

Nonfiction Book Proposal Outline

The following are some guidelines to help you. As much as you love writing, this is not designed to be an epic. You want to demonstrate that you know your stuff and that you are the right person to be writing and promoting books like this.

If you are in business you will recognise that this has similarities to a traditional marketing plan, because of course that's how businesses plan how they will market and sell their products and services and for the moment that's what you are.

This is often the hardest part and I would suggest treating each section like a mini project. Use all of the tools available to you. I love to mind map and use post it notes. When you brainstorm, do it, leave it and come back to it once you have given your mind time to process its unconscious thoughts. Use your intuition, often the first thing that comes into your mind is usually the right one.

This is where writing and personal branding coaching comes into its own. Using key skills this can all be teased out of you and written in a really professional manner.

Suggested layout

Title page
Table of contents
Introduction & summary
Target audience
Product – about the book
Competitors
Price
Content overview
Book length
Marketing & promotion
Place – where you will sell it – distribution channels
Promotion – how you will sell it
About the author
Sample chapters

I. Introduction

Describe your book in two or three paragraphs (500 words or less).

What is the title and subtitle?

What is the category under which it would sell?

Thinking about your target audience, what would make them want to read it?

Now rewrite it as if it was the back cover blurb and make it really cry out to your audience and by this imagine there were no boundaries, and let your passion shine.

Summary

Write this last. It's the executive overview. Short, no more than two pages double spaced. Purpose: if the editor reads nothing else, they will know what you have in mind. Ideally, it will be sufficiently compelling to make the editor read the rest.

Target Audience

What makes up your ideal reader/customer profile?

What markets will your book appeal to?

Start by asking a few questions and making some (educated) assumptions...then build up an archetype (or 2 - one male and one female).

Question	Him	Her
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Personal details: What's their name, age, job, marital status? Any children? Pets? Other dependents?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Personality: are they introvert or extrovert? Open or defensive? What's their attitude to risk? Are they assertive? Suggestible? Naturally sceptical?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Learning style: how do they prefer to receive information? Do they respond to visual aids? Do they look for summaries or details? Can they relate to abstract ideas or do they need something more tangible?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Point of view: how do they vote? Which newspapers do they read? What are their favourite TV programmes, websites and other media?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lifestyle: how do they spend their leisure time? What's their ideal holiday? Who are their friends? And what type		

of people would they cross the street to avoid?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anxieties: what's keeping them awake at night (and how can you make it go away)? Think about the symptom and the root of the problem – and what their life will look like when the problem is solved. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs & desires: what do they want that they don't need? What do they need that they don't want? Finally (a really important one...) <u>what would they hate to miss out on?</u> 		

What does that tell you about your potential readership?
Who else might read your book?

Product – about the book

Competitive Titles

List and summarise the major competitive titles and explain why yours is different from each.

Title	Similarities	Differences	Cost	Date of publication

Price

What price would you pitch it at and why

Content overview

List each of the intended chapters and what each is about.

What illustrations or photos do you need? Where will you get them?

Who will you reference? Do you have all the permissions you need?

Book length

Number of words

This is a great time to consider how long it will take you to write and edit the book, now add 30% on. This should form part of your writing schedule.

Availability

When will the following be ready?

First draft

Edited second draft

Edited third draft

The future

What other suggested titles do you have? How do they all fit together?

Marketing and Promotion

These are just some of the questions you should be asking yourself.

- Personal branding
 - Do you have a website for yourself and your books?
 - What about Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, email?
 - Do you need any vocal coaching to prepare you for your launch?
 - What about personal style? Who can help you to determine what first impression you will be giving?
- Speaking and presentations
 - Where can you speak? What speaker's networks could you access?
 - What other networks do you belong to?
 - Could you tour and give talks? What cost, if any? When could these happen? Who will arrange them?
- PR
 - What PR could you generate? Will you do it yourself or use a professional? What is the cost?
 - Where should publicity be focused?
 - Do you have publicity photos?
 - What are the magazines and media that your target audience pays attention to?
 - Where should you look to get the book reviewed?
- Testimonials, who could provide a testimonial that you can use in the book and on your promotions? Can you use these in your book?
- Expert pieces, opinions, blogs, how to's – which parts of your book can be used for this and where could they appear? These are your teasers.
- Will you self publish and self-promote? If this proposal is for publishers, then you would expect them to do this, however some thought should be given to how you would do it if you had to.
- What is your budget?

Write your action plan

What is your action plan to actively promote the book?

Area	Details	Who	When

About you, the Author

Your credentials and experience. What makes you uniquely qualified to write and promote this book?

Sample Chapters

Include the first one or two chapters - not the introduction, chapters that provide a sense of the style, voice, expertise and structure of the book.

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