to all of them...

3. My enduring love affair with the theatre

It began when I was engaged as a temporary stage electrician following demobilization and has persisted to this day; myriad memories and in particular the highly colorful characters among the

cast and crew of the shows I worked on.

It was on these three areas that I focused as I set about writing my first works of fiction.

1. *Tramlines* - novella
2. *Get Fell In* - full length novel
3. *Beginners Please: Murder* - another novella

I secured contracts for all three titles which were published in 2006.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK AND THE 'McGUFFIN'

This little-known technique revolves around identifying a niche and it has a lot in common with what the late great Alfred Hitchcock called the *McGuffin*; the singular device he employed in all of his screenplays.

'Hitch' reckoned that everyone is looking for something whether they are watching a movie or reading a book and when you discover what people are searching for in your particular niche you will be well on your way to writing a successful piece of fiction in record time.

And when you've done it once, you can do it all over again - as many times as you like.

Have you guessed the secret yet?

There is no end to its power in producing bestsellers and you will discover the secret in the chapter after next.

Meanwhile, here is another timeless secret, a tip that will stand you in good stead whether you opt for fiction or niche non-fiction as your genre...

WRITE 1000 WORDS EVERY DAY FOR A WEEK

Now why would anyone want to do that: write 1000 words every day for a week?

Well you wouldn't if you were an established author; you would already be pumping out much more than that on an average day.

But you might want to give it a try when you are starting out or if you have been writing for a while and are still struggling to break through.

Not just any old 1000 words though because that would be pointless; 1000 words tagged to the premise that presupposes you have identified a topic, you have researched the topic; you know your topic inside out - be it in the realms of fiction or non-fiction.

When you stick at it and knock out 1000 words every day for seven days you will discover in Week 2 that 2000 words a day is feasible, then 3000, 4000, 5000, 6000; whatever.

And as the weeks roll by not only will your output improve but so too will the quality of your writing.

But here is the real cruncher...

In tandem with your ever-increasing output will be a commensurate decrease in information overload, freeing your subconscious to work on new ideas, new concepts, new projects - and soon the fruits of its creativity will come flying at you from all directions.

So here in essence is what you get when you make up your mind to write 1000 words every day for a week:

1. Your output will automatically increase in the weeks to follow;
2. The quality of your writing will improve dramatically;
3. Information overload will decrease and make way for a fusion of new creativity.

This is the formula I used at the outset of my own writing career and currently I churn out around 10,000 words every day of which only 1000 might be directly related to a specific book project; the majority of my productivity being dispersed between articles, press releases, web copy and the like.

But it's all grist to the mill; the mill, the catalyst, the engine room that creates the harvest; your overall creative output.

ADOPTING PROVEN FORMATTING TECHNIQUES

Taking the trouble to familiarize yourself with the various formatting techniques employed by the publishing industry will also help enhance your chances of producing a bestselling title.

- How the title commands immediate attention;
- How the cover design varies from one publisher to another;
- How the contents list is laid out;
- How illustrations are employed to support the text where appropriate;
- How, why, and where bullet points are included to highlight key aspects;
- How appendices are compiled to assist the reader;
- How the preface sparks off initial curiosity;
- How the back cover 'blurb' sells the book.

This is vital work because should you choose to approach a publisher with sample material devoid of appropriate formatting, your proposal is unlikely to be treated seriously.

CREATING A DISTINCTIVE WRITING STYLE

Creating your own style comes evolves through practice, coupled with affording due diligence to the systematic approaches employed by established authors. Study the various techniques and learn from them.

When your writing exudes distinction you become recognizable in the industry and among the book buying public.

WHAT IMPRESSES COMMISSIONING EDITORS

When the commissioning editor of a publishing house examines your proposal he/she is looking for more than the ability to write clearly and concisely on the chosen topic.

- You must demonstrate mastery of your subject
- You must demonstrate the potential to produce further works in your specialist area
- You must demonstrate a grasp on publishing techniques.



