



# 5 WAYS TO WRITE THAT BOOK EVERYONE TELLS YOU THAT YOU NEED TO WRITE ONE DAY

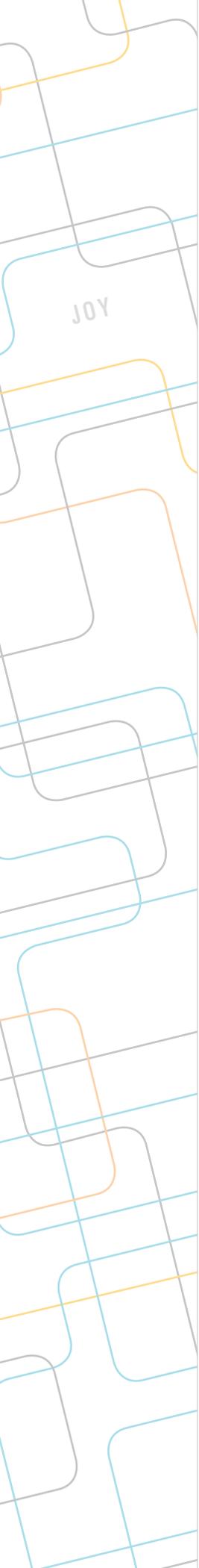
*You've decided that you absolutely have a book in you. Heck, people have been telling you for years that you have a story to share. No doubt, you've lived a story worth telling. Well, I'm going to let you in on a little secret: there are over seven billion people on this planet, and every single one of them has a story to share.*

So what makes you so special? Listen closely because I have the answer . . .

## ***You're the one who has decided to do it.***

It really is that simple. There are billions of stories worth telling, but the only ones that are told are those that are championed by someone who wants to be a storyteller. And that's you. You're a special breed, because you know that your story can change lives. Or at least you hope it can (stay humble!).

You also know that sharing your story well can change *your* life. It can introduce you to new people, create new opportunities, take you out of the 9 to 5, bring you greater fulfillment, and ultimately create a life that matters in new ways for you.



*All of that is true . . . if . . .*

- 01 You get to the finish line with a book that inspires you and that represents the essence of who you are and what you have to say in this world, and
- 02 Your journey while creating the book was full of magic.

***And this is the tricky part.*** You have to be careful, because your book can easily become something you hate. Here are the ways I've seen a creative project get shelved out of anger:

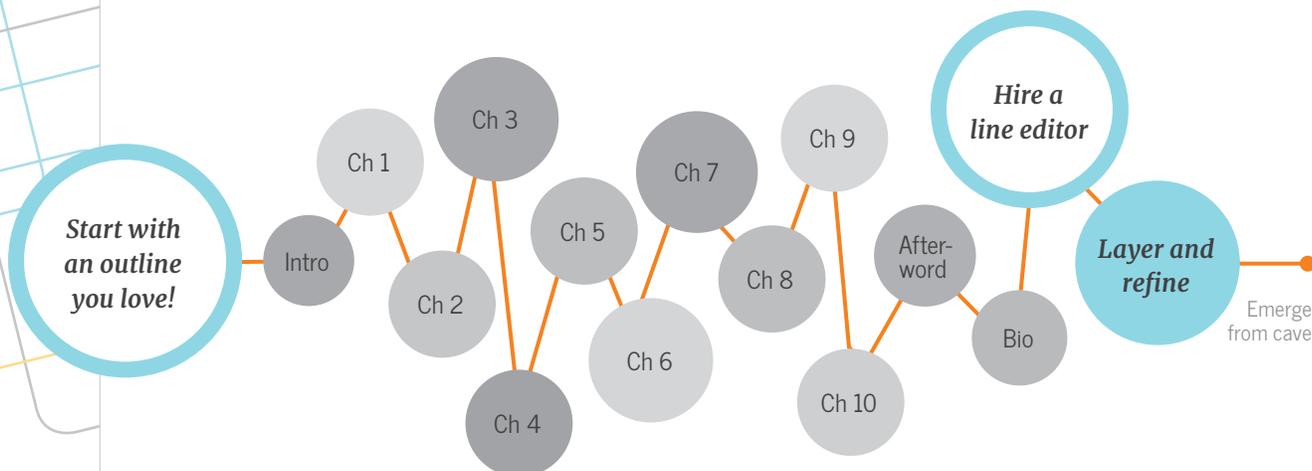
1. Hiring someone who doesn't turn in work on time and eventually the relationship sours.
2. Paying too much up front and then feeling like you're chasing the person you hired to do the job they said they were going to do.
3. Feeling like you're nagging when the writing doesn't meet your standards.
4. Writing a bunch and then having no clue how to organize it and feeling so hopeless you want to chuck it.
5. Finding out that you simply don't have the same values as the person you hired to help you.
6. Not signing a good contract and feeling trapped into working with someone you feel isn't "getting" you.

