



Nonfiction Book Proposal Cheat Sheet

Overview - What problem does my book solve, or gap in the market does it fill?

- Describe the vision of your book. Be concise, quick-paced, informative.
- Start with an attention-getting opener (Ex: startling statistics, interesting anecdotes)
- Make sure the title of your book is noted within the first couple of paragraphs.

Author Profile - Why am I the best author to write this book?

- Tell about yourself, your relevant qualifications (professional and personal) that make YOU the expert to write the book.
- Some writers prefer to write this section in the third person.
- Include writing credits (with dates of publication, publisher, format), awards, notable publicity, and sales/circulation information. Include speaking and media experience.
- Do not include a resume; draft a specific description as the author of the book.

Comparative Titles

- List 3-4 complementary titles that have sold well (w/title, author, publisher, pub date).
- Helpful research tools are online or retail bookstores, libraries. Search books that would be on the same shelf as your book, published by large/mid size trade publishers.
- Describe how your book is superior/different from each book. This is the key to this section—it is an opportunity to promote the features and benefits of YOUR book.
- Focus on YOUR book. Avoid critiques/summaries of other books.
- End with a bullet point summary of specific benefits of YOUR book.

Target Market - Who is the book-buying audience for this book?

- Who will buy the book? Why? Be specific!
- Use demographics, statistics and percentages of population for specific markets.
- Include target groups and why they would be willing to buy your book.

Promotion/Publicity

- Include any direct sales outlets you can use to contribute to market/sale your book.
- Include any associations or groups you belong to, including number of members, newsletters, websites, conferences, etc.
- Include a list of key contacts you know that *may* be willing to provide a pre-publication quote of your book that would help sales/publicity efforts.
- Use specific names, circulation and membership numbers.

TOC/Chapter Summary/Sample Chapters

- Create a Table of Contents, including any front matter or back matter
- Draft a brief paragraph Chapter Summary for *each* of the chapters. This should be a description of the features and benefits of the chapter.
- The last section is the only part of the proposal that is actually your book! Choose 1-2 Chapters—not the Introduction, but chapters that best demonstrate your content.