

BOOST YOUR BUSINESS WITH A BOOK

– Even If You’re Not a Writer –
in Five Steps

FRANCINE BREVETTI - LEGEND CRAFTER

DEDICATION

This modest primer is meant to support solo and budding entrepreneurs in their quest to promote their businesses.

Good luck and here's to your prosperity!

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Bill Walsh

*Catch a man a fish,
and you can sell it to him.
Teach a man to fish and you ruin a wonderful
business opportunity.*

— Karl Marx

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INTRODUCTION

The why of it all

Small business owners and solo entrepreneurs who have launched their businesses are frequently stretched by two forces -- a desperate need to build their enterprises, but a lack of funds to promote them. They may be one of any number of professions conducive to self-employment, such as interior designers, acupuncturists, lawyers, life or business coaches, fashion consultants, insurance, or real estate brokers, or you-name-it.

In their marketing efforts, business coaches may tell these folks, or they realize independently, that a book with their name on the cover as the author can be a valuable marketing tool, a way to be seen as an expert. However, most do not have the time or the skills to engage in such a project. This book can help you make these decisions.

In the 30 years I worked as a business reporter, I interviewed hundreds of corporate executives and entrepreneurs. I wrote about hundreds of companies.

When I left my employment at a newspaper and started my business as a freelance writer, I joined some networks for entrepreneurs. I reckoned I had become a sole proprietor, and I thought I might find clients in such communities. This new experience gave me an insight into entrepreneurship I never had before, even after all my years of business journalism. My compassion for their quandary gave rise to this book.

There are plenty of books in the marketplace, which teach how to write a book about your business. However, most of them focus on marketing and publishing your manuscript. Unlike these worthy guides, this book focuses on *how to write it*.

If you are a business owner or have been a manager or an executive, presumably you already know how to write a report.

Nevertheless, the prospect of writing a book with your name on it grabs you by the throat and makes you gasp, “How to start? Is it worth doing? Will it make a difference to my business? Will anybody read it? Do I have the time or the skill?”

I know, I know.

Then when you embark on writing a book, well-meaning people approach you and ask, “How’s the book coming?”

You want to either fall through the floor or strangle them.

Yet, you still want to write that book.

This brief primer will help you manifest the book you envision without having to resort to self-mutilation. Maybe you will even have fun.

*"Dear optimist, pessimist, and realist -- while you guys were busy arguing about the glass of wine, I drank it!
Sincerely, the opportunist!"*

— Lori Greiner, inventor, QVC host, Shark Tank investor

YOU'RE GOING TO DO THIS. YOU ARE.

PREFACE – DO NOT SKIP THIS PART!

Businesswoman Terri came to me asking how to market her book about her company. Problem was, she had not written it yet.

“Oh, I have notes all over the place,” she assured me.

On the other hand, Richard had written 800 pages on a business subject and wanted to know how to market his gargantuan tome.

Both of these talented people (not their real names) had conceived worthy and useful projects they wanted to write, publish, and sell their book.

However, they were missing the guidance and the structure to make that happen. Here is where I can help. I am going to lead you through choices you have to make to write your book: how to generate content so that you turn readers into clients or customers; how to start and continue writing; and how to find support for writing your book.

Why in the World Would You Want to Write a Business Book?

Aren't there enough books on the subject? Go to Amazon.com and find zillions.

But they are not ***your*** book. They do not express the fruits of your challenges, lessons, hard knocks, and triumphs. They are not your product or your service. Furthermore, they are not you.

These are among the benefits you can reap from producing a book with your name on the cover as the author.

1. Once your book is published and in your hands, you will feel tremendous. It will boost your self-confidence as few other things can.

2. You are no longer an amateur, nor invisible; you are the expert, and you are perceived that way.
3. You can charge higher fees. Woo-hoo.
4. You have differentiated your products and services from your competitors and all the books on similar subjects on the market.
5. Your book will open new markets and new opportunities that you have not yet perceived. Marketing company *Rain Today's* survey determined that 56 percent of business owners who had authored a book enjoyed increased leads. 56%, not bad, eh?
6. You are now interesting to journalists and broadcasters who are always looking for new subjects, the latest author/expert/artist, to interview for their publications or airwaves. Television and radio broadcasters especially seek interview subjects who have recently published.
7. Your readers become your customers and clients, and have now, created a community of repeat buyers.
8. You have attracted possible investors and collaborators.
9. You have attracted new visitors to your website and bolstered search engine optimization.
10. If your book is sold in other countries, you will have expanded your business's international reach.
11. You become a desirable speaker and enjoy new speaking and teaching opportunities. You are now among the tier of people who will be invited to panels and symposia with colleagues, other experts, and authors.
12. Your enhanced reputation gives you the platform to start a consulting practice.
13. You enter into a new world of contacts of a level, sophistication, and expertise that you have not enjoyed before.

More and more entrepreneurs and small business owners understand that this is an important part of marketing. Unfortunately, many do not know how to proceed to write a book by themselves; but, now you can.

Who Am I to Tell You How to Write a Book about Business?

This is an important question. I have been a business journalist since the late 1970s. In 2008, I went out on my own as a ghostwriter and book coach. You can find my bio on my website: www.FrancineBrevetti.com.

In the late 1970s, I started my journalism career in New York City as an editor for the trade magazine, *Risk Management*. I moved to the position of business journalist at *The Journal of Commerce*, where I covered finance and foreign trade for seven years.

In 1985, I pulled up stakes and left for Hong Kong, so inspired by the growing commerce between People's Republic of China and the West. I wanted to be there to report on those trends, especially leading up to the transition of the enclave's sovereignty to China from the United Kingdom. I worked as an independent reporter for local and foreign newspapers and magazines covering issues of foreign trade, transportation, travel, and finance. I was also president of the Hong Kong chapter of the Women in Publishing Society for two years.

After the transfer of sovereignty in 1997, I returned to the United States and settled in my hometown, San Francisco, California. I worked as a business reporter for *The Oakland Tribune* for 10 years covering matters of East Bay business including entrepreneurship, personal finance, technology, and The Port of Oakland.

The book you are reading now is the fourth I have written under my name.

When I lived in Hong Kong, the China National Tourism Administration through an intermediary commissioned me to write a guidebook to China called *Welcome to China*. When I returned to San Francisco, I was commissioned to write the history of America's oldest Italian restaurant, *The Fabulous Fior— over 100 Years in an Italian Kitchen*. A few years later, I published the sequel as an e-book, *The Fabulous Fior— over 125 Years in an Italian Kitchen*.

In 2014, after the death of one of my pets, I wrote and self-published *Cat Naps and Doggy Snorts – The Joy of Sleeping with Critters*.

Since I started ghostwriting in 2008, I have had over 10 clients who engaged me to write their nonfiction books, mostly memoirs, and biographies. I have also branched out to write books for people in business, especially entrepreneurs.

Why am I telling you *my* story? Because in your book you will have to tell *your story, in order* to encourage readers to identify with you and to enhance your credibility. Mine is just an example.

The Boom in Solo Entrepreneurship

Since the recession of 2008, I have seen entrepreneurship explode, as people were being laid off from steady jobs and had to draw on their initiative to create income. Once wage earners, the people who stepped out and stepped up were now ready to take control of their lives and their schedules. They started branching out on their own, sharing their gifts and talents. Meanwhile, many seniors who were not ready to retire when they were forced to were also choosing entrepreneurship. This way they can offer their vast knowledge and experience to a new audience and marketplace.

As the competition among solo entrepreneurs has stiffened, new ways of marketing have emerged, bolstered significantly by social media and the Internet.

Authoring a book is now seen as an essential addition to an entrepreneur's portfolio of marketing materials. With this push, two new avenues for creating your book have emerged. One is the multi-author book, and another is a seminar or online course, which promises to show you how to write your book over the weekend or in 30 days or some other astoundingly short period of time.

Individual authors offer a chapter each in a multi-author book. The chapters generally focus on a single theme, for instance, leadership or networking. This may seem like a good alternative for the inexperienced writer. Nevertheless, it does not burnish your expert credibility much in my view. Why would you want to invest in your competitors' contributions and their publishing costs? More to the point, who will read this book besides friends and family? (We will revisit this later in a sidebar at the end of this work).