In my twenty years of storytelling, I've seen and even been part of the destruction of many great ideas. I've learned how to navigate a brilliant process and what it takes to ensure that a project has the capacity for success and joy. In fact, I created the publishing division of Round Table Companies to solve the pain of some of my clients whose hearts were broken when major publishing or self-publishing didn't serve their dreams.

My goal with this article is to help ensure that your book and your journey while writing it are amazing and full of joy. Nothing short of a great experience writing your book will set you up to launch your book out into the world. So let's get to work discussing your options.

## BOOK WRITING OPTION 1: HUSTLE

If you're someone who can hide away in a cabin for three months and crank it out, you can absolutely write your book on your own. Momentum is a key ingredient to brilliance, and a short and intense timeline can help you realize your dream if you have the discipline and ability to hide away and make it happen.



**SUGGESTION 1** Before you run off to your cave to start writing, **have a solid outline in place that absolutely thrills you.** The last thing you want to do is just start writing. I've never seen it end well. Put in the up-front work to give yourself a roadmap before you get in the car and just start driving.

**SUGGESTION 2** Before you leave the cave, **hire a line editor** to give you notes while you still have time to go back and layer the book. A first draft is never a good draft. The saying goes that "writing is rewriting." The rewriting is all about layering and giving your reader a deeper and more moving experience with your words. Without this outside eye, you risk walking away from your cabin with a book that makes total sense to you but to no one else.

*Recommended places to find a line editor:*

- Round Table Companies
- [www.Elance.com](http://www.Elance.com)
- [www.Guru.com](http://www.Guru.com)

## BOOK WRITING OPTION 2: WRITE IT OVER TIME

I'll be candid: this is a really tough approach. I've heard so many people tell me they are working on a book and giving themselves a year or more to do it, and it never seems to go anywhere. Life will always dish up reasons to avoid your writing (or any dream for that matter!). A woman emailed me the other day who had been trying to write her book for 17 years. You have one life. If you want to be an author and share your story, please consider one of the other options, as they simply have a much higher success rating. If this is your path, heed these four suggestions.

**SUGGESTION 1** *Find an accountability partner.* Someone who will hold your feet to the fire and not let you slack off. Someone who may not even read your pages but expects you to send them like clockwork as a form of self-discipline. Someone who will not let you make excuses and who cares enough about you to support your getting this done.

**SUGGESTION 2** *Create writing times in your calendar and stick to them.* Don't wait for inspiration. Don't procrastinate. When that time comes each week, sit your ass in the chair and do your job. Write.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

**SUGGESTION 3** *Don't share your writing with your friends and family.* It simply won't be ready for other eyes—those eyes don't understand what you're trying to say yet and can be highly disruptive to your process. In fact, they can completely destroy your motivation. So tell people you're writing all you want, but keep your pages to yourself.

**SUGGESTION 4** *Prioritize appropriately.* This is your dream. It will require sacrifices to make it a reality. Don't shortchange the long-term reward for a short-term rush. Do the work.

