



# 30-Day Book Writing Bookcamp!

Week 1: Book Ideas that Work + Highly Effective Research



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### 30-Day Book Writing Bookcamp – Week 1

Congratulations on choosing the 30-Day Book Writing Bookcamp! You're here because you'd like to create a signature book. One that will brand you as an expert in your specific service and field.

#### What is a “signature book”?

It is a book that gives you **a strong, memorable identity**—either as an expert who deals in [your specialty] or as the creator of a specific program. (Example: Steven Covey's “7 Habits” system.)

That is the effect you want your book to create: When people see or hear the **title keywords** to your book or book series, they should instantly think of you; just the way people instantly think of “running shoes” when they hear the word “Nike” or they think of “Pepsi” or “Coke” when they hear the word “cola” (depending on their personal preference).

So are you ready to create your signature book? The one that makes your name or photo synonymous with your signature program or specialty?

Let's get started, and find the strategy that is perfect for you.

#### Step One: Understanding Different Types of Self-Help Books

What you are going to be writing is most likely a self-help book—and “Self Help” is the category you'll find most books written by industry experts, if you check Amazon.com.





But “self-help” doesn’t necessarily mean “touchy-feely” or “psychological makeover”. There are seven different types of books you can write that will fit into this Amazon category.

1. “Signature Program”- based book
2. “My Story” – biographical self-help book
3. Interview book
4. Inspirational book
5. “How-to” book
6. Survival Guide book
7. “First Steps/Goal” book

All of the best books by experts have one factor in common, without fail: They are **transformative** in nature, giving a promise that if you pay close attention to the book, read it all the way through and take its suggested actions, you will emerge at the end of the book a better, healthier or richer person than when you started reading it.

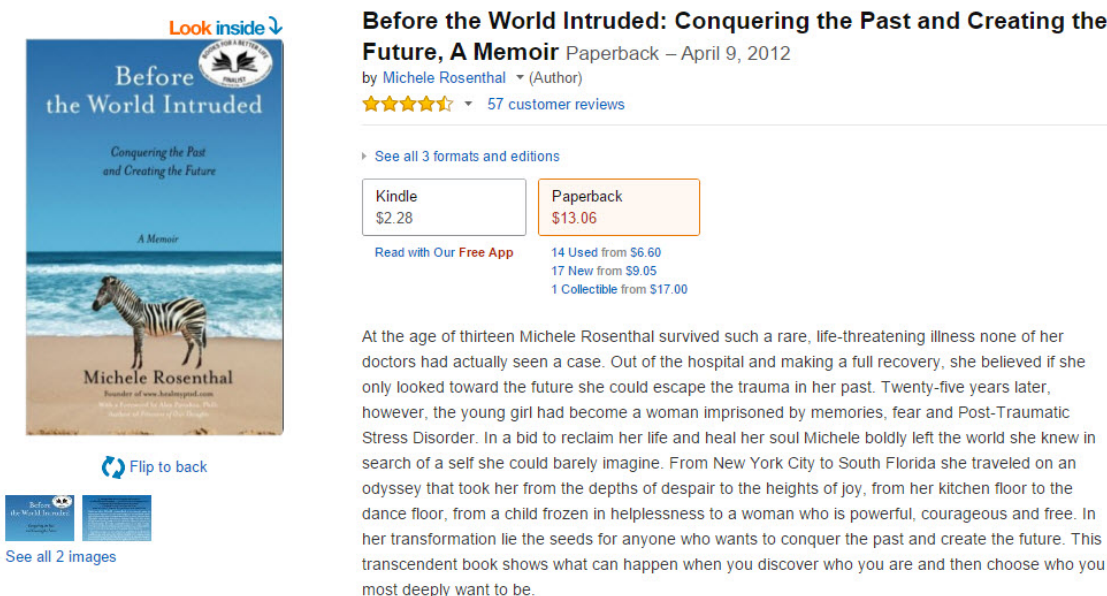
Certain types of books lend themselves better to different types of programs. For example, if you are a nutrition coach who teaches the revolutionary new “Anti-Fiber Diet: The Way to Live if you have Crohn’s Disease” (invented by you), a “signature program” book is the way to go.

If you are an expert whose roster is full and who has people lining up to be clients, you can also serve those waiting by writing a “how to”, “signature program” or “first steps” book, so people can get themselves hooked on (and practicing) the system you teach.

