



AUTHORING YOUR FIRST BOOK

The Art, Craft, Science, and Business of Telling and Selling Your Story

Seminar 1

THE ART OF WRITING

"If you hear a voice say, "I am not a painter, by all means paint. Then that voice will be silenced."

Vincent van Gough

"Creativity is allowing yourself to make mistakes. Art is knowing which ones to keep."

Scott Adams

Preparation: The Backstory

Commitment

- Prerequisite: a commitment + a game plan.
- Make sure your commitment and your game plan match.

Vision

- Program as possibility
- Become aware of the process of choice

Exercise on Choice

1. *Say out loud, two things you can't do. For example:*

- *I can't finish this article I'm writing.*

- *I can't get the clutter out of my office.*
2. Now restate each—but substitute *won't* for *can't*:
- *I won't finish this article I'm writing.*
 - *I won't get the clutter out of my office.*
3. Now say this sentence three times out loud:
- *I am always free to change my mind.*

- Do the next right thing

Perseverance

- The most important thing about a goal is having one.
- The most important thing about a plan is to stick with it.

Perseverance is not a long race, it is many short races, one after another.

Lord Eliott

Guiding Questions

Three Goals to Clarify Before you Start Writing:

- What you want to write?
- What you want to gain?
- Who you want to reach?

Eight Guidelines Before you Write Your First Chapter:

1. Write for a specific preferred audience.
2. Write a book title and subtitle that tells and sells.

3. Write a silver bullet: a clear, sharply focused description of your book that explains what your book is about, why it's special, and the precise benefits it will provide to readers.
4. Write your back cover before you write your book.
5. Write your book introduction
6. Create a table of contents.
7. Write a book outline.
8. Reach out for opinion molders

Reflections to Begin Your First Book

1. Your identity as an author.
2. You are thinking a book into existence. Then you'll craft it into a powerful message.
3. You will learn what your book is about by thinking and writing.
4. Plan, organize, think, revise, tolerate confusion and uncertainty.

An Exercise to Address Obstacles

Schedule a brainstorming session with yourself to do this exercise.

This exercise is to identify and address any obstacles that you have. Examples include interfering self talk, writer's block, anxiety about the unknown, not knowing enough, worrying about no experience, concern about not having anything to say.

Make three vertical columns on a page:

- 1. Title the left column Usual Cues.*
- 2. Title the middle column Usual Behavior.*
- 3. Title the third column Desired Behavior.*

The Who, What, Where, When, and How of Writing

Who

Who do you write for? Your most authentic answer is for yourself.

When you speak in writing, you do so to an intended audience.

What

Be attuned to needs. Provide answers. Make your approaches to answers accessible.

A “What” exercise: Think before you write.

Sit down and think about your idea before you begin to write about it. Think about what you will write along these lines.

- What are you trying to communicate?*
- What form your book should take?*
- What chapters it should be divided into?*
- What should go into each chapter?*
- What of your experiences will you draw on to enhance the book?*
- What research will you do to deepen the quality?*

Where

Decide where you will write. Protect that space and time from intrusions.

When

Make an appointment with yourself. Decide a schedule for writing that you will be loyal to, no matter what.

How

Recognize your natural style of writing. Are you a visual, auditory, or kinesthetic learner? Respect that style as you write.

To understand work and performance styles: “Toward Brain Hardware Optimization” in the Articles section of www.MentorPath.com

Your Commitment to Yourself

Creativity

Ten Caveats for Writers

1. The most important thing about a plan is having one. The second most important thing about a plan is sticking to it.
2. Write every day. It will help you think like a writer.
3. Read every day. It will help you think like a writer communicating to a reader.
4. Write in a voice that sounds like you.
5. Use language simply and warmly.
6. How you write will be how you are perceived.
7. Keep the burden of clarity.
8. Have the end in mind from the beginning.

9. Take some positive action toward your goal every day.

10. Decide what you want. Believe it's possible.

beliefs → behavior → performance

Seminar 2

THE CRAFT OF WRITING

“Writing is easy. All you have to do is cross out the wrong words.”
Mark Twain

“Write the truest sentence you know.”
Ernest Hemingway

Understand Your Motivation for Publishing: 11 and Counting

1. Disseminate your knowledge, experience, and message to readers
2. Gift to clients
3. As a gift to other offerings, or as an e-book used as a bonus to sign up for your newsletter
4. Publish with a traditional house using an agent to establish national presence as an author
5. Make money by selling your book yourself
6. Use your book to make money
7. Establish yourself as an expert
8. Use the book to enhance client base
9. Spring board for seminars, workshops, presentations, retreats
10. Develop mastermind groups or discussion groups using your book
11. Leave a legacy.

Voice

Definite voice is conversational voice.

Find the optimum way to write to define and enhance your voice.

