

Your Book Publishing Coach Newsletter

*The insider's guide to writing,
publishing, and making money with information products*

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Appendix: Sample Press Releases (used as examples) and article

***** INTRODUCTION *****

This whole month I examined various aspects of writing a press release. The sample press releases to which I refer are in the last two pages of this newsletter. There is also an article to which I refer in "Turn an Article into a Press Release."

Please print them out now and refer to them as you read on.

***** ARTICLE *****

How to Write a Press Release Part 1: What *Not* to Do

One of the best ways to establish your expertise is to get media exposure. It's free, and the media's coverage automatically conveys the aura of "expert" when they feature you.

You can get the equivalent of literally thousands of dollars of advertising if the media talks about you. And—with the added credibility. Would you be more inclined to believe someone who is written up as a cover story in a magazine or even your local newspaper, versus seeing an ad in the same publication?

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Media coverage offers you instant "celebrity" status.

Not to mention, it can boost or even launch a business, literally overnight.

Last July, in one week, I enjoyed three different media exposures: a write-up in the local newspaper; a national radio program on which my coauthor, Janet Penley, and I talked about our book, [MotherStyles](#); and a teleseminar with Annie Jennings PR about publishing trends.

I still work with clients who came to me via one of those avenues.

So, media exposure is worth pursuing. And the first tool you need is a press release.

Ideally, you should also have a website to send the media to, with a page or pages devoted specifically to your media credentials. However, you can start before you have that in place.

The first thing you need to learn is how to write an effective press release.

For the purposes of this article, and the other articles this month, it would be very helpful if you could refer to an actual press release or two. So I've arranged for you to download two different press releases, to which I will refer.

The first is a press release about my latest book, [MotherStyles](#), coauthored with Janet Penley. The second is a press release I submitted to PRWeb for online distribution. Both mentioned the teleseminar I was going to do with Annie Jennings PR (the "news" angle), but each took a very different tack.

Please take a moment now to [click this link](#) and then print each of these press releases before you continue reading this article.

Now, with the press releases before you, I want to point out a few things not to do.

What Not to Do

1. Don't make it more than one page. Some people say two pages is acceptable, but other experts stress never to go over one page. Given today's busy, information-overloaded world, I say: stick to one page.

2. Don't single-space the entire release. You'll notice that these releases do use single spacing, but there is a line between the paragraphs. Probably it would have been better if I'd used 1 1/2 spacing. But then I would violate the first rule. So—the key is to make it readable.

3. Do not use first person. Press releases must be written in an objective format. You want it to sound like a story people would actually read in a newspaper or magazine article. In fact, some press releases are picked up and used verbatim—so keep this in mind.

4. Don't ever, ever SELL! Though the whole purpose (from your standpoint) is to promote yourself, you cannot do it in a blatant way. Your goal is to give good information, that the reporter and readers/listeners will find interesting, and then the media person will do the "selling" for you when they feature you.

5. Don't try to do too much in your release. You should have only one goal with each release. It might be to drive traffic to your website for a free report, or to have a media person call you for an interview.

In the sample press releases, I wanted the exposure and traffic to my website and my teleseminar. The local paper ended up interviewing me and including a photo as well. So I was able to kill the proverbial two birds with one stone, though my main goal was to get people to the websites and to listen to the teleseminar.

*******JUMP START YOUR BOOK*******

Are you ready to start your book, eBook or information product NOW? Why wait another moment? Go to <http://www.WordsToProfit.com/JumpStartYourBook.html> and find out the 12 questions you must ask before you write your first word. Within a week you can start your book the right way, saving you hours, months, even years of wasted time and ensuring your book will be salable.\

Also, when you get **Jump Start Your Book**, you'll get a 51- minute recorded coaching session which contains much more detail on how to create an information product from scratch.

Go now to <http://www.WordsToProfit.com/JumpStartYourBook.html>.

***** **ARTICLE** *****

How to Write a Press Release Part 2: 7 Keys to Press Releases the Media Will Love

In the previous article, I showed you what not to do when you write a press release. The most important thing is to make sure your press release is read. So, by avoiding the mistakes that scream, 'Amateur!' you increase your chances of your recipient actually reading your press release.

Now I want to give you seven important keys to effective press releases that the media will respond to.

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Before I do that, though, you need to answer a crucial question: What do you want the reporter/producer to do when they read your press release?