For the same reasons, courses that promise to help you write a book over the weekend or in a month do not win credibility with me. I took such a course once and found out that it left out an important component: that the instructor and her syllabus assumed that students had

already done the research. The course was little more than a calendar of how to pace and schedule your time at the computer.

Believe me, if somebody sells you the idea that you can write a book in a month or over a weekend, some important facet of your education is going to be left out.

But for the person who wants to present themselves as an expert, and brings the depth of their experience and wisdom to readers who will become clients, writing a complete book of professional quality is the best way to go, in my opinion.

What Is Your Long-Term Vision?



In the spaces below or in your journal, state concretely what you want your book to do for your life and your business. You are not going to write a book because people tell you, you should. I have had many folks come to me and say, “I want to write a book because everybody tells me I should.” These people rarely start or finish.

You are going to write a book only because you feel compelled; an ache inside your chest that insists you have to write this book. That is why I am writing this book!

*There is no greater agony than bearing
an untold story inside you.*

— Maya Angelou

Apple founder Steve Jobs said: “You have to be burning with an idea, or a problem, or a wrong that you want to right. If you're not passionate enough from the start, you'll never stick it out.”

So how are you envisioning the book you yearn to write will change your life and/or your business? Will it make you feel fabulous? Indubitably. Will it bolster your prestige and your exposure? Absolutely. Will it bring you more business? That depends on your marketing efforts, which we will discuss at the end of this book.

Write here below exactly what your imagination foresees for your future once the book is published. Be specific about how it will change your life and your business:

Why are you hanging back?

This is what Ruth K. Ross asked herself before she wrote, *Coming Alive: The Journey to Reengage Your Life and Career*.

She recalls, “I had no idea if I have any ability to write at all. Other than 30 years of writing business memos, I have never done anything from a more creative standpoint; but I just had this kind of notion and passion inside me to write something to help people that were going through something similar that I was going through. It was the sense of not having the passion anymore for the work that I was doing and knowing that I was kind of stuck and disengaged and needed to figure out what was going to need my spark. ... So I didn’t know if I could do it, but knew that I have a story to tell, and so that’s how I got started.”

She gained confidence by asking friends and colleagues if her idea was worthy of a book. It was.

What is keeping you from making this happen?

The usual answers are **time**, **skill**, or **money**.

If you say you cannot go forward because you do not have the **time**, understand that you are making a choice. Perhaps writing a book is not a priority for you. If you are honest about this, then save yourself some agony. On the other hand, maybe you are using this as an excuse to avoid facing your fears about writing! Either face and overcome these roadblocks or abandon the project.

However, I recommend you find someone else to write it with or for you. Someone like me, a ghostwriter and book coach, can support you.

If you say you do not have the **skill**, (read “**confidence**”), then perhaps you also need a ghostwriter or a book coach. We will get to the difference between those two skills below.

However, if you say you do not have the **money** to invest in a book then you must ask yourself how big your marketing budget is. Because writing the book about your business is indeed a marketing outlay and is tax-deductible as a business expense.

Dear reader, this e-book is a tool to help you make those decisions.

Publishing requires research and investment

You must be clear about whether you intend to publish traditionally – a recognized publishing company – or self-publish.

In traditional publishing, you have an investment of time ahead of you. If you wish to self-publish, be prepared to invest both time and money.

In either case, you should research your market to see if there is demand for your expertise in printed form. Ask your colleagues, ask the people you are going to interview for your book, the experts you admire, and especially your current or previous clients.

Tell them of your intention for your book and its theme. Are they sincerely interested? Are they waiting to buy it, or are they encouraging you only to be polite?

Part of your research should entail reading other books published on a similar subject. How well did their books sell? You can find this out by searching for such titles on Amazon.com.

If you pursue traditional publishing, you will have to do rigorous market research as part of your proposal. Publishers will want to know how big your market and your platform are. Your proposal should be armed with well-documented examples of what your philosophy or system of business can produce.

However, even if you self-publish, it is not a bad idea to prepare yourself as if you are writing a professional proposal with all of the research that entails. Such an exercise will prepare you for the work ahead.

Going Forward or Hanging Back

Admittedly, not only you have embarked on an investment in time and money, but it's also an investment in your soul. How would you feel if you did *not* go forward? Not having written your book is often one of the primary deathbed regrets of writers and would-be writers.

American writer Mindy McHorse has written on her blog, which you can see in its entirety in the sidebar: The Top Five Deathbed Regrets of Writers. You will find this among the addenda at the end.

Now let us go on to the subject of how to generate content – in other words, how to evoke and assemble the words to attract readers who become clients.

Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all.

— Dale Carnegie

LIKE TO LEARN? LET'S MAKE THIS FUN.

STEP ONE — EXPRESS THE ESSENTIAL YOU

The Importance of Your Bio

Whether you are selling a product or a service, consider that your book is a sales tool. The most important thing you are selling is YOU.

Who you are is an integral part of your product or service. You are presenting your experience, your expertise, and your point of view. The way your brain works, your very personality, history, and values have shaped and honed your offering. If you want to sell your product or service, you have to establish your credibility in these areas.

If you are to start your book with your biography, assume that your reader has no idea who you are. A store's bookshelves are a lesson in quality. You may be the Genghis Kahn or the czar of your industry or niche, but your book sits on shelves beside one written by someone who is generating formulaic books like *Profits for Dummies* or the *Paris Hilton Book of Leadership*. How are you going to stand out?

Describe the experiences in your life that led you to create your system or your product.

For instance, several years ago I was commissioned to write the history of America's oldest Italian restaurant, the Fior d'Italia in San Francisco. It just so happened that I had recently returned from many years abroad and was just starting to reconnect with my native city, San Francisco, and my Italian-American roots. This commission was a chance to delve into my history.

When I was growing up, my mother would regale me with stories of her father, who had worked at the same restaurant almost one hundred years before. Oh, the stories she told – of my grandfather’s serving the esteemed tenor Enrico Caruso, the night before the great quake and the many fights in the kitchen that ensued among the waiters. Though I did not know my grandfather, her pride and joy in recreating these stories were inspirations in writing *The Fabulous Fior – over One Hundred Years in an Italian Kitchen* (available on Amazon.com).

I found profound joy in researching not just the origins of the restaurant and the founding families, but also the history of Italian-Americans in San Francisco.

I have used this experience in describing myself professionally. I also reference the 12+ years I spent as a freelance journalist in Hong Kong.

Now it is your turn. Explain how your path inspired your business. Mention the values you bring to your way of doing business and of dealing with your clients and customers. What kind of training did you have to achieve what you are now offering? How did mentors or sponsors inspire you?

Was your family background relevant? Exceptional experiences such as being educated abroad, your diplomas and certificates, or your inventions, patents, or awards are all important.

These issues establish you as someone in whom prospective customers will invest money.



You are not trying to brag for the sake of your ego. The only thing you are doing is convincing the readers that you are impressively credible and, therefore, the reader can trust what your book says. You do not have to add irrelevant details such as the most embarrassing thing that ever happened to you, or why you changed your major. Only what supports your business.

Make sure you include the testimonials that former clients and customers have written about you. Did you change any lives along the way? Was there a life-altering event that led you down this path?

However, if writing your biography appears too daunting for you, I offer my clients a VIP day working one-on-one with me just to construct their bios. In a relaxed and cheerful way, I will interview you attentively without judgment and together we will create a bio that reflects the genuine and professional person you are.

Career counselor and prolific author Marty Nemko (*Cool Career for Dummies*) encourages “radical honesty, including the weaknesses, things that you worry about, things that you screwed up, the things that it should be a true tell-all.”

Of course, you should balance these exposures with your brilliance and the benefits of your accomplishments. However, Marty makes the point that by being honest, “you are going to make a bigger difference to the world.”

Simply, your readers will more easily identify with you and appreciate you.

Your Core Message

What are you selling, and who will benefit from it? You would be surprised how many people have trouble expressing this succinctly. Just as you practiced your “elevator pitch” to use while networking, your explanation of your product and service has to be concise and irresistibly intriguing. Think of it this way: what is your customer or prospect wanting to know from you?

Write that core message below in fewer than 200 words here.

Feel free to refine it more than once.

Who Is Your Ideal Reader?