## BOOK WRITING OPTION 3: WORK WITH AN EDITOR

If you are absolutely committed to writing this book yourself, work with an editor on (at least) a monthly basis. This person will become both your accountability partner and your mentor. The value of this approach is that you learn how to become a better book writer through the editor's guidance as you move forward through your book, and that means much less work at the end. It also means you'll have a champion on your side when it gets tough. And it will get tough.

**SUGGESTION 1** *Hire someone.* Do not ask a friend for a favor. You want 10 to 15 hours a month from a professional who is being compensated to support you.

**SUGGESTION 2** *Interview several editors before you get started.* Make sure your values are in alignment. For example, at Round Table Companies, one of our values is brilliance. Imagine what would happen if someone wanted to hire us to do a cheap and fast job. We would simply not be pulling the rope in the same direction. You don't want to play that kind of values tug-of-war with someone this integral to making your dream a reality.

**SUGGESTION 3** *Look for these 3 things when hiring someone:*

1. *Talent:* Read their work; you should FEEL when you read it.
2. *Kindness:* You want to work with someone who is a nice person.
3. *Professionalism:* Make sure this person is an excellent communicator and delivers on time.

**SUGGESTION 4** *Speak with at least 3 of the person's past clients and ask:*

1. Did she deliver on time?
2. When she was going to be late (it happens sometimes), was she a good communicator?
3. When you had disagreements, was she a good listener, and did she handle herself respectfully?
4. Would you work with her again?
5. Would you recommend her to a close friend or family member?
6. What do you wish she had done differently?
7. Did you feel you paid the appropriate amount for the level of service you received?
8. Was money ever an uncomfortable issue?
9. Do you feel she captured your voice?
10. Are you amazingly, stunningly proud of your book?
11. In what ways did she over deliver on service?
12. How much time did the process require of you?
13. Do you regret the decision you made in going with this editor, or do you think she was the right choice for you?
14. In what ways will the editor be supporting you beyond your book?

*Recommended places to find an editor:*

- Round Table Companies
- Greenleaf Book Group
- [www.Elance.com](http://www.Elance.com)
- [www.Guru.com](http://www.Guru.com)

## BOOK WRITING OPTION 4: HIRE A GHOSTWRITER

So this one is tricky. You've probably seen my thoughts on **NOT** hiring a ghostwriter. But some exceptional ghosts out there know what they're doing and do it brilliantly. Unfortunately, 50% of our clients hired someone else before us and that person didn't deliver, so I have a relatively bad taste in my mouth about the damage I've had to clean up after a hack job.

If you feel that working one on one with someone is imperative to your process, then make sure you find someone reputable who can meet your goals.

**SUGGESTION 1** *Know your goals and articulate them to potential candidates.* What is most important to you?

- That this book changes the direction of your life?
- Book sales?
- Using the book to build your business?
- Sharing your legacy?
- Getting published by a big publisher?

What is important to you? Know the answer to this question, and hire someone who can deliver on your primary goals.

**SUGGESTION 2** *Know your budget.* Ghostwriters charge from \$5k to \$250k. At the high end, you'll be hiring a *New York Times* bestselling author to ghost your book. At the low end, you might be hiring a student or someone young and inexperienced who is a decent writer but who has never written a book. Professionals with talent who are in demand start at \$25k+. Professionals with talent who are in demand and have an awesome track record start at \$40k or \$60k or more. So how much do you have to invest in yourself and your book? You've got one shot at this, so expect to make sacrifices if you want to create something that changes your life—and the lives of your readers.