In both sample press releases, there were two places I ask people to visit for more information (and even a free CD). I had the websites already set up to handle getting contact information to send them their free CDs, and sign up for the teleseminar and to be on my mailing list.

Each press release should have a very clear purpose, and you need to be ready for the response. If you want the media to contact you to set up an interview, do you have your 15-second pitch ready? Do you have your bio sheet and QA ready? Do you have a website where they can find more information on your expertise and what media you've done before?

Before you write your first word of the press release, make sure the follow-up material is all set.

Now, with the press releases before you, I want to point out the 7 crucial aspects of a press release that captures media attention.

7 Keys to an Effective Press Release

1. Hook the reporter with your headline. Think about the persons to whom you are sending this. What would interest them and their readers?

Whenever possible, include a benefit in your headline, or arouse curiosity, or present something truly newsworthy.

Ask the Great Question: "Who cares?" If you can't answer that question, rewrite the headline. In fact, ask that question after you write every sentence.

2. Do not make the press release about you or your book, per se. Find another angle, one the media will care about.

In the "Author's 11th Book" release, notice that I didn't talk about the book itself directly. (As in, "New book on Mothering Styles is Available." Who cares?) I wrote it up as a feature story that talked about a career that many would find intriguing—a book coach. It is a human-interest type feature, and I sent it to the editor of the "Neighbor" section of our local newspaper. (Note that I mention I am a Winfield resident. That would not appear in something I would send to a national publication.)

The "Publishing Expert" release is about publishing trends—trends are always interesting to the media. Note too that I mention that one trend—self-publishing—has affected the media's own industry.

3. When possible, include a "news" angle. In each of these, the triggering event is the upcoming teleseminar on which I would be a featured expert. This made it "urgent."

There are other kinds of releases, called "evergreen." I could easily repurpose either of these releases to be a more "evergreen" release. To do that, instead of putting "To be released on or before [specific date]," I would simply put, "For Immediate Release."

4. Write in an objective style. Even though each release was really promoting me (and my book, in one case), it did so indirectly, in the context of interesting information. The release about [MotherStyles](#) also included information about Janet Penley, not just me.

Include at least one quote and at least credential in every press release.

5. Very important—do not write a press release as an ad! Nothing will get your release tossed faster.

How to know the difference? Very simply: Ads sell. Press releases tell. You want to give good information—and leave the reporter hungry for more.

6. Don't include everything in the release. Ideally, you want the media person to contact you for more information.

In the publishing trends release, I discussed one trend—self-publishing. But the release makes it clear that there's much to this particular trend—and that there are others I will discuss on the teleseminar as well. If they wanted to do a story on publishing trends, I'm the one they would want to call. Both releases hint that there are dangers to not understanding how self-publishing works.

7. Include a "call to action." Give the reporters something to do. In this case, they were given information about Annie Jennings PR and some free gifts from that website, as well as where to go for more information on the topic (publishing), which was my site. Giving both sites also added to the "objective" feel.

Review this checklist every time you sit down to write a press release. Then, after you write the release, go through the grid again, making sure you've included all seven keys.

Get Your Questions Answered ...

Please take just one minute of your time to take a brief survey that will help Diane write the kinds of articles YOU want to read. Go here (takes literally one minute or less: http://www.wordstoprofit.com/poll/public/survey.php?name=YBPC_survey_1)

Thanks for helping me know how to help you! Answers will be handled in blog posts and full-length articles, so stay tuned!

***** **ARTICLE** *****

How to Write a Press Release Part 3: Anatomy of a Successful Press Release

As mentioned in previous articles, the majority of press releases end up in the trash, virtual or actual.

So far I've given you [what to avoid](#), and the [seven key elements of a press release](#) the media will read.

Now I want to give you the blueprint for a successful press release. There may be lots of ways to write a press release, but I've boiled it down to the nine essential elements the best experts recommend for successful press releases.

Again, please note the sample press releases I've been referring to all month. If you haven't printed them out, [go here](#) and do so now, please.

Elements of a Press Release the Media Will Read

- 1. "FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE"** (or a time qualifier). If your news is for right now (or for any time), type these words, all in caps, in the top left-hand side of the page. If you news expires by a certain date, use "FOR RELEASE ON OR BEFORE [DATE]" instead.
- 2. "FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:"** and add a real person's name and phone number. This information should be in the upper right-hand corner.
- 3. Killer headline** (and subhead if you want). Skip a line or two, and add a headline (centered) in bold, large typeface. The subhead, if you use it, should also be centered, in a slightly smaller font. I like to use italics for the subhead.