If your expertise is more traditional, but you are lucky enough to network regularly with strong peers, the “interview book” format is a great way to go.



If you are a PTSD coach dealing with seriously paralyzed and depressed people, it becomes extremely important to demonstrate that you've been there—and overcome it. People with PTSD are used to being told there is “no cure” and to feeling as if the rest of the world simply doesn't understand the drastic re-hard-wiring that life-shattering trauma has visited on their brains. That is why PTSD coach, Michele Rosenthal, wrote a deeply personal account of her own trauma, struggle and recovery in *Before the World Intruded*.



Let's take a look at the benefits of each of these different types of signature books...

## 1. **“Signature Program”- based book**

This book type is best slanted towards people who have tried repeatedly to do something—and failed. Your promise is a fresh, new approach—and a unique system they can easily learn. Note that telling your story and providing real-life examples play an important part in ensuring the success of this type of book. It is perfect if your method works and has generated



enthusiastic clients with genuine success stories.

### 2. **"My Story" – biographical self-help book**

Part autobiography, part self-help or motivational work, this type of book is perfect when you are attempting to help people with a deep history of paralysis, procrastination, fear and failure. First you need to connect with this audience and reassure them you are not one of the A-type personality butt-kickers who will only reinforce their fear of failure (even if you are now an A-type personality)! Your own drastic transformation will reassure and instill belief—if you first connect by showing them you've "been there" too.

### 3. **Interview book**

If you are fortunate enough to know or network with several real niche celebrities who deal with your field or specialty, an interview book will hold wide appeal. Approach your potential interviewees individually and professionally, making it easy for them to agree to be interviewed. Tell them of the opportunities you have set up for promotion. Offer the book as a free gift for their list members—you will benefit from this more than from actual sales. Offer to interview them on Facebook Live, YouTube Live, LinkedIn Live or podcast.

The beauty of interviewing experts who are already respected, visible and popular: You become an expert-by-association.

So, go for it. Do a little homework—then ask.

### 4. **Inspirational book**

If your clients are into spirituality, an inspirational or philosophical book may be your best way to go—particularly if you can offer new twists to traditional practices like meditation or manifesting. (That's all the "Law of





Attraction" was: A new twist and a name put to something certain people have been doing for thousands of years.)

The key is to come up with that unique twist that "clicks" with the reader. Put a name to what you are teaching. Make it an entity with an identity in itself.

### 5. **"How-to" book**

Your client has a goal. Write a book that shows her, step-by-step, how to attain the first step of that goal or ground herself in the core basics.

Make sure, however, that it is a significant step—one that will change her life in an exciting, positive way. Help her along the first leg of the journey and also make sure you leave her able to continue alone, if she so chooses: Then conclude the book with a coaching offer.

Your "how-to" book should convince her that you really have the goods. You can show her how to do it, tip her off with insider secrets and shortcuts, and share the resources you, yourself, use—ones she might not know about.

### 6. **Survival Guide**

This type of book is best for the client who is already well on her way—the "intermediate" to "advanced" client. If that's the level most of your clients are at (and you really don't want to deal with novices), presenting your readers with a book that helps them take shortcuts, find the best methods and tools and just plain encourages them at faint-hearted moments you've identified is the way to go.

You can blend several types of book into a Survival Guide: Motivational, How-to, Inspirational... it's your pick.



Just make sure that every tip or section is essential, fresh, helpful—and indispensable. Something they will refer to again and again, while recommending it to peers!

### 7. **“First Steps/Goal” book**

Are your clients trying to achieve a specific thing? Lose forty pounds in sixty days? Eliminate joint pain? Make \$10,000?

Show them how. Focus only on the goal you state in your title (e.g. “Make \$10,000 in Forty Days: Maximize your Strengths and Shed Your Weaknesses”).

Choose a goal that is absolutely attainable, with diligent effort. Be sure to point out that ultimately, achieving the goal is up to them—then do your best to help them achieve it.

## Step Two: Setting Yourself Up for Success

Keep in mind that your book doesn't have to take forty years to write; nor be a thousand pages thick (unless you are J.K. Rowling). When people read books by industry experts and professionals, they are looking for something that will easily and quickly help them obtain a desired result: Ergo, the more easy-to-read (and attractively laid out) your book is, the better.