Your ideal readers are prospects for your business. What is the demographic of your most promising reader/customer? Age, sex, cultural background, education, income, hobbies, profession, and maybe religion may all be relevant. Narrow that down now.

Let me give you some examples:

When I wrote *The Fabulous Fior – over 100 Years in an Italian Kitchen*, I wrote the story of the Italian colony around the story of the restaurant itself. I knew there was a chance that my audience would not only be Italian-Americans, but they could also be foodies, people who had a history with North Beach or had a family connection to the restaurant itself. Many were readers who merely loved the history of San Francisco and North Beach. In this case, the readers' ages and cultural backgrounds mattered a lot.

I still get calls from the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of people who worked at the Fior d'Italia 100 years ago, telling me how much the book has meant to them.

The restaurant commissioned the book to expand their business and create buzz. They sold the book at the restaurant, and they gave it to large groups who came to dine there. The book became part of their marketing portfolio. It is still available on Amazon.com as a collector's item. It resides in the main branch of the San Francisco Public Library in the Italian-American section, I am proud to say.

You can read the second edition gratis by downloading it from my website, www.francinebrevetti.com.

With my latest book *Cat Naps and Doggie Snorts – the Joy of Sleeping with Critters* (see Amazon.com or my website), the ideal reader did not have to sleep with animals or even have animals. They just had to love them. The gender, age, education, or cultural background of my ideal reader for *Cat Naps and Doggie Snorts* did not matter because the love of animals cuts across all sections of society.

So just as you know your ideal customer for your business, consider your readership in the same tribe, unless you are trying to broaden the reach of your business. Then you have to do some thinking about how to broaden the appeal of your book's content.

*Business authors aren't counting on
their book's sales—they're counting on
what their book sells.*

— Derek Lewis, *The Business Book Bible*

**HAD ENOUGH INPUT FOR THE MOMENT?
SIT BACK WITH YOUR COFFEE. SEE YOU IN 15 MINUTES.**

STEP TWO — What Are You Going to Say?

Your book will serve its purpose if it helps clients and customers understand:

- What your product or service does for them;
- How it does this;
- The value and benefits of using your product or service; and
- The costs of **not** using your product or service.

The easiest way to help your clients understand the complexities of your products and services is to anticipate their basic questions. Knowing their most common questions and supplying the answers upfront help, your readers understand how well you appreciate their concerns and their desires.

Use the spaces and pages below to describe the 10 most common questions your customers and prospects ask you.

I assume you are already prepared to describe the cost of your product/service and how long your product/service takes to be beneficial; if not, **DO THIS NOW!** This will help your readers/customers decide if they want your basic program or all the bells and whistles as well.

Consider these common customer concerns.

For instance, if you are the reader, you may ask yourself:

- How will my life and work improve because I have worked with you?
Give me a vision of what you can help me create.
- How have your successes helped your customers?
- Tell me stories of your failures and how you will avoid that with my business.
(Are you brave enough to do this?)
- Tell me how you would help me assess and meet my needs.
- How will you create a plan that works for me?
- How will you help me deal with unexpected problems or opportunities? Should I even anticipate any? If so, why?
- What experiences and qualifications do you have in this field?
- What do I have to do to get the results I need to be successful?

- How do you work?
- What will I have to learn and how long will it take?
- Will it hurt?
- Are you qualified in this field? Are you bonded, certified, or licensed?
Have an advanced degree?
- Will I have to change the way I do things?
- How can you help me get through this as easily as possible?

Consider under what circumstances they ask these questions. Do these circumstances make such a difference that you will want to write about them? For example, one client with a certain kind of back pain will be best served by acupuncture while another kind of back difficulty will be more amenable to receiving chiropractic work or even surgery.

How much detail do you want to provide for these different circumstances?

Now here is a tougher *and more valuable* exercise:

What are the 10 most common questions your customers *fail* to ask you but should?

Their questions and your answers here can help you shine. Recount stories of people you could have helped but did not because they or you did not ask the right questions.

Here is my experience of poor communication with a client:

My client from Nicaragua had a compelling tale about her family's departure from Managua as it fell under the control of the Sandinistas. She wanted me to write her story, which I was eager to do. My client was not completely fluent in English, but she spoke well enough. I spoke no Spanish. The more I asked her about the Sandinistas – to heighten the drama of her story – the more nervous she became. Had one of us been completely fluent in one of those languages, I could have asked my questions more subtlety in a way that would not have alarmed her. I could have explained to her in a more palatable way that this history dramatized her story.

Looking back on it, she must have been wondering why I wanted to probe about this terrorizing event in her life. Nevertheless, she did not express reservations; maybe she could not. She eventually ended our project. In hindsight, (oh, wonderful realization!), I would have asked to be introduced to her family and gain their support.

Whatever you sell, check the link to this article below to see if it sparks questions relevant to your business.

Here is an example: if you sell cars, think about the many things customers fail to ask and then regretted later that they did not end up asking. “21 Car Buying Questions Everyone Should Ask,” an article in the Huffington Post addresses this:

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/nate-holzapel/21-car-buying-questions-e_b_4939112.html.

You may want to ruminate over this issue of errors in client communication with a friend, add a bottle of wine, and record your conversation. Kick back and have a ranting session with a perceptive and trusted colleague about what your clients and prospects miss about your offerings. What kind of feedback are you getting from your pal?

The questions your clients fail to ask may be the same ones readers will wonder when they read your book. Imagine your reader asking you in their head one or more of these queries:

- Can I work with and trust the author?
- Do I understand what the author is explaining?
- As I am reading this book, can I say with confidence I will be successful in doing it myself?
- Do I have to follow the author’s instructions exactly?
- What are some of the failures the author’s products or services have experienced that they are not telling me?
- Can I find a review of them on Yelp.com or some other source?
- What the author prescribes is going to be hard. How can I avoid doing what they tell me to do and still get the same results?
- I am sure if I do the first two steps, I can glide through the rest.

- I bet if I buy another book on the subject or sign up for an online course, that I can get the same results.
- Where can I find this product/service more cheaply?
- How can I be sure the author is telling me everything I need to know?
- Will the author be approachable if I try to contact them?
- Which of the author's competitors should I research?
- Can I talk to some of the author's previous clients/customers?

Perhaps you cannot address all these questions in your book, at least not directly. It is important to remember that your tone must establish your credibility and approachability enough so that readers (remember, they are prospects) can open up to you with these concerns. You must know enough about your competition in the marketplace to present yourself as the irresistible choice... one who is approachable and inspires credibility.

Case histories are essential.

Case histories give your potential clients a vision of why they need you and how much better off they will be when your work together is complete.

Just as your readers want to know about you, they want to be able to identify with other people who have needed your products and services before they found you. You do not have to get too complicated. You are not writing a scientific thesis or *War and Peace*. In a combination of your words and your customer's account of their experience with you, simply state their situation before they encountered you and your business and describe the transformation.

Here is an example:

Before I met Jack Swan, my inventory system was a mess. However, thanks to his consultation and his software, I have increased efficiency by 10%. Employee turnover is down by 25%, while customer satisfaction has risen 30%. My profits are up by 20%. Wow, was he worth it!

Alternatively, perhaps it is a question of a client's performance:

One lawyer who had always avoided public speaking doubled her business after working with her coach. Now she gives talks successfully. The lawyer was able to hire

two new employees to handle the new workload. Now, this coach can use that client's success in her promotional literature and/or book.

Here is a case study from my experience.

An early client of mine, I will call him Charlie, asked me to help him write his life story. It was a huge story, not just in the length of his lifespan but in the enormous variety of his experiences. This man had endured the depths of human suffering and enjoyed the heights of successful experience. He had a vast array of friendships and professional networks.

At the beginning of our collaboration, he was not talking to his two adult daughters. For some reason, they had become alienated.

Since I was helping him write his autobiography, my inquiries into this situation seemed appropriate to me. Except, every time I asked him about it, he avoided the question.

Charlie and I worked together to tell his life story for five years. Not just because of the permutations in his long life but also because of his need to repeat anecdotes and remembrances. It was as if he was purging himself.

Over the years, this man had changed since the time we had started to work together. He had become lighter, more self-accepting, and humorous about himself.

Eventually, he invited me to his 80th birthday party. Surely, this is a momentous achievement for anyone but especially for this magnificent survivor. His big bash was held at a sports and country club where scores of people were dancing, chatting, snacking, and having a great time.