The headline and subhead must arouse curiosity and force the reporter to keep reading. Your only purpose of the headline is to keep the reporter reading. You only have 5-15 seconds to capture their attention, so spend a lot of time on your headline!

4. Dateline. At the beginning of your press release, include your city and state, and the month, day and year. Note that one of my sample press release does not do this, but I have started to add the dateline since I learned that editors want to know this. Many journalists specialize in reporting news from a certain geographic market, so including this information could increase your chances of your material being picked up and/or passed on.

5. Lead paragraph. In a few sentences, tell the reader what your press release and story are about. Answer the "five Ws"—who, what, when, where, and why.

Also, it's crucial to make it clear why your media's audience would care about your information. This means you have to be familiar with the type of publication or audience this particular media outlet is reaching.

6. Quotation and credentialization. Give a quote or two from yourself or other appropriate person and add that person's credentials. This is one of the earmarks of a good press release; it's what gives it credibility.

7. The body of the press release. Here you go on to develop your message. Keep your reader interested! In his book, [Feeding the Media Beast](#), Mark Mathis identifies three things the media love: Difference, Emotion, Simplicity.

Difference: You need to stand out. Search for any difference in your book, product or service that you can think of and then play to that strength.

Emotion: Make the reader feel something. What emotion can you provoke? In the "Publishing Expert" I arouse a bit of fear or uneasiness: Publishing is changing at a fast pace, and unless you know some insider info, you may get left behind. I would play this up in the interview. For the press release, you give the facts but in such a way that it hints that there will be emotion in the story you give them.

Simplicity: Focus on only the most compelling aspect of your story. Ask: What non-essential factors must I eliminate to make my product tantalizingly simple?

Use bullet points when possible (but no more than 6 or 7). Show that there is more to come if they contact you.

8. The "call to action" and contact information. What do you want the reporter to do? State it clearly here, and give your contact information again. If you want them to contact you for more information, let them know what the information will be about. If you are offering something to their audience, you can mention that, but don't give any details of price etc.

9. End (or next page) information. To end your press release, type the symbols "###" in the center of your page after the last line of text. As mentioned in a previous article, you want to keep your press release to one page only. However, if you do break this rule and go on to a second page, at the bottom of page 1 type "-more-" in the center of the page, bracketed with hyphens, as you've just read.

Use this as your template for every press release you write, and you'll show the media you know what you're doing. If your headline and story are compelling, your call to action clear, and you're prepared when the media call—you'll be well on your way to gaining some great exposure. Try it!

*******RESOURCES*******

Further Resources on Publicity ...

If you are interested in going whole-hog with publicity, several experts have products you might want to check out—many of them free. I am impressed by all of these people and their honest, real-world approach to establishing expertise. That is, they do not promise to make you a best-selling author overnight, but they do take you step-by-step through tested systems. It's also interesting that each takes a somewhat different approach--which says something, I guess, about the complexities and possibilities of publicity.

1. Suzanne Falter-Barnes. Suzanne has several programs. One helps you [get your platform started](#). When you [sign up for her list](#), you can get her free list of top 50 media and publishing contacts. She also has a program specifically geared toward [business owners](#) who want to garner the incredible power of the media to build their business. Another program is for people who do seminars or otherwise need to [fill their groups](#) for marketing purposes (this too comes with a free audio course just for [signing up](#)).. Don't miss her informative blog and free teleseminars, either.

2. Annie Jennings PR. Annie often gives free teleseminars on Wednesdays, and many of them are offered later as [free MP3 downloads](#). She especially has a lot of great stuff about how to put up a media-friendly website. You can also sign up for her free tips on publicity.

3. Steve Harrison. Steve has excellent, content-rich teleseminars periodically on a number of topics very relevant to publicity and marketing (his specialties). He also holds seminars periodically. A friend who went to his publicity summit came back raving at how he over-delivered, it was worth ten times what she paid, and that what she learned will change her life and her business forever. She came back with tons of ideas to implement, and even had a makeover with an image consultant. I usually mention his teleseminars on my blog, so subscribe to the blog and keep your eyes open.