Which would you rather read: A thousand-page book of densely packed text with no screenshots, photos or illustrations... or a book that feels like “light reading”, that makes points clearly and leaves you feeling inspired every time you put it down? So focus on your main title topic—and when you edit, table everything that doesn't further that goal or deal with that topic into another file... for another future book.





Also **make sure that you feel excited about sharing what you know**. Notice we didn't say "excited about writing": Many people feel intimidated by writing—at first—but are genuinely longing to share their unique approach, tips, methods or inspirational story.

If you don't have fun writing your book, your reader won't have fun reading it. And ultimately, no matter how serious the goal or topic, your book should feel like **fun**: Not like a grim textbook that people just don't feel like picking up again, after they've made themselves wade through the first chapter or two.

To ensure your book inspires you as well as readers, before you write a word, take the time to **face and pinpoint your fears**. If you don't do this, chances are you may de-rail yourself or self-sabotage without even knowing you're doing so.

Ask yourself **why you are writing the book**—not only why you are writing it for your clients, but for yourself. And if the answer isn't "because I KNOW this will help" or "because I'm so excited about sharing this", then re-visit your topic and find a new topic that does make you feel that way. (If you're writing a book solely because you want to "raise my public visibility", ten to one it will turn out to be a lackluster book.) There's no reason why you can't write a helpful and successful book—as long as you **commit to taking the actions** laid out here—and actually start the journey. **Set a deadline** and start planning today!

Here's a simple example of decluttering your negative beliefs by re-framing a fear into an affirmation you can believe in:

"I'm just not a  
writer."

"I am an exceptional  
communicator!"



If you need a little help with this, be sure to take the time to work through this week's Exercise on "**Decluttering Negative Beliefs**".

### Step Three: The ABCs of Research and Planning

When you plan your book, don't just calculate time for the actual writing, factor in time for research, interviews, note-sorting and the like.

There are two types of research: Primary and secondary. Primary research occurs when you take the time to find the source of a fact or quote, and interview the originator directly. It is always more valuable (and more accurate) than secondary research (e.g. looking up a fact on the internet at a third-party source).

It can be intimidating at first to do interviews, but it will give your book a richness and validity no amount of secondary research can convey. Always remember that people who grant interviews are doing you an enormous favor, so respect them and their time. When planning, decide on who to interview and request interviews first thing, to allow plenty of lead time for responses and schedules.

Record your interview via Zoom, Skype or even just a pocket recorder, first requesting permission to do so. Specify this is for veracity, to ensure you get your facts straight—unless, of course, you and your interview subject are planning to use the interview as promotion.

Make your requests in a straightforward manner, stating:

- Who you are and whether or not your subject has met you
- What motivated you to select them
- What you specifically want to talk about or ask



- Where their responses will appear
- What you will do for them in return [optional]

Who you are and what motivated you to select them should take no more than a sentence or two—enough to fill them in on where they know you from (IF they know you: And why you chose to ask them instead of someone else).

Example:

Hi Sue,

Jean Asparagus here of CerebralChickenLady.com. I attended the Break Your Own Eggs Convention last August, and I was much struck with your insights into chicken psychology. I would very much appreciate it if you could spare ten minutes of your time, any day in October, to answer five questions about chicken psychology. I am writing a book on “Differences between Breeds: The Way Chickens Think” and I would love my readers to benefit from your wisdom.

I am including my five questions. Please contact me, if interested, and let me know the date and time that would suit you for a Skype or telephone interview.

Thank you for considering my request,

Betty Breadbucket  
CerebralChickenLady.com  
1234 Peoria Drive  
Dunmanifestin, OH 43002  
Tel: (614) 000-0000

Keep the tone straightforward, brisk but conversational. If you are dealing with an academic (e.g. Professor Paul Beakclipper, chief biologist of Woodpecker University), then be absolutely formal. This means addressing your letter to “Dr. Paul Beakclipper, BSc., PhD”, and addressing him as “Dear Dr. Beakclipper”. Do not worry about injecting personality into letters to an academic. Instead, focus





your attention on letting him know how your research will be used and assuring him he will be given a chance to ensure your quotes are accurate.

Strictly speaking, this is not required—but academics have huge reputations to maintain and it is always better to let them vet text quoting them in advance, rather than deal with angry letters afterwards. Be absolutely professional and precise.