Design every part of your book

- Write a focused, compelling, understandable, and enjoyable conversation
- Title: Five words or less that tells and sells
- Subtitle: The promise; the benefits described
- Envision the audience
- What is your “ah-ha”? Your good news?
- What will your book do uniquely well
- A seven to nine word mission statement for your book (The HUB)
- Review your Silver Bullet—keep it handy and visible
- Query letter: lead, body, bio, close
- The Book Proposal

The Nonfiction Book Proposal

1. Title and Subtitle

2. The Overview

- What the book is about.
- Why it should be written.
- How you will write it.
- Why you are the best person to write it.

3. Markets

4. The Competition

5. Promotion

- Regional and National presentations
- Publicist

- Faculty or Consultant positions with network promotion
- Memberships with marketing impact
- Electronic or regular mail contacts
- Collaborative and promotional partners
- Interviews for book release
- Articles available in eZine banks

6. Author Background

7. Chapter Outline

Table of contents + chapter by chapter outline with chapter abstracts.

8. The Sample Chapter

The Seven Habits of Successful Writers

1. Create a specific plan including your schedule for writing.
2. When you write, write. Don't combine writing and editing.
3. Take one step at a time. Have a small, specific, definable goal.
4. Find your most efficient way of writing and stick to it.
5. Read your work out loud.
6. Do adequate research.
7. Read the writing of others.

The Top 6 Mistakes Successful Writers Avoid

1. Avoid passive sentence construction.
2. Strive to be clear, specific, simple and humane
3. Show, don't tell your audience to keep them interested.
4. Keep the "I" to a minimum, in order to acknowledge and engage your reader.

5. Lose the jargon and fancy phrases.
6. Be a good storyteller.

Chunking Exercises

Chunk: A piece of writing about the size of a newspaper column that looks at a single subject.

Exercise 1: Write a single chunk. Treat the single subject in a complete, self-contained way. This might be an anecdote, vignette, exercise, description of an event, complete thought, case study. It should be on the subject related to your book.

Exercise 2: Write four more chunks.

You will see the chunks are the building blocks of nonfiction books.

Exercise 3: Fit your chunks into your outline.

See what the chunks illuminate or describe to further a section of a specific chapter of your book.

Exercise 4: Plan a month of writing.

After you have written five chunks and fit them into the outline, you may want to revise your outline. After revision, select the next chunks to write. For these, you will be more aware of what you want to write and you can make a writing schedule.

This schedule is simply a writing plan that does not have to be detailed or onerous.

Important areas of focus for the serious writer.

1. A Mission Statement of your book
 - *Ideals*: The core values that motivate and guide you. They define what is important to what you will convey in the book.
 - *Purpose*: What you wish to accomplish.
 - *Strategy*: The art and science of a plan of action.
 - *Goals*: SMART: Specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time bound.
2. A business plan for your book. (Book Proposal)
3. A timetable: Calendar of completion of all aspects of your book
4. Daily schedule.
5. Your writing office.
6. Your tools. Adequate support: equipment, supplies, space
7. Continuing education in the craft of writing + your topic content
8. Join a writer's group

Your Belief Systems

Reframing Exercise

Say out loud two things you can't do. For example:

- *I can't finish this article I'm writing.*

- *I can't get the clutter out of my office.*

Now restate each, but substitute won't for can't:

- *I won't finish this article I'm writing.*
- *I won't get the clutter out of my office.*

Now say this sentence out loud three times:

- *I am always free to change my mind.*

References:

How to Write a Book Proposal by Michael Larsen

Write the Perfect Book Proposal by Jeff Hermann and Deborah Hermann

The Art of Writing by William Zinsser

Addendum

If you use Microsoft Word, you can test the "readability" of your writing by clicking on "Tools" then "Options" and then "Spelling and Grammar." Then click the check box at the bottom that says "Show readability statistics."

After you spell-check your document, a box will pop up showing the number of words you used, the number of paragraphs, the number of sentences, the number of sentences per paragraph, the number of words per sentence, and the percentage of passive sentences. It will also give you two indicators that are based on the Flesch-Kincaid formula for readability. These indicators measure reading ease (based on 100 points, with 100 being the easiest) and grade level. When the reading ease is 65 or higher, that tells you have a good chance of connecting with your reader.

Seminar 3

THE SCIENCE OF WRITING

“A writer is someone on whom nothing is lost. When you start writing, you think like a writer.”

Henry James

“So much of writing is about sitting down and doing it everyday, and so much of it is about getting into the custom of taking in everything that comes along, seeing it all as grist for the mill. This can be a very comforting habit, like biting your nails.”

Anne Lamott, *Bird by Bird*

Comfort Zone

To write and publish your first book you'll have to leave your comfort zone.