4. Joan Stewart. Also known as The Publicity Hound®, Joan Stewart teaches thousands of authors how to develop strong relationships with the print, broadcast and Internet media that, in turn, help them sell thousands of books. I've been on her list for years and bought some of her reports; she's a wealth of knowledge. [Click here](#) to take a look.

5. Arielle Ford claims that she's helped to sell more than 15 million books sold and has 15 bestselling authors in her stable. I like [her website](#), which is itself an example of an engaging, informative, entertaining and effective sales page. So if for nothing else, [check out](#) how she uses media, lays out her site, and "sells" you on her product. Then decide if it's what you need at this point.

*******WRITING/MARKEING TIP*******

How to Turn an Article into a Press Release

One of the key strategies for making a living from your writing is to learn how to repurpose your content.

You have some content, right? Information you want to share with others and, if possible, make money from?

How do you do that?

Last month I taught you a lot of things about article writing. This month I'm teaching how to do press releases.

This week I'll put the two together, and show you how to turn an article into a press release.

Step 1: Start with your article. Get out your article. For the purpose of this lesson, I'll use "[Start Your Book Right](#)." (This too is in the last pages of this Special Edition newsletter. Please scroll to the bottom of this newsletter and print it out now. It will be easier to follow this lesson if you have that in front of you to refer to.)

Now, let's say I wanted to repurpose this article into a press release that will announce that I'm giving a teleseminar on this topic. (Which I am going to do, by the way. Notice how I repurpose the content I've already done. Since I have to write a press release for the teleseminar anyway, I thought I'd teach you my method as I do it. I'm into multi-purposing!)

Step 2: Formulate Your Headline. First, I need a headline that will grab attention, right? Make sure there's a promise.

Here are a few possibilities:

"Publishing Coach Teaches Teleseminar on Avoiding the 7 Mistakes Almost All Authors Make"

"Author, Publishing Expert Teaches How to Avoid 7 Mistakes Almost Every Author Makes"

"Upcoming Teleseminar Teaches Authors How to Avoid 7 Common but Costly Mistakes"

"Upcoming Teleseminar Teaches How to Avoid 7 Common but Costly Mistakes Almost Every Author Makes"

"Book Coach Teaches How to Avoid Most Costly Mistakes Authors Make"

"Book Coach Teaches Authors How to Avoid 7 Most Costly Mistakes"

"Book Coach Teaches Authors How to Avoid 7 Most Common Mistakes"

"Book Coach Reveals How to Avoid the 7 Costly Mistakes Most Authors Make"

To come up with the final headline, I would do some keyword research, as well as go to my "swipe file" of successful headlines that I've collected over the years.

(By the way, I would appreciate your input: Which title would make you want to read on? Remember, the only purpose of the headline is to get someone to read more.)

Of course, I would format the press release correctly, as I mentioned in "Anatomy of a Successful Press Release." You'll see that in the final form.

For now, let's concentrate on content.

Step 3: Write the Lead. The first paragraph needs to give the "five Ws"—who, what, when, where, and why. So, here goes:

Winfield, IL, May 22, 2007—Author and publishing coach/consultant Diane Eble will give a free teleseminar for anyone considering writing a book, or who has already been published, on "How to Avoid the 7 Most Costly Mistakes Almost All Authors Make." The call will take place on Wednesday, May 30, at 7:00 p.m. Central Daylight Time, and will last 60-70 minutes.

Step 4: Quote and credentialization:

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"Nearly all authors, published or not yet, make at least one or two mistakes that can derail their book. If the mistakes don't keep them from getting published in the first place, they will definitely hamper their ability to sell their books," says Eble, who is herself the author of 11 books and who has been in the publishing field for more than 28 years as an author, editor, and copywriter. "I've made all these mistakes, and I've seen other authors make them. I want to help other authors avoid these mistakes so that they can not only get published, but get their books out to lots and lots of people," she adds.