If you are interviewing a peer, or someone whose career cannot be ruined by a misreported or out-of-context fact, you can decide to be more conversational—and this is the norm in the professional world. If you are on someone's mailing list, address them the way they address you. If you know your interview subject even slightly, you can judge whether or not to call them by their first name. (Go with your gut.)

First names are also more common in North America: If you are contacting someone from Europe who you don't know (or don't know well), keep it formal—first names from someone they don't remember will not be seen as friendly, just disrespectful.

When requesting interviews or answers to questions, **expect negotiation** and be prepared for it. Be as accommodating as you can. After all, your interviewee is doing you the favor (especially if you're not yet widely known).

Another important part of research is cross-checking. Learn to listen for that little inner “warning bell” that makes you uneasy about a fact or story—and go to the source for clarification.

### **Citing Your Sources:**

Unless you are writing an academic piece, you don't have to formally cite your sources in a specific format, but it adds credibility to your book (and is a possible protection against lawsuits) if you take the time to cite sources. In fact, if you



have used any information from a professional with a PhD, do list your sources at the back of your document, and double-check your expert's preference for citation style. Make sure you also ask if you have cited him/her correctly when doing a final proof.

Familiarize yourself with the information at these links:

- <http://help.library.ubc.ca/evaluating-and-citing-sources/how-to-cite/>
- <http://library.uvm.edu/guides/subjectguides/BIZ/citesources.php>
- <http://www.apastyle.org/learn/quick-guide-on-references.aspx>

It is perhaps overkill to cite sources as if you were writing a research paper—but it is better to over-cite rather than do it incorrectly.

When citing professors/doctors, cite research-paper style. When quoting other experts and crediting other websites, the final APA Style link, above, is your best bet to follow.

### **Researching Offline Sources:**

Many writers research solely online, and ignore offline sources. **DON'T DO THIS.** For one thing, **offline sources are usually much more reliable than online sources.** Reputable print publications—for example, National Geographic—are ruthless and meticulous when it comes to fact-checking (and will actually employ fact-checking specialists).

In fact, **be your own fact-checker.** Go over your book in its final incarnation and cross-check every fact (or have your assistant do it for you). You will build your reputation on a whole other level, if your research is as passionate as your writing.

And finally—**don't neglect your local librarian!** The research desk at your public library can be an invaluable source of aid, information and tips.



### Step Four: Learning from the Best

Take the time to study other professionals who have written books. Ask yourself:

- How did they use their books for branding?
- What motivated them to write the book?
- What do they bring to their readers?

Study even a few top coaches and you'll almost instantly get the answers to these questions—and see how you can apply their wisdom to your own book-writing process and promotion.

Links to start out with:

[Share Guide: Interview with Jack Canfield](#)

[Oprah Winfrey: Advice to New Writers](#)

[How to Write a Book that sells You: Increase your Credibility, Income and Impact](#)

[Publication Coach Blog](#)





## APPENDIX A: ACTION PLAN - BRAINSTORMING YOUR BOOK

### Week 1: Book Ideas that Work + Highly Effective Research

Your Company Name/Title\_\_\_\_\_

Tagline: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Complete this action plan and the accompanying exercises to brainstorm your signature book.*

#### 1. I would feel most comfortable writing:

##### Signature Program book

- You have a "signature" program or method that is already branded
- You are not planning to replace it

##### "My Story"

- You have overcome an incredible obstacle that few overcome
- You want to help those who are facing the same type of challenge

##### Expert Interviews

- You know or have access to 5-7 celebrities or peers you can interview
- You aim to be an expert-by-association and you know your audience would love your guests

##### Inspirational

- You specialize in a spiritual or emotional healing discipline
- You can easily write stories, affirmations and parables that will uplift people

##### How-to

- You want to teach your clients a task, strategy, skill or method they absolutely need to master before signing on for a program package

##### Survival Guide

- Best for clients closer to the start of their journey
- Can include essential tools, tips, pitfalls to beware of, strategies to set up

##### "First Steps"

- Basic skills to set your future potential clients up for success



**2. Top three book types I feel I could write more easily than others:**

**3. My preferred top book type choice:**

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### 4. Questions to ask myself:

■ Is my book transformative? How will it change my reader's life?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. What are the unique benefits of each top three book type I think I could write?

