

Don't Fear the Red Pen

Editor is not a four-letter word spelled: E-V-I-L. Contrary to popular belief, editors do not want to rewrite your story or take away your writing voice; they want to help polish it. There is no need to fear an editor. A good editor will help a writer stay true to their voice.

One of the most important steps you'll take in the publishing process is to HIRE, WORK WITH and TRUST an editor.

WHAT IS AN EDITOR'S JOB?

Editing is not just about finding typos. Editors will look for:

- Misspelled words
- Misused words
- Punctuation mistakes
- Make sure you write in the active voice
- Watch for overused adjectives or adverbs
- Sentence and story structure
- Inconsistencies
- Interesting, well-developed characters (fiction)
- Overall story sense

WHAT KIND OF EDITOR DO YOU NEED?

Editors are one or a combination of all:

- Educated
- Experienced
- Gifted

The Educated are schooled in the English language. Perhaps they are, or were, college professors. Most hold university or college degrees (PhDs, MAs, BAs), or have some type of continuing education training.

The Experienced may or may not hold a degree, but they have years of concrete editing experience. Perhaps they were in the publishing business before becoming editors. Perhaps they worked many years in the corporate world.

The Gifted have a natural ability to find typos, understand sentence structure, and pick out misspellings or misused words. It's their gift. These gifted editors make terrific proofreaders!

WHAT TYPE OF EDITOR DO YOU NEED?

- **Developmental Editors** will shape your book at the beginning stages. They usually work with you chapter by chapter.
- **Content Editors** look at the big picture after the manuscript is done. They focus on plot, tone, voice, organizational structure and character development (for fiction).
- **Copy Editors** look for correct word choice and suggest wording changes to help clarify and tighten sentences. They concentrate on grammar and spelling and correcting punctuation.
- **Manuscript Review Editors** will offer to read your entire book for a fee and give you excellent feedback on how to improve it.
- **Book Doctors** are where editors send manuscripts that need extensive revisions or more help than the editor can give. Book Doctors are skilled at analyzing problems with the manuscript and can offer great advice to help the writer improve the manuscript.

- **Proofreaders** are often overlooked, but are also an important part of the publishing process. They are skilled at finding what everyone else missed. Proofreaders should be the last person to read your book before it goes to layout. Once the manuscript comes back from layout, making changes becomes harder and very costly. I also suggest that the proofreader take another look once the book comes back from layout. This is when widows, orphans and spacing inconsistencies can be caught, and where page number and table of content comparisons are scrutinized.

HOW DO YOU FIND A GOOD EDITOR?

- CIPA is a great resource to find editors.
- Talk to some of the published authors for personal referrals.
- Look at the acknowledgment pages of your favorite books.
- Do your own research. Contact four or five editors and ask them to give your manuscript a sample edit and ask for a quote.
- Find an editor that works in your genre. Ask the editor what they specialize in. An editor that works mainly with non-fiction financial books is probably not a good choice to edit your children's book.

WHAT ARE THE EDITING STEPS?

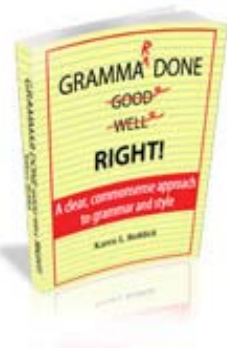
1. Let your friends and family read your manuscript.
2. Hire an editor and send them your manuscript in either hard copy or electronic format.
3. The Editor will read through your manuscript, making corrections or comments and return it to you.
4. Read through the editor's remarks. Make note of any questions or disagreements.
5. Communicate and work with your editor by going through the editor's remarks via phone.
6. Rework your manuscript based on the agreed upon changes.
7. If needed, return the manuscript to the editor for a final edit. (NOTE: Steps 6 and 7 could be repeated several times depending on how much work your manuscript needs.)
8. Send to a professional proofreader.
9. Send to a professional layout designer.
10. Send to a proofreader for final, detailed analysis.
11. Send to a professional printer.
12. Go through the printers mock up very carefully. It's your last chance to find any hidden mistakes.
13. Make lots of money off your perfectly polished book!

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

Editors charge by the hour, by the page, by the word or by the project and prices vary depending on what type of editing your manuscript needs. It's impossible to talk price without seeing what needs to be done, but pricing ranges from \$35.00/hr.-\$95.00/hr.

Here's a helpful tip: Take the time to become a better writer. Because the cleaner the copy you can give to your editor, the less time it will take to edit, which means less cost to you.

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The clear, commonsense approach to
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