I walked in and saw him standing with his arms around two women. He introduced me to them; they were his daughters. I was thunderstruck. When had this reconciliation occurred? Just as he never told me how they became estranged, neither did he tell me how they had made peace.

Do I think that my intervention changed his life? Not exactly, but I did observe that during our collaboration, his view of his life had changed.

Alas, I miss you, Charlie.

Moreover, while you are writing your case histories, ask those former clients or customers for their endorsements, so that you can use them for marketing material or on the back cover of your book. It is important.

Here is another way of conceiving content.

Suppose you are writing a workbook or a “how-to” book. When you consider your readers (prospective clients), envision them in three classes of expertise: the beginner, the intermediate, and the accomplished person.

In each case, isolate two or three insights or words of wisdom, the results of your experience for beginners, intermediates, or the accomplished.

Give each three great points. Include tips from experts other than yourself. Relationships with other experts who are not direct competitors can only add value to your book but also will help you promote and sell.

Perhaps you organize your chapters so that the first ones address the beginners, the next chapters for the more intermediates, and then the accomplished. Add tips appropriate for the newbies, semi-experienced, and the knowledgeable in each relevant chapter. You are building a structure of increasing complexity that folks across all levels of expertise can use.

This great piece of advice came from speaker and consultant Bill Walsh, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Power Team International.

Make It Fun!

Just because you are writing a book about business does not mean it has to be dreary. Efforts to make it entertaining are *vital*.

Frequently, when I read a nonfiction book (a book that is supposed to raise my consciousness or increase my knowledge or skill), I get bored and lazy if it starts to look/feel like work. Leading me to wonder if I just do the first two steps, can I glide through the rest?

This is a classic case of MEGO, (journalism lingo for My Eyes Glaze Over).



Give them enticing stories and examples that make them want to keep reading to the end. Study the most entertaining and exciting business books you have ever read. Determine why they held your attention or made you tell others about them.

Make sure your book is a page-turner, so they cannot wait to get to the next chapter and read to the end. Do not doubt your ability to do this; you can learn this technique.

Consider soap operas in which each episode leaves you hanging to find out what happens next. When I was a kid back in the Pleistocene Age, Saturday afternoon movies always offered at least one cowboy serial. We would not know what would happen to the Lone Ranger as he stood on the cliff with a murderous posse behind him until the next week.

That is the way every chapter should end.



Think of other ways of making your book entertaining to look at as well as to read. Would you engage an illustrator or cartoonist to illuminate critical points in your message? Are relevant factoids, even trivia, jokes or pertinent quotes in order? You can do an online search for just such material and find mountains of memorable stuff.

Harvard Business Review and *New Yorker* cartoons may be quite affordable. In addition, you might find a cartoonist cheaply on fiverr.com.

Here are some links to *humorous* business quotes:

<http://www.inc.com/john-brandon/16-funny-quotes-to-start-your-next-business-presentation.html>

<http://www.businesspundit.com/100-funny-business-quotes/>

<http://www.patsula.com/smallbusinesshumor/>

Here are some links to *serious* business quotes:

http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/topics/topic_business.html

<http://www.businessinsider.com/101-best-inspirational-quotes-for-entrepreneurs-2013-9>

<http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/business>

*Start writing, no matter what.
The water does not flow until the faucet is turned on.*
— Louis L'Amour

**THIS IS A LOT TO THINK ABOUT, RIGHT?
WHY DON'T YOU TAKE THE DOG FOR A WALK?
SEE YOU IN 20 MINUTES.**

Now let us talk about digging up material/ pure gold/irresistible and good stuff from sources other than your brain.

STEP THREE — Research

Plagiarize! Plagiarize! Let no one else's work evade your eyes.

Remember why the good Lord made your eyes.

So don't shade your eyes. So plagiarize, plagiarize, plagiarize.

Only be sure always to call it, please, research.

—“Lobachevsky” by Tom Lehrer, satirical songwriter, and mathematician

Naturally, I am not suggesting you plagiarize – that is, lift sections of somebody else's work and claim it as yours without giving attribution to the creator/author.

Nevertheless, when conducting your research, do feel free to let other people's ideas inspire you and ideally lead you to your articulation of that idea or even challenge it.

In **STEP 2**, we explained how you could create content for your book from the very experience you have had with your clients and customers. However, you are not finished yet. There are more goodies available for you.

Those Other Guys

You need to know what your competitors are writing and offering in their practices and professions. You can bet that I consulted other books on how to write a book before I wrote this.

First, you want to be able to distinguish your book from theirs. The very fact that a unique individual (you), is writing about your experience and wisdom in your field, will render your text different from the others. It will be infused with your singular personality, your life experience and voice, your humor, and your irreplaceable value. You can capitalize on this.

- If your view or philosophy is different from your competitors', then that is something for you to emphasize in your text. What experiences led you to that worldview?
- In addition, you want to know what your esteemed colleagues and competitors are doing in case they know something you do not know, but you should. How are you going to deal with that? Will it expand your view of your content or force you to revise or eliminate material?

Those Other Gurus

Feel free to quote other people and include the source of the reference, either in a footnote or in notes at the end of the book. It is helpful to study and quote other experts in your field. It lends credence and authority to your work.

Keep a record of these references as you research and write, so you do not have to go back over your manuscript after it is to be edited to ferret them out to add notes or bibliography at the end. That is called drudgery, and I have done my share of it.

- Right here, right now, make a list off the top of your head of those people whose wisdom and knowledge would be dynamite if added to your book.

Do not be afraid to contact these authors and experts and ask for an interview. They might be flattered that you want to include their points of view and the fruit of their scholarship in your book.

Interviewing people is a craft.

How will you ask this person to help you in this way? Some people freeze at the word “interview.” Tell them, broadly, what your project is and why you want to pick their brains if that is convenient. Assure your “interviewee” of how much fun you will have doing this together. Acknowledge the time they are spending with you. Do not forget to send them a thank-you note afterward.

Tell them you will record the conversation to get their comments down accurately, thus saving them any concerns about being misquoted.

Prepare yourself by listing your questions beforehand. You do not have to strictly keep to it, but the list will free you to listen and interact with your subject.

Consider the benefits of technology if you are writing an e-book. You can include the edited audio track of your interview(s) in your book!

Interviewing on the phone

Many interviews take place on the telephone or via Zoom. The advantage is that you do not have to travel or carve out as much time for this exchange as you would if you were to meet your subject in person.

The disadvantage is the absence of body language, which is particularly pertinent if you do not know the subject personally.

Of course, you want to record this interview. You can use a free service such as www.freeconferencecall.com or a monthly subscription to sources such as www.audioacrobat.com or its competitors.

These services allow you to record your talk, keep a permanent record of the conversation, and they enable you to share the audio file with other people.

If You Meet Them in Person.

Ideally, you will talk to them alone. Choose a quiet and isolated place. A private office would be good. I understand that you want to make the meeting a pleasant, if not exactly a social event; so, you invite them for coffee or a drink. Just be aware of potential hazards.

I do not recommend interviewing anybody in a restaurant or in public. Such an environment inhibits freely flowing conversation and the ambient noise -- the clacking utensils, people walking by, etc., may be picked up on the recording device. This will distract both of you.

For the same reason, there should be absolutely no background noise or music. I do not believe in eating during an interview if you are in a restaurant. It disturbs your focus. Besides, even the mellow slurp of your interview subject sipping coffee can distort the playback. The noise you make clicking your pen or rustling papers or any moving object that is close to the recorder or your smartphone will be magnified when you play it back, making transcription more difficult.

I avoid interviewing two people at the same time, no matter how close they are. People always censor themselves, consciously or not when someone else is around. On the other hand, they disagree and start to argue. You do not want this. I have made exceptions when I was interviewing two founders of a company and their marketing person who facilitated the interview insisted they be seen together. Oh well.

Start in a slow, relaxed way, asking questions that require little thought or emotional impact at first. This is nothing more than a conversation, but a recorded one.

Naturally, you listen intently. There is a temptation if your recording apparatus is operating to let your focus drift because you know it is all being recorded. Snap, yourself out of the daze ASAP. You may have missed the opportunity to ask a follow-up question to material that you were sleeping through.