A comfort zone is simply a familiar pattern of behavior

When we write a new story – and change our minds – we change our brains.

Frame

How you frame something can change the meaning. The meaning can change your mind. Your mind can change your brain.

Each meaning and each frame is yours to construct. It is not there until you create it.

A three-step combination to reframe and incorporate your new endeavor:

1. Visualization.
2. Affirmations.

3. Change your behavior to precisely what you want.

The Science of a Vision

The key elements are:

- Repetition: the neural networks dedicated to your vision must be renewed and repeated regularly, or they will be eliminated.
- Consciously incorporate this new vision into an ongoing story to be ultimately metabolized as part of the self. Otherwise, you will “lose” this vision.
- Be very specific about the experience of having achieved the goal.

Regulate States of Mind

State of mind: a psychophysiological state, an internally organized software program of expectations, attitudes, meanings, and feelings.

Grounding and Centering Exercise

- *Ask yourself: “How present am I?”*
- *Go through a systematic review of your body and perceptions from it: feeling, perceiving, and moving each aspect of your body from toes to head.*
- *Systematically inventory each of your senses:*
 - ◆ *Seeing*
 - ◆ *Hearing*
 - ◆ *Touching*
 - ◆ *Tasting*
 - ◆ *Smelling*

- *Attune specifically to aspects of body function that may be calming: focus on and control of breathing, tensing and relaxing various muscle groups, alignment of body posture.*

Progressive Relaxation:

Sit in a comfortable chair and close your eyes. Clear your mind. Focus only on your immediate bodily experience. Begin feeling the sensation of relaxation.

- *Take a deep breath.*
- *Breathe in relaxation. Breathe out tension.*
- *Focus entirely on your feet and toes; relax them completely.*
- *Let the relaxation move into your calves. Then to your thighs.*
Notice the warm, heavy, comfortable sensation.
- *Let the relaxation move into your hips. Then to your abdomen.*
Then to your chest. Notice the relaxed, soft feeling of your muscles, and the deeper breathing.
- *Let the relaxation travel up your neck into your face. Then to your scalp. Then to your brain.*
- *Be aware of even deeper breathing. Continue to breathe in relaxation, and breathe out tension until your entire body is in a relaxed state.*

Decide when to stop the exercise. Allow a moment of transition to a fully alert state.

You will remember this experience in your body and mind and will be able to access it more quickly each time.

Creativity

Flow: a state of heightened focus, productivity, and happiness. A state of mind of being centered and focused without distraction that allows full immersion in the process of concentration and performance that creates superior results.

Exercise: Morning Pages

Morning pages are three pages of longhand writing done first thing in the morning, totally stream of consciousness. There is no wrong way to do them. Just write. Even if you can't think of anything to write, write anyhow. Do not edit or judge, just write. The morning pages are a primary tool of initiating or rediscovering your creativity.

Management of State Specific Issues: Chokes, Slumps, and Blocks

Chokes

Thinking too much causes a choke.

Slumps

Thinking too little can cause a slump.

Blocks

Writer's blocks usually occur when the writer can't enter a state of mind to create.

Insight Changes the Brain

At the moment of insight, a complex new set of neural connections is being created. An “ah-ha” experience activates centers in the brain to release certain chemicals.

A Summary of the Science of Writing

- Since old patterns are hardwired, it takes consistency of focus on new experiences to change this wiring.
- Concentrate on new behaviors—possibilities rather than problems or obstacles in order to create new brain pathways.
- Create new ways of thinking to simulate brain circuits, with an “eye on the prize” – the completed book – to lay new mental maps.
- Regulate states of mind and manage emotions to promote brain power.
- When diverted to an old feeling or behavior, redirect ideas and energy flow to the new ideas.
- Remember that the power is in the focus, and that permanent change is from the consistency of that focus.
- Focus on successes rather than obstacles or non-performance. Focus aligns and directs energy and efforts.
- Emphasize positive, adaptive, behavior and progress; discourage attention to negative behavior.
- Knowledge is inert until it is activated. Put it into behavior.

- Think about your new experience and evolving self – how our new experiences will require thinking of yourself – your identity – in a new way.

Inverse Wisdom for Authors

1. Burn your bridges.
2. Do the opposite of what you normally do when you are afraid, worried, anxious, uncomfortable, or stuck.
3. Obstacles reveal desires.
4. Discomfort can be a sign of progress.
5. Lean into the unknown.
6. Don't believe every thought you have.
7. You do not attract what you want; you create what you focus on.
8. You only see what you believe.
9. Believe in someone and then he or she will show you why you do.

Seminar 4

THE BUSINESS OF WRITING

“Writing a novel is like driving a car at night. You can only see as far as your headlights, but you can make the whole trip that way.”