Selecting Subject Matter to Stimulate Publisher Interest

Having reviewed in some depth the intelligence you have accumulated over the years, you ought now to be arriving at a view (if you haven't already done so) as to where your primary source of expertise lies. However, before cementing your choice of a topic it will be necessary to run the data through several tests to confirm its suitability as the subject matter for your first book, your first potential bestseller.

- Will the topic be convincing enough to warrant widespread appeal among devotees?
- Will you be capable of confirming its validity and expanding on received data?
- Will you be able to convert your expertise into a teaching module?
- Will the accumulated material manifest a disposition for regular updating?
- Will the topic have the potential for subsequent editions?
- Will it have the propensity to spawn more books on disparate aspects of the subject?

- Will you be tempted to abandon the project if your topic has already been covered?

You won't be able to resolve all of these questions right now but you will be by the time you've finished reading the course.

WHAT ATTRACTS PEOPLE TO WORKS OF NON-FICTION?

Autobiographies and biographies of celebrities are always in demand because they arouse the curiosity factor and particularly so when the material evokes an expectation of salacity.

The curiosity factor is equally evident in readers of how-to books, guides and manuals, but directed by a more responsible motive: the thirst for information on how to do something, do it better, and excel at it. And so the chosen topic must be capable of fulfilling these wholesome expectations by ensuring that readers will become better informed on the subject matter for which you and they share a common interest.

Your personal expertise must be equal to the task you set yourself because otherwise, no matter how cleverly conceived or creatively scripted, your work will never be published. Commissioning editors can spot a fake a mile away. While they may not be expert on your subject, they will very quickly ascertain whether or not *you* are.

PASSIVE V ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

Levels of reader participation tend to vary between different genres and the differential with regard to commitment invariably favors non-fiction.

People read fiction to be entertained

(Passive participation: in one ear and out the other)

People read non-fiction to...

- Become better informed
- Learn new skills
- Hone existing talents

(Active participation: invoking the faculties of reasoning and memory retention)

Much popular fiction is in style for just a while but superior niche non-fiction can be around forever, earning the estates of its originators drip feed residuals in perpetuity. For example *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie was first published in the mid-1930s, sold millions of copies worldwide, and is still re-issued from time to time. This famous book has been through several publishing houses but it has only one originator.

Whenever people pick up a how-to or self-help book they are demonstrating willingness to engage in active participation. They know they are in for some work and you should in there pitching with them, providing an interesting topic and knowledgeable text in an easy-to-read format that transforms a chore into a pleasure.

WHY GUIDES, MANUALS, HOW-TO AND SELF-HELP BOOKS ARE ALWAYS IN DEMAND

No one willingly volunteers for instruction unless there is more, much more than mere passing interest in the topic, and therein resides the market for quality guides, instruction manuals and how-to books:

Qualified, targeted prospects

You are preaching to the partially converted: all the more reason then that you run your expertise through all the tests to ensure its validity. Your knowledge must be superior to that of the reader and it must be quantifiably so.

Unsubstantiated opinion has no place in this classification of non-fiction and so you must validate all that you **think** you know and expand upon it responsibly with every means at your disposal.

This calls for intensive research and without it you will end up with egg all over your face because your manuscript will never get past the first reading stage of any professional publisher you might approach.

ESTABLISHING THE DEPTH OF YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Never take for granted that you already know enough about your special subject to fill a book. No one is that clever. Spend some time testing out the depth of your knowledge by making lists of what you know and what you don't know. Take particular note of those areas that require substantiation or where you are lacking corroborative detail.

CONFIRMING ITS VALIDITY AND EXPANDING ON THE INFORMATION

This is where you start your research and it is vital. Most of what you need you will find online at home or in the free-to-use 'active learning' centers provided by your local public library where you can also double up on your research by accessing appropriate hard copy references manuals.

SURVEYING OTHER PEOPLE'S PRODUCE

While you are in the process of conducting the required tests on your chosen topic, there is no better way of dipping your toe into the waters of essential research than to survey the produce of fellow writers in the genre.