Suppose you are going to take notes by hand. This is tricky because you want to make sure to take notes accurately. Some people speak fast. How fast can you write? How good is your hand-eye coordination? Will you be so intent on getting your notes down correctly that you fail to maintain eye contact with your subject?

Handwriting incurs another danger. Suppose you have trouble reading your notes. If at any time you want to go back to the subject and ask if the quote you want to use is accurate or if you got the date down correctly, you are opening the door to their attempt to revise or even suppress what they have already told you. People always want to make themselves sound better, more knowledgeable, and more intelligent. Alternatively, they then decide they do not want to be quoted saying that particular thing at all. This will drive you crazy. When you use a recording device, there is no question about the accuracy and fidelity of the interview material.

No matter what technique you use to take notes, be alert to the ending of your interview. Ask if there is/was anything else they want to add. When your subject sees you put down the pen or turn off the recording device, they will frequently relax and start divulging material you

would never have imagined. Pick up the pen again or turn on the recorder once more and capture this.

Do not be afraid to ask any question you want. As a journalist, I have learned from said experience, when I once hesitated to ask certain questions because I was positive the subject would not answer them. Only later did I find out that some other reporter working for another publication interviewed the same person who directly addressed the question I would have asked had I been more daring.

The message is: do not assume who will answer what. People give the most surprising answers and are willing to share information you would never have guessed had you been less cheeky.

What if your question offends the person you are interviewing? Well, welcome to research. It is an occupational hazard, but one worth the risk.

To sum it up, your research comes from your brain, your records, and the input of others. Learning how to assemble all this input is key.

Record-Keeping – Keep It Simple, but Keep It

While you are doing your research, keep notes of your sources on an Excel spreadsheet of their contact numbers and addresses.

Also, do not wait to compile the bibliography until the end. It will frazzle you to collect all of those references after you have written your text.

Now let us get it done in ***STEP FOUR***.

Ready?

*The best way to become acquainted with a subject is
to write a book about it.*

— Benjamin Disraeli

WHEW! YOU CAN TOTALLY DO THIS.

IS IT TIME FOR THE FUNNY PAPERS?

STEP FOUR — Now Let's Get It Done

In this chapter, we discuss how to turn your research, notes and all your thoughts into a palpable, actual book or an e-book. Something you can be proud of and put your name on.

By now, you have the basis for the content in your book. There should not be anymore pussyfooting around or talking about how to do it. Either, you do it yourself, you find support to encourage and cheer you on, have someone else to do it all for you, or a combination of all those.

The Most Important Steps

Discipline and routine are critical to writing success. You will need both habits whether you write by yourself or if you have the support of a ghostwriter or book coach.

“Do. Or do not. There is no try.”

— Yoda from *Star Wars*

Here are some tips from many years of successful business writing and coaching:

Tip 1. Start with self-honesty about what you want to accomplish and when

As a book coach and a ghostwriter, I have no judgment about the schedule you commit yourself to. I just care that you adhere to your promises to yourself. Otherwise, experience has shown me if you fail to keep your commitments to yourself, you will most likely lose confidence. In addition, if you lose confidence and do not move forward, you lose the opportunities a book can give you and any credibility that you could thereby gain.

If you put aside one and a half or two hours every day that are inviolate, depending on how much research you have to do and how long your manuscript will be, you could conceivably write the first draft in 6 to 12 months, more or less.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how committed are you to achieving a draft in the next 12 months? Put that number here. ____ . Go back to this note occasionally to remind yourself.

How much time are you planning to set aside each day to write? Do you have a deadline for the whole project, or have you set regular milestones that you intend to achieve? You might find this latter method more doable.

Tip 2. Be real about how much time it takes to write a book and how much time you have to work on it.

One prospective client who asked me to coach her through her book told me at the beginning of summer that she was going to spend two hours a day writing. I was impressed.

Practically in the same breath, she informed me she was looking forward to her daughter's return from school and spending time with her during the summer. I could have predicted what would happen. There was no book at the end of the summer. There was no book a year later.

So please be realistic about the time it takes to create a manuscript. It has to be a priority. I said this before, but it bears repeating: If you say to yourself that you do not have time, then you know you have decided it is not a priority or is this assertion a subterfuge to keep you from facing your fears or insecurity about writing?

However, you can acquire the right help to do the things you do not have time to do alone.

Tip 3. Banish distractions!

Deactivate your fascinating diversions like your telephone, video games, television, and the radio in the background. Reschedule talking to your child on Skype. Make sure your children and/or your pets are outside your workspace and post a "do not disturb" sign on the door if necessary. This is your time.



Tip 4. There is no need to write without support.

The image of the lonely artist slaving away in his garret to produce his art is the stuff of opera, not real life. I strongly recommend that you find an accountability partner, a book buddy if you will. Ideally, this is somebody who needs your support as well. When both of you reciprocate the support and there is no need to pay each other, or even a writers' group can serve you well.

When the Fior d'Italia restaurant, (which bills itself as America's oldest Italian restaurant and is located in San Francisco's North Beach), commissioned me several years ago to write its history, the restaurant owners did not give me a deadline. I had a full-time job at the time as a reporter for the *Oakland Tribune*. My dilemma was how to deliver on my commitment in a timely fashion without neglecting my job or my life.

I went on Craigslist and sent out an appeal for an accountability partner. It so happened that Elizabeth Cutler offered her services but wanted nothing more than to be of service. For almost 15 years, I called her every weekend and gave her my agenda for the next few days.

If I did not meet my goals, she never scolded or berated me. She just cheered me on, which is the way it should be.

Tip 5. Let your passion motivate you.

How will it feel to see your name on a physical product that you have generated and that disseminates your ideas, your inventions, your passions, your unique service, or your product?

Write down your ideas/feelings here:

This is how you are going to feel: you are going to feel bloody great! You are going to feel wonderful. It will boost your confidence. You may also feel other things, perhaps scared or nervous. That is okay. Just jot down the support you have available to you when your feelings are not so happy. Remind yourself of your vision and motivation for this project. Do not forget the people who support you. Remember their messages of inspiration during the occasional tedium of writing your manuscript. You might keep this list of reasons handy to refer to when the going gets tough.

Let me repeat myself: One of the deathbed regrets of writers is not having gone forward with the project they had envisioned earlier in their lives. (See sidebar.)

Now ask yourself: what will it feel like **not** to have written your book? Think about it. Will you feel regret? Will you feel disappointed in yourself?

Remember the words of poet John Greenleaf Whittier: “Of all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these, ‘It might have been.’”

Jot down your ideas here – how I will feel if I *do not* write my book:

Tip 6. Fingers to the keyboard or pen to the paper.

You have done your research, right? All your notes and sources are organized and easily accessible in your computer files. Now you need to write something. It is zero hour. Maybe you have been collecting notes for months or years. Maybe you have not articulated what you want to write about at all. Maybe you feel stuck. Write anyway.

That Old Devil, Writer’s Block

What is writer’s block?

Mostly, it is self-criticism, sometimes called the Inner Critic. That insistent voice hums in the background of your mind, sometimes at low volume, or shouting. It says things like:

“You can’t do this.”

“Are you going to write that?”

“Can I say that in public?”

“What would (my mother, my spouse, my colleagues, etc.) say?”

“This is dreadful! This stinks.”

“When (whoever) reads this, will they? I will be humiliated.”

For many of us, professional writers included, it shouts most loudly when we have to write professionally. Even, or especially, when our message is felt deeply.



That Old Devil, Writer's Block

So, how does one get past this Inner Critic, the strange benefit of having an ego? There is only one way: start writing something. Anything. Just get the wheels oiled and moving forward.

I call it the gibberish method because I want to relieve you of the feeling that it has to make sense at first. Record any ideas that come to your mind and keep writing.

*“Start writing, no matter what.
The water does not flow until the faucet is turned on.”*
— Louis L'Amour

It could be anything, even if you start out blah, blah, and blah. For instance, what your grocery list comprises of, the doctors or clients you have to call, what you should have said to Harry last week, the corrections you have to make to your tax return. Your knee hurts. How you feel absolutely lousy right now or simply confused. Will those kids next door ever shut up?

Here is another method: write a letter to your inner critic. Tell it how it feels to be stuck.