Step 5: Body copy:

In her teleseminar, which is free to the public except for normal long-distance charges to the teleseminar bridge line, Eble will discuss:

- Why starting your book too soon can doom it to failure—and the approach they should take that will just about guarantee a successful book
- The number one mistake nearly every author makes, and an easy way to avoid it
- Why most authors never make more than a few cents on their book—but how you can ensure your book can bring in a lucrative income
- Where to go for help, so that you can be confident you'll write a book that will sell
- How to avoid the bad advice that's rampant
- How writing a book is similar to painting a room
- What you absolutely need to have if you want to find a publisher to publish your book for you

How did I write these bullet points? I just looked at my article, and thought about what I could say about each of the 7 points that would arouse curiosity and make people want to come to the teleseminar. I'm still giving them information—I'm telling them what they'll learn on the call. But I'm doing it in such a way that it arouses curiosity.

Notice sometimes I use the words "so that." Whenever you write down a feature, continue on with "so that ..." and give the benefit—the payoff your reader will be looking for.

Step 5: Call to action:

To sign up for the free teleseminar, go to <http://www.wordstoprofit.com/teleseminar.html/>. Once you register, you will be given the phone number and access code for the call. You will also receive a study guide prior to the call, so you can take notes. All who register will also be given a link to the downloadable recording, which is also free.

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For further information about the teleseminar or about book coaching, contact Diane Eble at 630-665-0843 or visit <http://www.wordstoprofit.com> or <http://www.yourbookpublishingcoach.com/>.

Step 6: Copy, paste, format into press release style and revise. I took all the above copy and cut and pasted it into a file. After adding the correct information at the top and adjusting the spacing to 1.5, I noticed I went over one page. Rather than violate the one-page rule, I decided to cut the press release. I made the headline smaller, cut the subhead (which I might reconsider later on). I cut some of the bullet points, and rewrote some of the copy that felt awkward or repetitious. (Good writing is all in the rewriting—and I found several places to improve the copy.)

To see the final version of the press release, [click here](#).

I encourage you to study it to see how I repurposed the content, as well as how I cut and rewrote the copy. Notice it contains all the elements of a successful press release. It tells clearly who it is for as well, and why readers would be interested. It sticks to the correct format, and does not give away too much. I want the reader—and the reporter—to feel a need for more information, which of course they get if they respond to the call to action.

I'm not saying this is a perfect press release. No doubt I'll continue to refine it, especially the headline. (Please do send an email to diane@wordstoprofit.com and vote on the best headline. If you do, I will give you a surprise gift! Include your mailing address, please.) But I hope this little tutorial gives you ideas for how to repurpose your own content, whether it's articles into press releases, press releases into articles, articles into teleseminar content, articles into larger documents such as a small report or ebook.

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TO BE RELEASED BEFORE
AUGUST 2, 2006

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
CONTACT: Diane Eble, 630-665-0843

Publishing Expert to be Featured on Teleseminar to Discuss Publishing Trends

Winfield, IL (PRWEB) July 25, 2006--Publishing veteran Diane Eble will be featured on an Annie Jennings PR teleseminar on Wednesday, August 2 at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Time, to discuss the topic, "The Turning Of The Tides Of Publishing ."

"The publishing industry has seen a sea change over the past decade," Eble says. "Changes in technology, distribution, the explosion of various media, the Internet, all pose significant challenges for publishers and authors alike."

Eble, who has 27 years of experience as an author (11 published books, more than 350 articles) and as an editor of books and magazines, adds that the changes are not all bad. For instance, "print on demand" technology makes it more possible than ever for almost anyone to get a book published.

That's good news, since industry surveys show that somewhere between 82 and 90 percent of Americans plan to write a book someday.

Eble warns that all the changes make it imperative for authors to get educated about the publishing process from reputable sources. "There are many ways to self-publish, for instance. Some companies take advantage of people's desire to publish a book and overcharge for their services. Self-publishing is still a tricky business, and you want to make sure you know what you're doing."

The explosion in self-publishing has also affected traditional publishers—and the media, Eble says. "With the glut of books being published now, the media look even more to reputable publishers as gatekeepers." Yet, if a self-published author knows how to approach the media, there's still room to break in, according to some experts. "Coming to a publisher with an already-established audience—or 'platform'—is critical to any author's success. So is having a strong marketing plan yourself."

Diane Eble will be a featured expert on an upcoming teleseminar with Annie Jennings PR on August 2 at 1 p.m. Eastern Time, to talk about these and other publishing trends. Visit <http://www.anniejenningspr.com/bookpublishingcoach.htm> for more information about the teleseminar, and to get a free CD of a live media training session with a national media trainer. For more information on publishing and book coaching, go to <http://www.WordsToProfit.com> or <http://yourbookpublishingcoach.com>.