**SUGGESTION 3** As with option 3 (Work with an Editor), *interview past clients of the ghostwriter you think you want to use.* Ask them the following questions:

1. Did she deliver on time?
2. When she was going to be late (it happens sometimes), was she a good communicator?
3. When you had disagreements, was she a good listener, and did she handle herself respectfully?
4. Would you work with her again?
5. Would you recommend her to a close friend or family member?
6. What do you wish she had done differently?
7. Did you feel you paid the appropriate amount for the level of service you received?
8. Was money ever an uncomfortable issue?
9. Do you feel she captured your voice?
10. Are you amazingly, stunningly proud of your book?
11. In what ways did she over deliver on service?
12. How much time did the process require of you?

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13. Do you regret the decision you made in going with this ghostwriter, or do you think she was the right choice for you?
14. In what ways will the ghostwriter be supporting you beyond your book?

- SUGGESTION 4** *Make sure your contract has an out.* If the project is not going well, or you simply are not getting along, you need the ability to walk away with no further money due beyond what you owe for work done to date.
- SUGGESTION 5** *Read a potential ghostwriter's past work.* This might be challenging because ghostwriters have to maintain confidentiality with most of their clientele, but NEVER hire someone without reading a full book and making sure you feel that the writing was alive and exciting in the way you want your own book to be.
- SUGGESTION 6** *Try to find someone who is great at self-management.* One of the biggest drawbacks to hiring an individual is that the person may not be self-disciplined enough to stay on task, which changes you from a client to a manager. To avoid this potentially massive issue, find someone whose clients rave about the process and level of professionalism.
- SUGGESTION 7** *If something feels off, talk about it with your ghostwriter.* This is an emotional process to begin with (you're pursuing a dream!), so inevitably, feelings will arise. Express them. If you feel heard, you're working with someone who gets it and can manage himself amidst the emotions of the creative journey. If you do not feel heard, then try again. If you have tried 3 times and do not feel heard, terminate the contract. Walk away before the animosity builds up to a point it can no longer be resolved.
- SUGGESTION 8** *Just to avoid ending on such a sour note, remember to have fun with the process!* Be vulnerable. Enjoy the discomfort of putting a book together. Trust in the universe. Extend love to your ghostwriter because that person is in the trenches with you. She is your partner. If she impresses you each step of the way and shows up with integrity, then you are truly blessed. Enjoy the ride!

*Ghostwriters we recommend:*

- Round Table Companies
- Barry Fox
- Gotham Ghostwriters

*Places to find and review ghostwriters for hire:*

- [www.Elance.com](http://www.Elance.com)
- [www.guru.com](http://www.guru.com)

## BOOK WRITING OPTION 5: HIRE A WRITING FIRM

There are two types of writing firms. One partners you with a ghostwriter, in which case, they are more like option 4 under a larger umbrella. Typically, beyond the pairing up, they have little to no involvement. So that's not a writing firm in the way I am recommending here. A "writing firm" uses a collaborative approach to working with you on your book. Much like a television studio uses a writers' room to create TV shows, a writing firm uses a writers' room to bring your book to life. That means that instead of one ghostwriter, you're surrounded by an entire team of professionals. The value here is that you are the client, not the manager. If you have an issue to be resolved, the company is responsible for ensuring that happens. Not happy with the writing? That's a company problem. Not happy with the billing? Let the company figure it out. Not happy with timelines? You have an ally in the company, and they will work with your team to resolve it.

When it comes to writing your book, being the client and not the manager is the number 1 differentiator between a laborious process and one full of joy.

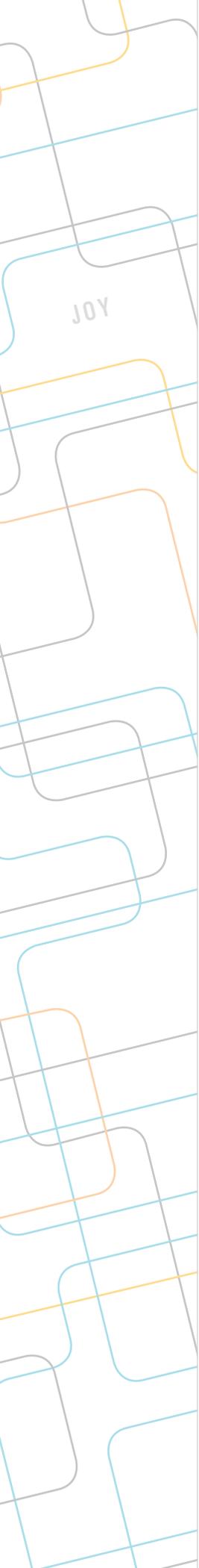
You never want to have to be "bad cop" with your creative team. That should be someone else's job, if it is needed at all.