“Dear IC, I know you’re trying to help me by keeping my standards high. I just want to get something down on paper right now. I want to write what is pressing on my heart at this moment. So, please get out of the way. When it comes time to edit, then you can come out and play and help me make my prose shiny.”

In other words, whatever opens the heart valve, anything that is affirming, helpful, and/or uncritical. I promise you, keep writing this way, and eventually what you desire will emerge on the page.

Above all, do not stew over your words until you have completely downloaded your thoughts. I do not recommend editing right away. I see people writing chapter 1 and when they consider going forward to chapter 2, they think, “no, let me reread chapter 1 and make it perfect”.

This is an escape from going forward. Wait until all your material is written before you go back and rewrite. It is best to wait a couple of weeks or months before you go back to reread and refine your baby.

Mind mapping

I am a huge proponent of mind mapping to expose the ideas and themes you have been incubating in your brain long *before* you create an outline. Outlines impose structure on your ideas before you may be ready to write.

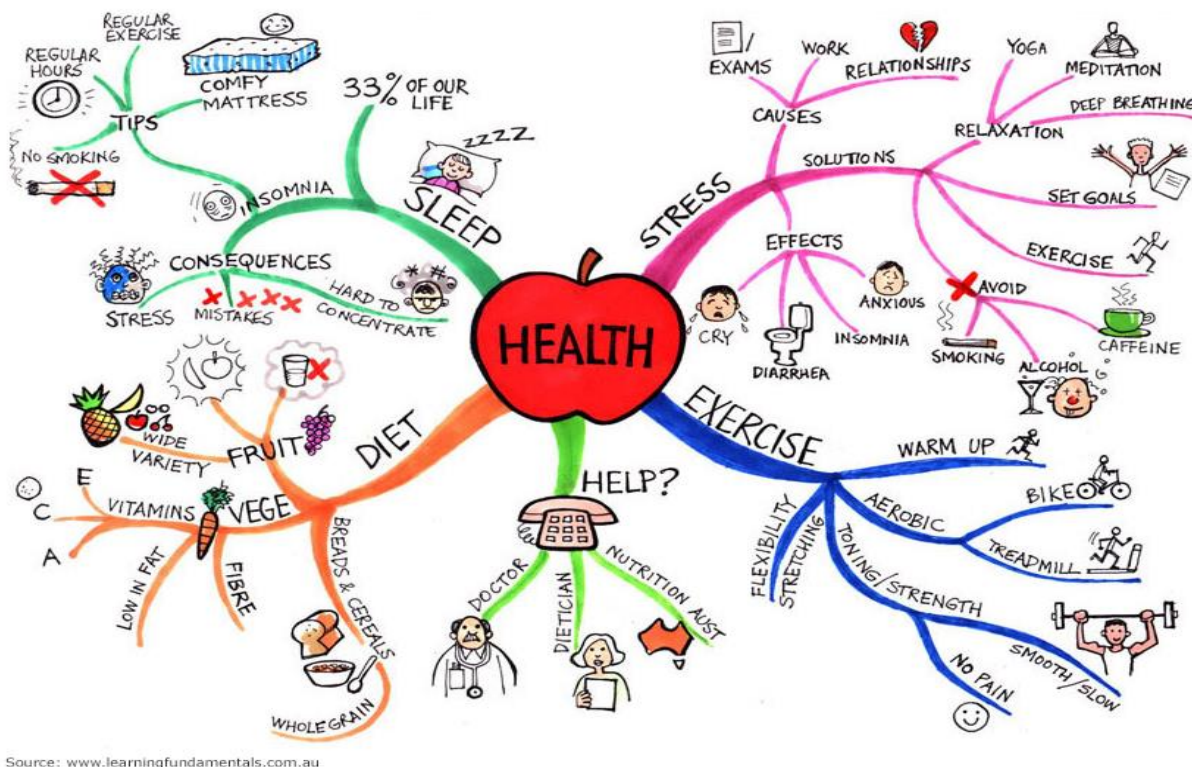
Mind mapping is brainstorming on paper. It teases out ideas and associations you have in your head that may not yet be quite conscious. Do an online search of “mind mapping” and see some examples of how it is done. You cannot fail at this, not if you approach it with a playful and relaxed attitude. All you need is paper and pens, preferably colored (although I do it myself with a pencil), curiosity, and humor.

Draw a central symbol or word representing the theme or title of your book in the center of your blank page. You then sketch out, doodle, brainstorm, and spin your thoughts for content. You draw your ideas as branches and balloon-lets from your central theme. You can think of the major balloons that you drew as the chapter heads. In addition, you may consider the little balloon-lets that sprouted from them as subheads to these chapters.

You might want to do several mind maps, each on a particular theme in your book. Once you have seduced all of your ideas and their associations out of your cranium and onto paper, then only are you prepared to write an outline. Below is a typical mind map. However, you do not have to get this fancy. Nobody else is going to see it.

Just enjoy the process of generating new ideas playfully and without judgment.

Here is a simple but colorful example, courtesy of *Oregonstate.edu*.



Now you turn your mind map into an outline. It is simple. I suggest creating several mind maps depending on the number of themes you want to address. Keep scribbling like this until you feel satisfied you have extracted your ideas. Once you see your ideas laid out pictorially, you can decide what your priorities are: which chapters come first. Remember, every main branch can be a chapter. Every small branch can be a subhead under that chapter; there are no rules – only what works for you.

Now you have your outline, now what? The blank page is your friend. Start putting the words down. Still cannot think of what to say? Again, write anything. I mean it. If you are totally flummoxed and constipated for words, write a stream of consciousness as long as necessary until your appropriate ideas start flowing. I cannot stress this often enough.

Tip 7. Keep on keeping on.

Expect to flounder. It is okay. Everybody does. Just keep at it. You are doing it. Yes!

Tip 8. Give yourself all the help you need.

While you are writing this book, you are going to be living your life and managing your business at the same time. Lack of help can cause some people to throw up their hands and give up.

You may need a housekeeper, a baby/pet sitter; a patient, supportive and compassionate spouse; a partner or close friend, which is also important, to keep you on track.

You will probably need one or more of these: a virtual assistant, a secretary, editor, proofreader, an intern, or a researcher. You might find the VA, the editor, and proofreader from www.editorsforum.org or www.editcetera.com.

Unlike scrolling for help on Craigslist, going to either of these two organizations assures you that the talent is experienced and screened.

A virtual assistant is essentially a secretary who works from their home. This person is computer-literate and well informed about social media. A VA can take much of the grunt work off your desk. Craigslist is an obvious place to find, one but there is also a professional association of virtual assistants.

After you finish writing your manuscript, put it away for a month or so and then come back to it to reread. You will be amazed at how many changes you will want to make. Make them and then look for a professional editor.

Another option could be that, before you find such a person, you may want to ask intelligent, supportive friends to review your manuscript and give you their ideas. If you have any trepidation regarding whether a friend will be snarky or critical; do not give them the manuscript. There is nothing like unfriendly criticism to discourage you from going forward.

Hiring an editor, intern, researcher, or the VA, etc. is going to be part of the investment you make in your book, in both money and time, and is tax-deductible in all cases.

Notice there is more than one kind of editor. The copy editor or line editor corrects your grammar, spelling and makes some suggestions on the flow of paragraphs. This person works with your text when it is in final or nearly final form. They read each sentence carefully, seeking to fix all errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and word usage while preserving your meaning and voice. They may suggest rewriting some of your text, to clarify your meaning and conform to a reputable style guide.

A developmental or structural editor analyzes the structure of your book and how you have developed your theme. This professional will scrutinize your project from its initial concept and comment on the structure of your project. You may also submit your first draft to a developmental editor for suggestions on how to reorganize or reinforce your message.

Do you want a ghostwriter or book coach?

What is the difference between them?

In both cases, **your name appears on the book**; you the copyright; so you control the content.

What does a ghostwriter do?

A ghostwriter can write your book completely, certain parts of it or will rewrite an existing manuscript. Ghostwriters aim to help you focus on and develop your message. An author/client can approach a ghostwriter with:

- Nothing written, just an idea
- A rough outline
- A partial draft or
- A whole manuscript that needs to be researched or revamped

Folks look for ghostwriters when they feel they do not have the time or the skill to write their book themselves. Still, you will want to carve out time to work with your ghostwriter. They will need to interview you extensively and will need your direction on research to accumulate and other sources to interview.