This will give you an initial feel for:

- The various categories covered by published authors;
- The miscellaneous topics occurring in each category;
- Comparison of writing styles;
- Which titles have progressed to a second edition;
- How many and which have been successful in attaining multiple editions;
- The impact of all of this on the prospects for your chosen topic

How to undertake your survey

Start by sending off for a copy of the current catalog of each of the mainstream publishers specializing in your specific marketplace. Spend some time studying these promotional pieces so that you become acquainted with the genre from the viewpoint of:

1. The publishers
2. The authors
3. The booksellers
4. The book buyers

Zero in on those categories that are even remotely connected to your area of special interest and endeavor to gauge their impact on the market. How many titles have reached the second edition stage? Are any on their 3rd, 4th, 5th or even 6th edition? If you can spot a few results, the omens are looking good. And while to have your category represented would be advantageous, it might prove equally advantageous if it is not. It could just be that no author has yet come up with a proposal on an acceptable approach.

Should you be successful in so doing you may well persuade a publisher to introduce a new category to match your chosen topic.

Next item on the agenda

Purchase one or two titles (or borrow them from your local lending library) and read the books through from cover to cover, noting style,

content, execution, and the appeal of front and back covers.

This exercise will serve you well before you start writing your own book.

To give you a flavor of what to expect

Here are some categories and selected titles from the produce of mainstream non-fiction publishers *How To Books*.

Small business & Self-employment

Book-keeping & Accounting (6th ed)

Going for Self-Employment

Starting a Business From Home (4th ed)

Starting Your Own Business (3rd ed revised)

Buying a Franchise

Master Your Own Destiny

Raising Start-Up Finance

Buying & Running a Small Hotel (3rd ed)

Starting and Running an Antiques Business

Becoming an Aromatherapist (2nd ed)

Business & Management

Resolving Conflict

Grow Your Own Achievers

You're in Charge Now (3rd ed)

Managing Difficult People (2nd ed)

Writing a Report (6th ed)

Preparing a Winning Business Plan (3rd ed)

Writing Business Letters (3rd ed)

Mastering Business English (4th ed)

Managing Performance Reviews (4th ed)

Deliver Outstanding Customer Service

Career Development

Planning a Career Change (4th ed)

Writing a CV that Works (2nd ed)

The Job Application Handbook (5th ed)

Love Your Work

Passing That Interview (5th ed)

Working in Television (7th ed)

Working with Animals

Working in the Voluntary Sector (2nd ed)

Thrive on Redundancy (2nd ed)

Returning to Work (2nd ed)

Living & Working Abroad

Buying a Property in France (2nd ed)

Buying a property in Spain

Getting a Job in America (6th ed)

Getting a Job in Canada (3rd ed)

Getting a Job in Australia (4th ed)

Getting a Job Abroad (6th ed)

Getting a Job in Europe (4th ed)

Getting a Job in New Zealand (2nd ed)

Living and Working in Paris

Retire Abroad (2nd ed)

Home & Family Reference

Making a Wedding Speech (6th ed)

Making the Best Man's Speech (2nd ed)

After Dinner Speaking (2nd ed)

Quick Fixes for Kid's Parties

Quick Fixes for Bored Kids

Buying a House

How to make Money from Property

A Simple Guide to Pensions

Making a Will

Managing Your Personal Finances (4th ed)

Personal Development

Trusting Your Intuition (2nd ed)

Asserting Your Self

Overcoming Depression

365 Steps to Self-Confidence

Learning to Counsel

Feeling Good

Thrive on Stress

Living the Life You Want

Write Yourself a New Life

Exploring Spirituality

Study Skills & Student Guides

Read Faster, Recall More

Write Successful Essays (2nd ed)

Writing an Essay (4th ed)

Writing Your Dissertation

Writing an Assignment (5th ed)

Practical Research Methods

Passing Exams Without Anxiety (5th ed)

Critical Thinking for Students (3rd ed)

Worldwide Volunteering for Young People (3rd ed)

Student Survival Guide

Note the proliferation of multiple editions among most of the categories

**This indicates the detection of the
elusive ingredient that leads to
bestseller status...**

Does your topic fit in here somewhere?

If not, study the complete catalogue and you will find a niche.

WHY NOT TO BE DISMAYED IF YOUR TOPIC IS ALREADY COVERED

- What if your topic is already listed and not just once but twice or even three times?
- What if some of these titles have already knocked up multiple editions?