Other values of working with a firm are that an entire staff of professionals will intimately know your story and support your success. Considering everything that has to happen after your book is finished (to launch it into the world), having an entire team of believers can be invaluable to your goals. You get to remain the client if you wish to, instead of having to turn yourself over to a management role as you try to figure out how to market, distribute, and even publish your book.

**SUGGESTION 1** *Find a firm that mirrors your values.* If you're going to work with an entire team, it is imperative that the company culture and the values it lives by align with your own.

**SUGGESTION 2** *Talk to past clients.* Ask them the following questions:

1. Did the firm's team members deliver on time?
2. When unexpected issues came up, were they good communicators?
3. When you had disagreements or weren't feeling good about the process, were they good listeners, and did they handle themselves respectfully?
4. Would you work with them again?
5. Would you recommend them to a close friend or family member?
6. What do you wish they had done differently?
7. Did you feel you paid the appropriate amount for the level of service you received?
8. Was money ever an uncomfortable issue, or were financial issues handled respectfully?
9. Do you feel they captured your voice?
10. Are you amazingly, stunningly proud of your book?
11. In what ways did they over deliver on their service?

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12. Who were the people on your team who had a large impact on your book and your direction?
  13. How much time did the process require of you?
  14. Do you regret the decision you made in going with this firm, or do you think it was the right choice for you?
  15. In what ways will the firm be supporting you beyond your book?

**SUGGESTION 3** *Understand the financial model.* Ghostwriters often want 50% up front. Firms often work on a deposit and then a monthly retainer. Make sure you understand up front when you will be billed and what you'll be receiving in exchange for the payments.

**SUGGESTION 4** *Understand the firm's process and what to expect as your project unfolds.* Every approach is different. For instance, the first part of our process is all interview based. We average two phone interviews per week for the first 8 to 10 weeks as we create the big picture and write the outline for what the book wants to become. It's important that you know what to expect so you feel comfortable with the pace at which you're moving.

**SUGGESTION 5** *Have an explicit conversation about momentum.* Momentum is key to any creative project. How does the firm ensure that you always feel a sense of forward progress?

**SUGGESTION 6** *Talk about brilliance.* If you're going to hire a firm, it's because you're after an exceptional product. How does the firm protect your investment?

**SUGGESTION 7** *Understand the value of a team versus an individual.* What is the firm offering through the team model that is important to the process of working with you?

**SUGGESTION 8** *If you're looking to change the world with your book, ask how the firm can assist you beyond the development process for the book.*

**SUGGESTION 9** *Talk to the president of the firm.* If you're going to make a sizable investment like this, it's important to be on the president's radar.

**SUGGESTION 10** *Ask the firm to dream with you.* You're not hiring them to just do a job. You're hiring them to help change the direction of your life. Get a feel for what they think is possible for you and your book.

*Recommended firms:*

- Round Table Companies – We are the only firm using a collaborative team model to write books that can impact the world.

## IN CLOSING

If you've gotten this far, you've probably felt you were supposed to write a book for years. The story is living within you. My favorite description that I've heard is that your story is like a traffic jam; you simply cannot see past it until you release the block. So take steps to help you get your story told. ***Our narrative is what gives definition to our experience in this world. Find the right path to share yours.***

If you need help determining the right path for your journey, visit our website or give RTC a shout. We're happy to help you any way we can.

With love in writing,

Corey