Ideally, the author/client has all the research necessary assembled or at least can point the ghostwriter to the sources of the material the book needs. How much material the client provides and how much the ghostwriter creates for the client affects the ghostwriter's fees.

The author/client looks to the ghostwriter for extensive brainstorming; the client is open to being interviewed and responds promptly to the ghostwriter's questions.

Discuss your budget when you negotiate with the ghostwriter. There will be other expenses beyond interviewing and writing, such as photocopying, transcription, editing, publishing, sometimes travel, etc.

Understand, this is a collaboration between the two of you. Make it clear with the ghostwriter about how much work (writing, interviewing and research) you will do and how much your writer will assume. The ghostwriter's fee will match those requirements.

You can find a ghostwriter by searching online and comparing prices and experience, or you can approach a public relations or marketing agency that assigns projects to writers under contract to.

Alternatively, you can ask me, Francine Brevetti.

I have extensive experience writing people's nonfiction books, brainstorming with, and guiding my clients to focus on their message and content. By careful, nonjudgmental listening and questioning, I help people express ideas sometimes they had never been able to articulate.

Jill Lublin, author of bestseller *Guerilla Publicity – Hundreds of Sure Fire Tactics to Get Surefire Maximum Sales for Minimum Dollars*, stressed that if you write a book, you will be taking time away from your core business.

She said she has found ghostwriters helpful in her work.

It is my gift and my privilege to retain the client's voice most closely in the text. The prose I delivered for a gentleman who had been a correction officer at Alcatraz Federal Penitentiary for several years was far different from the language I rendered for the man who had been the head of a major California wine trade association.

Remember, you have the final say over what goes into the manuscript. The ghostwriter's name may or may not be listed under your name, on the cover of the book, depending on your agreement.

If you are writing a book about your business, a particular industry or field, your art or philosophy, you will want to find a ghostwriter who has experience in these areas.

This is a long-term relationship, and every effort must be made to establish and maintain trust. You may also ask the ghostwriter to sign a nondisclosure agreement, so you can be sure about the confidentiality of the material you share.

Ghostwriting costs

People always ask me how much it costs to hire a ghostwriter. Each has their own scale but expect to invest several thousand dollars, no less than \$20,000 at the low end. Ghostwriters to celebrities and chief executives ask for as much as six figures or more.

I hear you groaning, "Aaaargh! I can't afford it."

I have some reflections on this complaint. A ghostwriter's job is a big job. While this professional is doing research and writing ***your*** book, they are taking the burden from you, enabling you to produce a book you probably would not have done otherwise. Here is where you calculate what you are going to gain from your book instead of taking time away from your daily responsibilities to write it yourself. Is this a fair trade? Many people think so.

On the other hand, a book coach helps you write the book yourself.

Sometimes a person is motivated to write their book themselves, but needs help. Perhaps they need discipline, structure, brainstorming, or just confidence.

A skillful book coach shepherds the author/client by helping them strategize the creation of content and the structure of the book. The coach then helps them set goals and milestones for accomplishing a manuscript piece-by-piece, phase-by-phase. The coach keeps the author/client accountable by reading whatever the client has produced during the agreed-upon time frame and making suggestions.

For instance, when I work with such clients I help them conceive of what they can achieve in the next week. Then they write that material and send it to me to read before our next conference. When we reconvene, I comment on the work and make suggestions on how to go forward. We set another goal to be accomplished in a week.

It should be understood that the author/client must be coachable and open to suggestions.

A book coach costs a lot less than a ghostwriter and frequently charges a retainer.

Now, how are you going to market your magnum opus? Turn to *STEP FIVE*, the next chapter, please.

*A writer should have this little voice inside of you saying, tell the truth.
Reveal a few secrets here.*

— Quentin Tarantino

YOU'VE BEEN A REAL TROOPER TO READ THIS FAR.

IS IT TIME TO BLEND A SMOOTHIE? OR A MARTINI?

STEP FIVE — Ideas for Marketing and Exposure

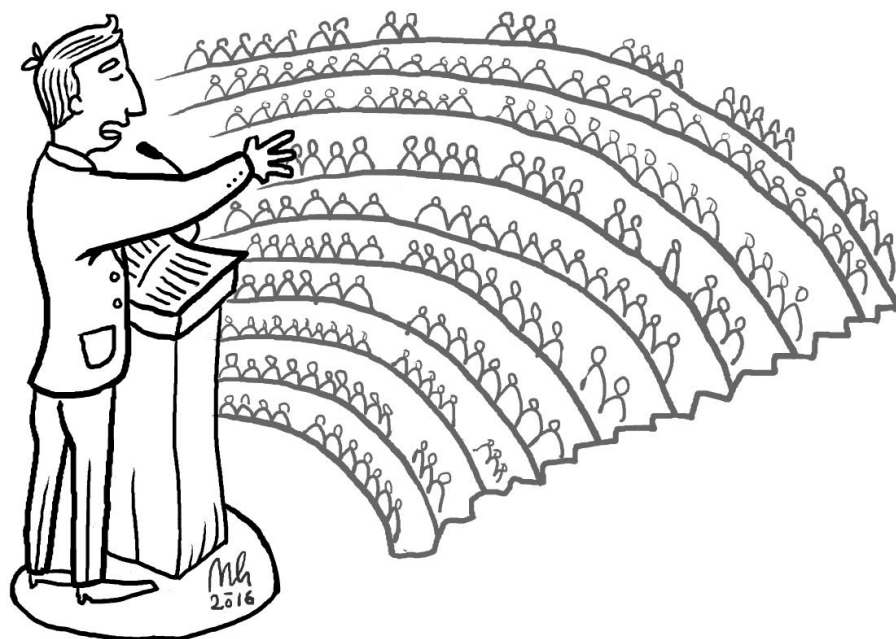
Now your book is in your hand or on your e-reader. How are you going to get it into other people's hands or e-readers? Even if you have not had it traditionally published, especially if you have not had it traditionally published, there are so many ways you can distribute your work.

It is said that one of the major reasons why self-published books do not sell well is a lack of professionalism. Amateurish editing, poor design, and formatting exacerbated by a rush to publication—all of these deficits will keep your books in your garage or storage locker. Be prepared that you will have to work to distribute it—even if a traditional publisher picks it up.

However, if you have worked hard, achieved the admiration of qualified professionals who have read and studied your work, then you can stand tall. You can feel solid about what you created. Proceed to enact these various means of distribution.

- When your book is published or has gone live, have a book signing and attract publicity for the event.
- For instance, give it away for free for a limited time to stimulate word-of-mouth attention. When you paid for it to be written, it was an investment, remember?
- Tell all your friends and associates about it. Buy a few dozen copies to give to friends and associates.
- Use your book as a brochure to give to prospective clients and close the deal.
- Choose an excerpt from your book as the basis for a blog or article.
- Send a copy of your book to key decision-makers in an organization you want to work with. Impressing the recipient, you can use this strategy to get an appointment.
- Ask your book's readers to write reviews of your book on Amazon and Barnes and Noble's websites, or the social media platform, Good Reads.

- Do a public seminar that corresponds to your book's title and content. Give a talk in front of potential clients on the subject of your book. When you give this talk, use your book as the raffle prize. Simply gaining people's contacts for the raffle will help you build your contact list.
- Whenever and wherever you speak, you sell your book at the back of the room. Perhaps you can get the sponsor of your speech to buy books at a discounted rate to sell to the attendees.
- Revise the signature on your email to add your book's title and a link on how to find it.
- Take a selfie of yourself reading it and post it on your Facebook page. In fact, your book should have its Facebook own page and website.
- Mention it on your blog, newsletter, or anything else you publish.
- Reach out to media contacts and propose an interview with you about your new book.
- Talk about it on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and other social media sites.
- Public libraries now offer e-books. Can you get yours listed?
- If your well-crafted volume is an e-book, check these sites below for tips on distributing and marketing it.



<http://www.hongkiat.com/blog/sell-ebooks>

<http://boostblogtraffic.com/ebook-mistakes/?hvid=m8g3o>

Additionally, you can just do an online search on how to write or market an e-book.