Rejoice. There is documented evidence of consumer demand for your topic. Self-help publishers are always on the lookout for acceptable alternatives to top selling products. It's a case of market forces and the in-house competition factor coming into play; like several leading brands of detergent powder emanating from the same manufacturing source.

CONVERTING YOUR EXPERT KNOWLEDGE INTO A TEACHING MODULE

This is one of the core purposes of this home study course and by the time you have finished it, you will have learned how to dissect your expertise and convert it into a seamless how-to teaching module of your own creation. You will also have learned how to prepare a professional proposal for publication, how to assist in promoting your work after it has been published, how to increment your income in various directions - and where to look for your next project.

The mission statement for Wallace D Wattles' 1910 classic self-help book **The Science of Getting Rich** is brief, succinct, and prophetic. It reads, *"To inspire, encourage, and exemplify abundance thinking and a strong sense of self-worth for people of goodwill everywhere."*

Wallace chose his topic from what he was witnessing all around him: poverty and despair brought about by a vicious spiraling downturn

in the economy (shades of today as history repeats itself yet again).

It strikes a **timeless niche** because everyone everywhere wants to learn how to get rich. Nowadays there is a website entirely dedicated to the book www.scienceofgettingrich.net where visitors can download the virtual version for free or purchase it in audiotape format.



Adding Bestselling Potential to Non-Fiction

Now we shall look at what you must do to transform your published title into a bestseller.

There is still work to be done, lots of work, but it will be well worth the effort, time, patience, and perseverance...

There are three distinct classifications of the publishing term 'bestseller'...

Transient blockbuster - Shoots to the top of the list on publication but fizzles out and lands in the 99 cents bargain bucket just as quickly.

Slow burner - Has quiet beginnings but picks up speed in time, is in style for a while, and produces a steady volume of sales during its limited life on the bookshelves.

Perpetual frontrunner - Hits the No.1 slot in its niche immediately

and stays there, year after year, edition after edition, generating ever-increasing sales in perpetuity.

It is to the third classification of bestseller that this module will direct your energies with a series of exclusive techniques; the same techniques that produced this frontrunner...

JIM GREEN

Starting Your Own Business

The bestselling guide to planning and building a successful enterprise



5TH EDITION

Nothing just happens, you make it happen, so pay due diligence to all of the following essentials for attaining and maintaining bestseller status

Is it possible to do this, incorporate bestselling potential into your work?

Yes, it is, and some successful authors consciously use the technique wherever and whenever feasible while many others include it unwittingly but to equally good effect.

In the previous chapter you learned how to apply the secret in fiction writing and now we will examine its essential relevance to niche non-fiction.

Testing out the potential for life beyond a single edition is something you can do for yourself quite easily by carrying out this simple test...

Check if your topic possesses a 'timeless' niche-carving aspect

In other words: that it is not associated with a fad or a fashion. For example, I've had many books published over the years, some of which have been in style for a while then disappeared, one of which bombed, but most of which just keep going on from strength to strength. Why? Why should the majority prove so popular? They are popular because they are directed at niche markets that are self-perpetuating and have a seemingly bottomless pit of prospective participants. Like the London buses, there's always another one coming along in a minute.

LITTLE KNOWN SECRET TO CONTROLLING THE FLOODGATES

It is as uncomplicated as steering clear of the seasonality factor when choosing a topic for execution. This sounds like a contraction in terms but it is not. A topic can be current but with inherent strands of durability attaching; conversely, a topic that is seasonal is almost certainly a fad or fashion, or at best, temporary in nature. The **identification of longevity is the little known secret to injecting bestselling potential** and thus opening the floodgates to the prospect of a successful first impression followed by subsequent editions. Uncomplicated as this little secret is, it is never easy to uncover and calls for concentrated effort where introspection, intuition and research all have a part to play.

UNCOVERING THE ELUSIVE INGREDIENT

In Chapter 3 we talked about choosing a topic for your first assignment and as you set about this task to be on the lookout for the elusive ingredient that might hallmark your work as more than just another one-off.