E.L. Doctorow

Someone one once asked Ira Gershwin, the great American songwriter, what comes first: the words or the music? He quickly answered, “The contract.”

Options for Getting Your Book Published

1. Self-publish

Considerations and steps:

- Editing
- Formatting
- Indexing
- Graphics: front and back book cover and spine
- ISBN number and bar code.
- Arrange warehousing + distribution.

2. Subsidy publishing

3. Print on Demand (POD)

4. Fulfillment House

5. Traditional Publishing House

6. Partnering with a Foundation or Company

7. eBook

Why Self-Publish?

Five benefits of self-publishing:

1. Control.
2. Money.
3. Waiting and rejection.

4. Autonomy.
5. Power of belief.

Titles That Tell and Sell

- 3-5 words that capture the essence of the books promise
- Does the title sell (an answer, not a question; a solution, not a problem).
- A memorable image, metaphor, or a symbol that captures the essence of the book.
- Is the title a prescription for the cure that the book will provide?
- Does the title make a promise the book will fulfill?
- Does the title offer your unique position—your book’s HUB?
- Does the title speak to one of the five great marketing motivators: fear, exclusivity, guilt, greed, or the need for approval?
- Does the title appeal to the needs, fears, and values of potential readers.
- Does the sub-title clearly spell out the benefits of reading the book.

Exercise: Brainstorm titles

Brainstorm a title for your book. Don’t censor or try to focus only in one direction, but free associate. Allow a free flow of ideas and write them down. Put down anything and everything that comes to you. Come up with thirty potential titles that you write down.

Exercise: Brainstorm a subtitle.

Do the same with your subtitle. Same free flow, not at the same time as you're brainstorming your titles. Carve out a separate time. Brainstorm thirty possible sub-titles.

Then later come back to your brainstormed titles and sub-titles and select your favorites. Put those away for 24 hours and then come back to them a third time and look at how they fit together. See what rings true and seems engaging. Select one or two of each.

Exercise: Bullet Points

Write six bullet points of benefits that readers will get by reading your work.

Make them brief, clear, and simple

Publishing Roadmap for Nonfiction.

1. Come up with your idea.
2. Do your homework.
3. Choose whether to type, dictate or write your material.
4. Research topic and competition.
5. Develop a title and subtitle
6. Find similar books to model
7. Design a working cover page

8. Create a mock up
9. Set a binder to hold your materials
10. Write out a basic structure for your book (chapter titles, overall concepts, chronology)
11. Organize your ideas into chapters
12. Generate a complete Book Proposal, even if self-publishing
13. Create your first draft of Chapter 1.
14. Edit and review first draft to create a second draft to insure proper punctuation, grammar.

Platform

Where to Build Platform

1. *For a major book deal with a big publisher*

Considerations to build your platform:

- email list
- ezine or newsletter
- blog
- affiliate partnerships
- writing articles for publication
- speaking, workshops, and seminars
- publications in trade journals
- presentations to conferences, trade shows, organizations
- affiliate contacts and partnerships
- media exposure and contacts: radio, TV, podcast, Teleseminars

2. *To enhance a coaching practice.*

Brand and niche are important.

3. *To become a professional speaker.*

The easiest way is to have a book.

4. For major media

Authentic brand and niche.

White Papers

White Papers are persuasive documents that usually describe problems and how to solve them. A White Paper is a cross between a magazine article and brochure. The white paper usually focuses on a product or service and translates them into business advantages.

Things You Can Do to Promote Your Book

1. Buy a domain name as soon as you have a title for your book.
2. Start your own blog at Blogger.com or Wordpress.com.
3. Write a few articles on your topic and submit them to the internet for syndication.
4. Get business cards.
5. Put together a marketing plan.
6. Do an internet search for writer conferences or book festivals in your area.
7. Create an email signature to promote your book and message
8. Write a press release and submit it to free online press release sites.
9. Write a brief bio that you will use in pitching yourself to the media.
10. Start your own email newsletter.
11. Leave your business card, bookmark, book flyer, or postcard wherever you go.

12. Pitch yourself to local TV and radio stations.
13. Pitch yourself to local print media.
14. Work on your press kit and have it available on your website.
15. Check your local paper to see if the topic of your book is in the news, and write a letter to the editor to share your expertise and promote your book if it is.
16. Check with the local companies to see if they're interested in buying your book in bulk.
17. Add reviews to your website. What someone has to say is a thousand times more effective than what you say in terms of promotion.
18. Donation of your book to a charity silent auction. If you attend, sign it for the winner.
19. Get to work on your next book. Sometimes the best way to sell your first book is by promoting your second.

The Business of Writing

You can deduct expenses related to the business of your writing.

Included: research, marketing, supplies, equipment, books, subscriptions, entertainment, travel.

The key to each of these deductions: keep adequate records. Document the business purpose.