Book A: \_\_\_\_\_

Examples:

- ☐ I think my readers would like this style best
- ☐ I have a signature program that will easily convert to book form
- ☐ I have material already written in the form of:
  - Blog posts|
  - Client exercises and worksheets
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ I know 5-10 experts I can interview

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_





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**Book B:** \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Book C:** \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



6. Brainstorm potential Book Titles below:

**Title:**

**Subtitle:**

**Title:**

**Subtitle:**

**Title:**

**Subtitle:**

**Title:**

**Subtitle:**

**Title:**

**Subtitle:**

**Title:**

**Subtitle:**

**Title:**

**Subtitle:**

**Title:**

**Subtitle:**

## *My Final Choice for my Signature Book:*

**Book Type:** \_\_\_\_\_

☐ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ \_\_\_\_\_

**Benefits of this type of book:**

**Book Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sub-Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **7. Prime keywords for my signature book:**

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8. My book has a strong, memorably identity that brands me as...

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### EXERCISES: DECLUTTER NEGATIVE BELIEFS

1. Identify your unique negative beliefs about writing a book and re-frame each negative into a positive statement that resonates with and energizes you:

Negative Belief	Re-framed Affirmation
E.g. "I'm not a writer."	I am a great communicator. This will be just like talking to a client!
"Other coaches/experts write books—not me."	
"I don't have time to write a book."	

### 2. Choose a strategy that you feel comfortable with. Plan to write your book using this strategy.

I will:

- ☐ Write my book myself
- ☐ Dictate my book using:
  - ☐ Voice to text software
  - ☐ A Dictaphone and a transcriptionist
  - ☐ Skype interviews
  - ☐ An iPhone or Android recording app
  - ☐ [Search for Recording Apps at AppCrawler](#)
- ☐ Hire a ghostwriter and give her samples of my “voice” from letters, my website, etc.
- ☐ Hire a ghostwriter to clean up my raw interview transcriptions and turn them into book form
- ☐ Re-purpose old blog posts, client worksheets, session format notes, etc.
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_



### 3. Identify negative behaviors you need to transform:

- ☐ Procrastination
- ☐ Being “too busy”
- ☐ Not facing fears
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Other ideas to clear negative mindsets and boost motivation:

- ☐ Take a mini-course on transforming negative mindsets, or dealing with your issue [E.g. procrastination, fear]
- ☐ Read a book on writing your own book that resonates with you
- ☐ Join a Book Writing Challenge Group
- ☐ Join a Writer's Group
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX B: CHECKLIST

- I understand the differences between the seven main types of books that coaches often write:
  - “Signature Program”-based book
  - “My Story”
  - Interview book
  - Inspirational book
  - “How-to” book
  - Survival Guide
  - “First Steps” book
- I have decided on the book type I will write:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I have identified my primary keywords—the ones people will use to search:
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- My book brands me with a strong, memorable identity
- My book will be transformative
- The transformation point and/or take-away from my book will be:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_





- ☐ I am genuinely excited by sharing the information in my book
- ☐ I have asked myself why I want to write the book:
  - Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ I have committed to writing my book:
  - ☐ I have drawn up a schedule that includes research, writing, editing and formatting
  - ☐ I am committed to writing \_\_\_\_\_ words per day OR \_\_\_\_\_ hours per week
  - ☐ I have given myself a deadline: \_\_/\_\_/20\_\_
- ☐ I have allotted a realistic lead time for:
  - ☐ Primary research
  - ☐ Secondary research
  - ☐ Interviews
- ☐ I have made a list of people I want to interview for my book
- ☐ I have sent out interview requests
- ☐ My letter states:
  - ☐ Who I am and whether or not my subject has met me
  - ☐ What motivated me to select them
  - ☐ What I specifically want to talk about or ask

- ☐ Where their responses will appear
- ☐ What I will do for them in return [optional]
- ☐ I am aware that it is always better to cite sources (and when using information or quotes given by certain types of experts, absolutely essential)
- ☐ I am committed to, at the very least, acknowledging my sources—even if only in acknowledgements at the front or an appendix at the back of my book—including:
  - ☐ Who said it
  - ☐ Where I got it from
  - ☐ Specific date/details information or quote originally appeared
- ☐ I am:
  - ☐ Employing a fact-checker
  - ☐ Meticulously doing my own fact-checking
- ☐ I am using offline sources for research too, including:
  - ☐ Print periodicals
  - ☐ Reference materials
  - ☐ My local librarian
  - ☐ Local experts
  - ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ I have been proactive in learning what I need to know about writing a signature book to “fill in the gaps”