1. Does the topic have appeal for both sexes?
2. Would it be of interest to most age groups?
3. Does it cut across the spectrum of socio-economic classifications?
4. Is the subject matter readily recognizable?
5. Is it niche-carving?
6. Does it possess a timeless quality?
7. Are there other books available on the topic?

On the face of it you may think this is a rather tall order and a constraint on anyone setting out to produce their first book. But if you wish your work to incorporate bestselling potential, these are the questions you should be asking when choosing a topic for consideration. Even if you have already settled on one and are now doubtful whether it would meet these qualifications, look again at

your topic from every angle to uncover **potential durability**.

To assist you, here are a few examples of niche non-fiction topics that always seem to meet the test of time, but the list is by no means exhaustive. There are others, many others, and yours may be among them.

- Book-keeping
- Building self-confidence
- Buying a guest house
- Buying a house
- Buying a second home
- Changing careers
- Constructing a business plan
- Coping with stress
- Handling interviews
- Improving your memory
- Living abroad
- Making a speech
- Making a will
- Making money from property
- Managing other people
- Managing your finances
- Managing yourself
- Mastering business terminology
- Overcoming depression
- Passing exams
- Preparing reports
- Retiring abroad
- Returning to work
- Self assertion
- Setting up a business
- Surviving redundancy
- Using the Internet
- Working abroad
- Writing assignments
- Writing CVs & Essays

Everything here scores highly on the 7-point test (listed above) for uncovering the elusive ingredient - as does the set of modules you are currently reading together with all my bestsellers including: *'Starting Your Own Business'*, *'Starting an Internet Business at Home'*, *'Your Retirement Masterplan'*, etc. Why? Because the market for each of these tomes is like a bottomless pit; there will always be someone else about to travel the respective route and in need of a road map. So too might your topic pass the 7-point test if you dissect it thoroughly enough.

Now here's the kicker....

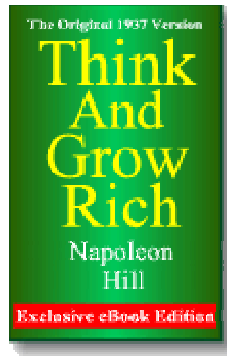
When you have identified your mystery ingredient, the secret to controlling the floodgates, what you do next is what all successful how-to and self-help authors have been doing successfully for centuries:

- 1. You tell your readers something they don't know;**
- 2. You show them how to do it.**

It has worked since ages past and it will continue to work forever because this little secret is the quintessence of niche marketing. You identify a durable want or need, provide a practical solution, and a constant stream of eager enthusiasts will beat a path to your knowledge for evermore.

DEVELOPING YOUR OWN SLANT ON A PRESCRIBED TOPIC

The ability to develop your own particular slant on a given topic also contributes to bestselling potential. Everyone has their own way of looking at things, describing how they work and what makes them tick.



When Napoleon Hill and Clement Stone got together to produce the famous self-help book and much worked concept of mind over matter and subjected it to the twist of two disparate viewpoints blending together to yield a rich harvest. Interestingly, although both names appeared on the original cover, there was only one author, Napoleon Hill, the architect of the slant that transformed their work into a bestselling book spanning eight decades in worldwide bookstores.

If you can find an unusual angle, a different approach or a hitherto un-worked technique for your topic, you are on the way to developing the unique proclivity that will set your work apart from similar tomes.

There are elements of longevity in all self-help subjects but sometimes you have to dig deep to find them: once uncovered, work at how best to utilize them as underpinnings for the text. Follow the instructions given here to uncovering durability in a topic and you will be well on your way to churning out your first potential bestseller...



Locating an Appropriate Publisher

You have many matters to attend to (often simultaneously) in the execution of getting your book published. Locating an appropriate publishing house is just one of these - but clearly a crucial undertaking. Start the quest as soon as your outline is established and your list of contents is firmly in position.

- Where will you start?
- How will you investigate the market?
- How will you develop a proposal for publication?
- When will you submit the proposal?
- Would you send the complete manuscript?
- Would you submit to a number of publishers?