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TO BE RELEASED BEFORE
AUGUST 1, 2006

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
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Author's 11th Book Leads to New Career as Book Publishing Coach

When Diane Eble came on board to help Janet Penley write a book on mothering, she had no idea it would lead to a whole new career direction.

The book is *MotherStyles: Using Personality Type to Discover Your Parenting Strengths* (DaCapo Lifelong Books, April 2006). It was Diane Eble's 11th book, Janet Penley's first. For Janet, it was the culmination of 19 years of research and working with mothers using the framework of personality type. For Diane, *MotherStyles* became the gateway for a new direction: coaching writers through the writing, publishing, and promotion of a book.

"The most gratifying part of writing *MotherStyles* for me was coaching Janet, seeing her grow from someone who knew very little about publishing and wasn't confident of her writing, to the self-confident, successful author she is today," Diane says. Janet Penley has appeared on numerous television and radio programs, and both authors are scheduled as guests on the Midday Connection national radio show on August 1 at 12 noon, Central Time (90.1 FM) to talk about *MotherStyles*.

Diane Eble brings nearly 28 years of experience in the publishing industry as an author (11 books, more than 350 articles), editor of both magazines and books, and copywriter to her new career as a book publishing coach and consultant.

"Publishing has gotten to be both a more complicated and more exciting field," Diane says. "Recent technology has opened more options than ever for people who want to publish a book."

That's good news, since industry surveys show that somewhere between 82 and 90 percent of Americans plan to write a book someday. Eble warns that you need to do your homework first, as many companies pose as "publishers" but do no more than overcharge for printing your book, leaving you with a basement full of books you can't sell.

Diane Eble will be a featured expert on an upcoming teleseminar with Annie Jennings PR on August 2 at 12 noon Central Time, to talk about publishing trends. Visit <http://www.anniejenningspr.com/bookpublishingcoach.htm> for more information about the teleseminar, and to get a free CD of a live media training session with a national media trainer. For more information on publishing and book coaching, go to <http://www.WordsToProfit.com>.

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Start Your Book Right

Avoid the 7 Mistakes 95 Percent of Authors Make that Keep Them from Getting Published and/or Selling Their Book

by Diane Eble

Nearly all authors, published or not yet, make at least one or two mistakes that, if it doesn't ensure failure to get published in the first place, it definitely hampers their ability to sell their books.

I know. I've made all of them at one time or another. As an editor and book publishing coach, I've also seen countless other authors make one or more of these mistakes.

We made these mistakes because we didn't know any better. You will know better, once you've read this article. That means you'll put yourself ahead of 95 percent of other people who will continue to make these mistakes. Knowledge is power, as the saying goes.

Mistake #1: Starting your book too soon.

While I'm all for taking action rather than just dreaming that "someday I'll write a book," most people get an idea and immediately start focusing on that idea. They never stop to ask some key questions, such as, "Who will read my book? What else is out there on this topic? What can I contribute uniquely to what's already out there? Why do I want to get this book published?"

In fact, there are twelve key questions I believe authors should ask and answer for themselves, ideally before they even write their first word. Thinking through key questions, doing some research on your topic and your market, will ensure a salable book.

Mistake #2: Not knowing who their audience is.

This one is very, very common. Many people want to write a book that appeals to "everyone."

"This is a book on leadership," says one client. "Everyone needs to know these principles."

Yes, but not everyone feels a need to know these principles. My own book, [*MotherStyles: Using Personality Type to Discover Your Parenting Strengths*](#), could be said to appeal to any mom. Realistically, however, only moms who are motivated to understand themselves and others are likely to buy it. In fact, when Janet Penley and I wrote the book proposal (before writing the book, I might add), we delineated eight key

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characteristics of the kind of mother who would be likely to buy this book. In addition, we identified two niche markets for whom this book would be of special interest.

When you know your market, when you can picture your ideal reader, it makes it easier both to write and market the book.

Mistake #3: Focusing solely on the book, and not considering what else they can do.

Now, this is only a mistake if you want to make money from your book. If you don't care if you make any money from all your hard work, then you can skip on down to the next point.

Seriously, most authors do not make any kind of significant income from their book itself. This is because a book has a perceived value of between \$10 and \$25. No matter how much expertise you pack into your book, the public is conditioned to pay only this amount of money for it.