“Substitute 'damn' every time you're inclined to write 'very;' your editor will delete it and the writing will be just as it should be.”

— Mark Twain

OH, IT FEELS SO GOOD TO HAVE GOTTEN THIS FAR.

RUB YOUR TUMMY.

SUGGESTED TEMPLATE FOR YOUR BOOK

The cover of your book may look like this:

- Title and Subtitle
- Your name- the author.
- If you have a ghostwriter who wants to be named along with you, it might be rendered either:
 - by Johnny Depp as told to Melissa McCarthy ***or***
 - by Johnny Depp with Melissa McCarthy
 - The ghostwriter's name may appear under yours and possibly of a different size or typeface.
- It is advantageous to the ghostwriter to have their name on the cover of your book with you, but it is something that must be negotiated. A ghostwriter might ask for a higher fee if their name does not appear on the cover with yours.
- Acknowledgments: here is where you honor those who helped you, a ghostwriter or book coach, your mom, your guru, your spouse, your secretary, editor, etc.
- Table of contents

The text may be organized like this:

- Introduction: explain why you are writing this book.
- Chapter 1: your bio and expertise and what you want to achieve for readers
- Chapter 2 and following chapters: each major lesson or key message you want to convey can be its own chapter. Refer to your mind maps and your outlines.
 - Do not forget your case histories and comments from other experts.
- Final Chapter: a summation of your overall conclusions and a call to action that inspires your reader to undertake a particular endeavor you have outlined in your book.
- Notes, if any
- Bibliography, if any
- Index, if any

THERE. FINALLY. GOOD FOR YOU.

Need help? Call me at 415-397-7830 or write me at Francine@francinebrevetti.com for a free half-hour consultation.

SIDEBAR ONE The Top Five Deathbed Regrets of Writers

Compiled by copywriter Mindy McHorse

Fellow Writer,

If you went through life without ever trying to be published or paid for your writing, what would be your *biggest* regret?

A group of writers were asked this question. Here were the five most common answers:

"I'd never know if I could have made it."

"I'd never find my voice."

"I'd never get to show others what I'm capable of."

"I'd hate not having the freedom to do what I want."

And the top answer of all, was:

"I couldn't live a life true to myself."

Let us face it. Nobody wants to feel that way. Moreover, you do not have to if you do something about it now.

Start by asking yourself five important questions. Right now, ask yourself ...

Will I regret never knowing if I could have made it?

Could my words make a difference to someone?

Don't I want others to know the real me?

Shouldn't I take charge of my life now, instead of waiting until it is too late?

Don't I deserve to feel fulfilled?

SIDEBAR TWO What's your excuse today?

Author Susan Wiggs posted this ironic wake-up call on her blog:

I hear it from emerging writers all the time. **I have a great idea for a novel. I am going to sit down and write it as soon as I...**

- ...Get my day job under control
- ...Get my final kid into kindergarten
- ...Get into college ...out of jail
- ...Get my finances in order
- ...Fix my marriage
- ...Finish painting the house
- ...Pay off the car
- ...Clean the can opener
- ...Clean the rain gutters
- ...Get the puppy housebroken
- ...Retire from my job
- ...Finish watching the third season of “Weeds”
- ...Get my Bachelor’s...Master’s...PhD...LLB...MD
- ...pay off my student loans
- ...Read all the Outlander books
- ...Check in with my 19,000 Facebook friends
- ...Upgrade my computer
- ...Make tenure
- ...Landscape the yard
- ...Take a vacation
- ...Host my book group

- ...Teach my teenager to drive
- ...Finish knitting this sweater
- ...Forgive my parents ...forgive myself
- ...Get over my fear of failure ...get over my fear of success
- ...Get permission from my parents/spouse/children/therapist
- ...Hire an agent
- ...Learn to use the subjunctive case
- ...Quit worrying about what my family will think of my story, especially the dirty parts
- ...Stop smoking/drinking/playing online games
- ...Figure out the business of publishing
- ...Lose 20 pounds so I look good in my author photo...

You name it, and a procrastinating writer has said it. Here is a dirty little secret: (I hate to be the bearer of bad news), but the cruel reality is this: **there will *never* be a good time to write.** Life will always intrude. That is what life *is*. Be glad for that. If you have no life, you have nothing to write about.

The good news is there is a simple solution. **Make time for the things that are important to you.** If writing your story is important, make time for it. It is as simple as that. Turn off the TV, leave the dishes undone, close your e-mail, grab a notebook and pen, and tell your family, “Don’t interrupt me unless your eyes are bleeding.” You will be surprised by the respect they give you.

The way you spend your day is the way you spend your life. So, quit being your worst enemy and start being your best friend. Make time to write, even if you do not have time.

I have procrastinated my way through the writing of many books. Somehow, the story emerges.

***SIDEBAR THREE* The Multi-Author Book, Its Pros and Cons**

Collections of short stories may include the works of more than one author. Academic and scientific books frequently are compendiums of several authors.

However, if you are publishing your book about your business, you may want to think hard about investing in a multi-author book regardless of how attractive the offer.

Motivational speakers and business coaches frequently offer entrée into publishing by persuading unpublished clients to add their chapter to an anticipated collection. There is good reason, why an unpublished person would find this appealing. It appears someone is going to help them publish.

This is a typical scenario:

The business coach/motivational speaker offers to publish this opus and will include your chapter amongst others on a given and often similar theme if you invest \$3000-\$6000 (a hypothetical amount but in the neighborhood of many programs).

This could be attractive for those who have never published or written a book before. Such a program opens up the opportunity to add their names to the number of new authors entering the stream of publishing.

“I’m in print!” one can hear them congratulating themselves.

Moreover, they do not have to worry about editing their chapter, designing it, nor manufacturing it. It is done for them because they have paid for this service.

Your chapter will include your biography and links to your websites.

Sounds good.

However, these programs present significant downsides. The one point I find particularly odious is that I have known motivational speakers/publishers attract new authors with the promise of producing “bestsellers.”

However, I am not at all sure that these publishers instructed their new authors the difference between a bestseller on Amazon.com versus a best seller in the *New York Times* or the *Wall Street Journal*.

To be part of Amazon’s top-100 list, you have to sell 1,000 copies of your book within the first few days following its release.

To be on the top-five list, you have to sell substantially more copies, estimated to be at least 300 copies a day, depending on the time of day, and the day of the week and, other conditions.

To reach the *Wall Street Journal* bestseller list you have to sell about 3,000 in the first week; a *New York Times* bestseller requires sales of at least 9,000 copies in the first week.

No matter how many copies you sell, reaching the gold at Amazon's top of the list does not hold the cachet of the other two publications. This should be understood, and frequently it is not.

However, maybe you do not care about being a bestseller. Good, then such promises from your publisher will not sway you, and you will be happy to invest \$5000 or more.

Still, I have my reservations.

Understand that investing in a multi-author book will cost you at least as much and frequently more than you will invest in self-publishing your full-length manuscript as an e-book. A print book is significantly more expensive, of course. Still, with today's opportunities to publish content on-demand or electronically have brought the cost way down.

Another thing that bothers me about these programs is that they do not put the new author in the spotlight. You are typically allowed only 10 to 12 pages in the one chapter you have contracted for.

Meanwhile, your chapter appears among about a dozen or more of your competitors. How can you possibly stand out? Even if you make sure your content, style, and presentation are unique, you can be sure, the other authors in this volume are seeking to stand out as well.

You have little control over the cover design; you are only one among several people who have a vote on your cover design.

Next, how are you going to sell it? The publisher does not help you distribute.

You can use the same techniques noted in this volume for your single-author book. Again, you are selling the work of other authors who have appeared in this publication along with you.

Most contracts with multi-author publishers require you to buy 100 copies; and who will buy them from you? Frequently, I have seen authors relying on their family and friends to be their readers – it is not a good strategy for finding new customers.

I know people who have contributed chapters to multi-author books who carried them to all their speaking events to sell or give away. If you do not have a method for unloading them, you will probably keep a stack of them in your garage, if you have one.



I know this may seem harsh. I can hear people saying, “But I can’t write a whole book! I wouldn’t know how.”

Except, you can, and you will. If you have read this far, you are obviously motivated, and you can do it.

Call me at 415-397-7830 or write me at Francine@francinebrevetti.com for a free half-hour consultation.