MATCHING YOUR OUTPUT TO PUBLISHING PROFILES

Start by matching your creative output to the produce profiles of the main fiction or non-fiction publishing houses. Check out the catalogs for topics that are identical or similar to yours. Now attempt to rank the publishers in a league table of suitability by jotting down against each player the number of times your chosen subject matter crops up. Take this a stage further by doing a similar exercise on multiple editions; 2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc.

When you have completed the assignment, you will have a list of candidates for your proposal and in order of precedence.

RESEARCHING THE MARKETPLACE

Now go online but you won't need the standard search engines. All mainstream publishers have their own composite websites and it is to these that you should go to obtain *current* information on how to get published. While hard copy research resources such as *Writers and Artists Yearbook* and *The Writers' Handbook* provide much valuable data of a general nature, they cannot update at the touch of a button - and publishing guidelines do vary between publishers, and are subject to change.

WHERE TO FIND 1000s OF PUBLISHERS ONLINE



To make your researching ultra simple, here is a website where you will be able to access *thousands* of publishers and their respective websites...

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_English_language_book_publishers

What you will be looking for are web pages devoted to authoring, hyperlinks that announce 'authors', 'getting published' or even 'about us'. Copy to file, or print out everything you come across and study the material carefully.

RESEARCHING SUBMISSION PREREQUISITES

Among your searches you will find tips or guidelines relating to the correct procedure for submitting a proposal and these can take the shape of comprehensive instruction or be as bland as a single paragraph. Such is the importance of submission prerequisites that you can never learn too much. Here then for your information is an extensive example covering the essentials.

Typical Author Guidelines for Submitting a Non-Fiction Proposal

When you follow the guidelines provided, it allows you to focus on what to include in your proposal and also enables the publisher to make a more accurate and speedy assessment of its viability. These are the key factors to bear in mind as you set about construction.

- Who you are writing for** (the target market)
- The structure of the content**
- How you can offer something different from competitive titles**

You would normally be requested to submit the following:

300/500 word description of the aims and scope of your book

Features and benefits for the reader

Intended style

Subject matter covered

Why there is a need for such a book

Does it cover a gap in currently available literature?

Does it present new findings?

Is it topical?

Detailed list of contents - Chapter headings and subheads for each chapter.

Target market readership - Outline in 1/2 paragraphs.

Who are you writing this book for?

What is the approximate numerical size of the market?

At what level are you writing? (beginners, experienced practitioners)

Would the material be suitable for international markets?

Would it be more usefully directed to regional readership?

Would local editions be necessary?

Comparative/competitive books on the market

List titles

State why yours is different

Mechanical data

Word count

How you would present the text (mss only; mss and cd/disk)

How illustrations would be provided (digital or hard copy)

Word processing package normally used

Timescale - Indicate when final manuscript would be ready

Biographical details

Author(s)

Editors or contributors

Professional capacity

Experience relevant to topic covered; previous publications.

HOW TO PREPARE A PROPOSAL FOR ACCEPTANCE



Now you know what to include, how will you format your proposal?

You have choices

- You could include everything in a single communication.
- You could sectionalize it (covering letter + separate lists for the elements).
- You could present it in the form of a bound report.

However you do it; do it professionally. This is your one shot at making a lasting impression and you can't do it face-to-face (not even experienced practitioners get that opportunity). Put as much concentration into the preparation of your proposal as you afford every other aspect of the project. It's that important.

Some authors make use of all three techniques, but for what it's worth (and especially for first time out of the trap) I favor the bound report accompanied by a brief but succinct covering note.

WHEN TO SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL

The guidelines tell you how but not when. What they do tell you though is that you don't have to wait until you've finished writing the book. Publishers know that you won't submit a proposal until you have done your homework: crafted the outline, composed the list of contents, and produced a few chapters.

This is the time to submit the proposal - and if you are really up for it - enclose 2 or 3 sample chapters.

They won't turn you down for showing initiative.

WHY YOU SHOULD NEVER SUBMIT THE ENTIRE MANUSCRIPT

The core reason for the proposal is to enable the publisher to judge the validity of the project, so resist at all costs the temptation to submit the entire manuscript. It is unlikely to be read and much more likely to be binned unless you have included return postage.