On top of that, the royalty structure is such that an author will only make between a few cents to a few dollars on a book. The royalty amount a publisher pays is only around 10 percent of net. Net means what they get after they've given a retailer or other distributor their discount, typically at least 45 percent. If your book retails for \$24.95, the net the publisher receives might only be \$13.72. Your royalty from that would be \$1.37. If you had an agent involved, they would get 15 percent off the top of your cut. That brings your royalty, per book, down to less than \$1.17 per book.

Do you see now why you can't get rich on the book itself (or even pay your rent or mortgage)? You'd have to sell 1000 books a month—which is very unusual—just to make a little over \$1000.

That's why you need to figure out other ways to package your expertise, and structure the book so that it is the beginning point of how people find out about you and get involved with you. (See my article, "Your Book is Only the Beginning," for ways to do this.)

Mistake #4: Trying to do it without help.

There's so much to learn about just about everything nowadays, that the only way to succeed in anything is to get help from someone who's been there, done that. Someone who knows the pitfalls and shortcuts and even where the likely detours are going to be, and how to get back on track.

Barbara Stanny, in her books *Secrets of Six-Figure Women* and *Overcoming Underearning*, talks about two kinds of helpers. There are the Way Showers who show you where to go and how to get there, and the Messengers who have the information, ideas, referrals and lead you need to get to where you want to go.

Look for Way Showers and Messengers from books, reliable online resources, and especially people you know who have already traveled the path. Don't know anyone? Seek them out. Don't be afraid to write to an author you admire or even an agent. We're all busy people, but most people like to help go-getters who reach out.

Mistake #5: Getting bad advice.

As you seek help, beware! There are many people who promise you that in a few days or weeks, you can finish your book and become a best-selling author. Be very wary of such claims. Check the person out thoroughly.

I once fell for a scam that promised to enable me to "Write a book in 14 days." Although there were a few interesting ideas in the program, it simply didn't work. The worst thing, though, was he never made good on any of his bonuses. I did check out one of his testimonials (he quoted a well-known copywriter I knew), but I should have checked him out further. The "master writer of 45 published books" had no known books mentioned in Google.

If anyone tells you anything other than that writing a book takes work and planning and that success, while possible, does not happen overnight—hang onto your credit card!

Mistake #6: Not having a good plan.

Most authors have no plan! You wouldn't build a plan without a blueprint, would you? You don't start out on a trip not knowing your destination, or without mapping your route, would you? Yet, many authors just think they can write their book and get it published without any kind of plan whatsoever.

I know. I've done it! Don't. Get the advice, devise your plan. Having a plan for anything makes a huge difference.

Mistake #7: Not writing a book proposal.

If you want to sell your book to a commercial publisher, a book proposal is indispensable. The only way you will ever sell a book to a commercial publisher is to send a top-notch book proposal.

Even if you self-publish, it's a great exercise to write up a book proposal. This becomes your plan.

I liken writing a book to painting a room. The most time-consuming part is the preparation: cleaning the walls, taping up the trim, then painting the trim. Writing a book proposal is like these preparation steps. After that, writing the actual book is as easy as rolling the paint on the walls.

Suggestions to Take Action ...

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As "Your Book Publishing Coach," I don't like to merely inform ... I like to inspire you to take action on what you've just read. So here are some suggestions:

1. To avoid all the mistakes above, learn how to map out your plan, and begin your book the right way—guaranteed—check out the . ["Jump Start Your Book: 12 Questions You Must Answer to Write a Book That Sells" Toolkit](#)

2. For more on the correct mindset an author must have to make a living from their book, [sign up](#) to receive the audio class called ["Make a Living from Your Book—Starting Today!"](#) You will not only understand what it takes to become a successful author, but you will actually begin outlining your book idea at the end of the class. Those who took the class affirmed that this is what happened for them—even though they didn't believe they were ready to start their book! So yes, you'll actually start writing your book ... but you will also do it right, if you only avoid the mistakes mentioned above as you go along (especially if you also get Jump Start Your Book).

3. I am putting together a course on how to write a winning book proposal. (I have sold every book I've ever proposed using this approach--11 books in all, plus a reprint despite three agents telling me, "Nobody's buying reprints.") There's no obligation if you sign up--it will just allow me to let you know when the course is available. [Sign up for the notification now.](#)