WHY MULTIPLE SUBMISSIONS ARE A NO-NO

Sending your proposal to a string of publishers simultaneously or sequentially is a pointless exercise and will do you no favors. Better by far to await a reaction to the first submission. Should it prove

inconclusive, take note of the comments because additional guidelines may be provided enabling you to re-submit; should it prove unsuccessful, move on to the next candidate on your list.

WRITING A BOOK PROPOSAL FOR A WORK OF FICTION

There are subtle but meaningful differences between proposals for fiction and non-fiction and you should be aware of these if your first book proposal is to be for a work of fiction. To instruct you on these variances I can do no better than reproduce the following set of guidelines provided with the courtesy of the *Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia...*

“Editors are traditionally myopic and work in offices cluttered with manuscripts. There are meetings and book fairs and sales conferences to attend, authors to entertain, and serious editing to be done. There is a lot of pressure, and time is in short supply.

Editors read manuscripts from their favorite agents first. Then they read manuscripts from other agents. Last, they wearily attack what is known as 'the slush pile'. This stack of unsolicited manuscripts is, presumably, so called because, like unwanted snow, it piles up and turns dirty and yellow with age. Some publishing houses will not even allow a slush pile to accumulate - they simply return unsolicited manuscripts unopened.

How to avoid sinking into the slush pile? It is human nature for an editor facing a large slush pile to read short submissions first.

Even if you have a complete manuscript available, always submit a book proposal first

What is a book proposal?

Your book proposal should be typed on white paper. Sample chapters should be double-spaced and all other material single spaced, with double spacing between paragraphs. Send a simple

covering letter identifying your submission as a proposal for the publishing house's consideration.

On your first page give the title, your full name or the name under which you want to publish, the approximate word count you project as the length of the finished manuscript, the estimated time of manuscript completion (here you can note if the manuscript is complete already), and the genre (for example: general fiction, thriller, mystery, fantasy, sci-fi, woman-in-jeopardy, romance, historic romance, Regency Romance, western, or historical novel).

Send literary fiction as general fiction

Please note that category fiction only sells if proposals get seen by editors. If you can categorize your manuscript, it will be given to an editor with knowledge of that category. Category or genre fiction does not mean formula fiction. In all cases, originality counts. However, books in each category may have certain common elements. For example, resistance, or the inability of the main characters to get together right away, is a standard element of romance fiction.

What else goes in a fiction book proposal?

Follow this information with a page on you, the author. In a few paragraphs, give the pertinent details of your life, work, and travels. Include titles of other books and publications if you've published before.

Provide a brief synopsis (2 pages maximum) of the entire plot of your book. Use upbeat sales talk. Write as if this is the blurb that's to go on the dust jacket.

Include 3 chapters, not necessarily the first 3 or any consecutive 3, and follow them with a detailed 15 to 20 page plot synopsis that includes bits of dialogue.

How long is a book proposal?

In total, your fiction proposal should not be longer than 100 pages nor shorter than 50 for a full-length novel (400 pages typewritten). The rule of thumb is that the proposal should be about one quarter as long as the manuscript itself.

Anything else you should be aware of?

Yes. If you want your synopsis and your sample chapters back, or even if you want a reply of any kind, be sure to ask in your covering letter and to include an SAE, big enough and with enough postage to accommodate your proposal”

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WHAT TO ENSURE BEFORE YOU SIGN A CONTRACT



Should your proposal prove successful you will receive a contract (memorandum of agreement) detailing the terms and conditions, warranties and indemnities governing the agreement. It is your responsibility to protect your intellectual property, so check out everything with a fine toothcomb. Note in particular those sections relating to potential avenues of income for your published work. These would normally appear under headings such as those listed below and would include royalty percentages:

- Home hardback sales
- Export and special discount hard back sales
- Home trade paperback sales
- Export and special discount trade paperback sales
- Publisher's cheap editions
- Editions licensed for manufacture to another publisher
- Royalty-inclusive sales
- Mail order sales
- Premium sales
- Book clubs

RETAINING THE COPYRIGHT AND OTHER VALUABLE RIGHTS

It is to your advantage to retain the copyright of your work and to protect your earning capacity with regard to reprographic production rights, which for a niche non-fiction would normally comprise:

- Single issue or one-shot periodical rights
- Translation rights
- Sound broadcasting rights
- Merchandizing rights
- Educational reprint rights

ADDRESSING THE AUTHOR QUESTIONNAIRE

Following a successful submission, the author is often requested to complete a pre-publication questionnaire. This is to your advantage and the information required adheres to a pattern such as that outlined below...

AUTHOR QUESTIONNAIRE

The information you will provide will form the basis of all marketing and publicity activities.

Your name as you wish it to appear on the title page

Title of book

Sub-title

Author's full name

Author's VAT registration number, if applicable

Nationality (required for copyright purposes)

Country of domicile

Domicile on date of publication

Home address

College, school or business address

Telephone and fax number(s)

Email address

Degrees and other professional qualifications

Present appointment

The manuscript

Brief description of your book, this should indicate the importance or topicality of the subject and aims of the book. Add a summary of its contents, emphasizing salient features. This copy will be used in advance publicity and may appear in the publisher's catalogue.

- **Do not be over-modest about yourself or your work. Effective promotion and sales result only from full and accurate information.**

EMPLOYING THE SERVICES OF A LITERARY AGENCY

To date, none of my own bestsellers have been published through the good offices of a literary agency but you will save yourself a great deal of time and tribulation if you manage to place your work with a reputable source. Should you decide that using a literary agency is the route you'd like to take, here are four reliable online sources to facilitate your research:

<http://www.writers.net/agents.html>

<http://www.firstwriter.com>

http://www.authorlink.com/agents/agent_login.asp

<http://authorassist.com/directories.html>

Carry out your researches to locate a suitable publisher, prepare the proposal, and make your submission using the guidelines provided. Then exercise patience; it can take up to three months before you receive a reply. On the other hand, if your topic is really 'hot', you may get a telephone call straight back from the publishing house...



Placing Your Work Elsewhere

Not every writer is fortunate enough to have his/her work accepted for publication by a traditional house and when this happens it can prove very frustrating; doubly frustrating when you've written something that you are desperate to see in print; something you want other people to read.

There is always recourse to the expensive vanity publishing houses but I wouldn't take that route come what may. **Would you?**

But the good news is; there is a way out, a legitimate route you can take.

Imagine my surprise when I stumbled across the perfect solution for publishing creative output that you cannot place elsewhere.

I have a string of traditionally published titles currently selling in bookstores worldwide but I have a few that I have never been able to get into print.

That is until I discovered **Lulu**.

To date I have placed three previously unpublished titles with <http://lulu.com>

Just recently I received an author copy of the first. I am delighted with the quality; indistinguishable from much of the produce I've had published by traditional houses.

SELF PUBLISHING WITHOUT INCURRING HUGE COSTS



If for example *like me* you don't get to see your grandchildren very often because they live far away, you might want to set down your experiences as a memento for them in the shape of a self published book. You can do this and you can do it without incurring substantial costs. A word of caution though: do not even consider using the services of a vanity publisher; it will cost you a leg and an arm and you will end up with the spare bedroom or garage piled high with books you cannot even give away.

Here are two helpful tips should the self publishing approach appeal to you.

1. Go to the trusty online detective www.google.com – type in as a keyword phrase 'writing my life story' – and watch what happens. You will be directed to thousands of creditable sources for professional advice on blocking, constructing and writing up your material. Alternatively, refer to *Writing Your Life Story* by Michael Oke (How To Books).
2. Purchase a copy of *Publishing Books Using Your PC* by Peter Domanski & Philip Irvine. You won't find this invaluable tome at your local bookstore. Instead, send a cheque or postal order for £12.99 to Domanski-Irvine Book Company, Coldwell Farm, Stretfordbury, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 0QL – or email them at info@dibookco.u-net.com

Following the directives contained in *Publishing Books Using Your PC* you can do the bulk of the work yourself with minimal outsourcing costs for the cover and binding.

Good Luck!



Jim Green