



30-Day Book Writing Bookcamp!

Week 4: Writing, Editing, and Formatting your Book like a Pro



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30-Day Book Writing Bookcamp – Week 4

Welcome back! You should now be well into the rhythm of writing every day, but let's quickly go over three basic key points...

Step One: Creating the Perfect Daily Writing Schedule

You should by now have a better idea of how long your book needs to be. If you would like to take this bookcamp literally and get the writing part done within thirty days, remember that you need to divide the projected total number of words in your book by the number of words per day or hours per day that you plan to achieve, in order to meet your thirty-day deadline.

For example, if you plan to write a 50,000-word book in thirty days, at the rate of 700 words per day if you divided 50,000 by 700, you will quickly realize that you have to slightly more than double that number of words per day. (50,000 divided by 700 = 72 days.)

So let's divide 50,000 words by 1,650 words per day. That gives us an estimate completion time of 30 days.

And before you get too daunted by that many words per day, realize that 1,600 words per day is only **four pages** of solid text per day. You may finish your book even faster if you are including photos, diagrams or illustrations.

Some people will easily be able to knock off four pages in a morning. For others, it will be a full-time commitment. And there are still others who will find it quite easy to manage ten pages per day—and get their book finished in less than a week!

This is particularly true if you are doing a lot of copy-pasting from your already-created:



- Worksheets
- Instructions
- Client exercises
- Notes

But hey—another point to remember is that it's not a race! The important thing to remember is that you need **to work at a pace that is comfortable for you**. If your afternoons are taken up with client consultations, wonderful! You may have to realistically adjust your deadline so you plan to complete your book in ninety-days instead... but the important thing is to **start writing your book now!** Not next week, or next month!

You may be planning to **time your book launch with a product, VIP Club or package launch**—for example, your new Annual Commitment package (or whatever you plan to call it). That's when you may not have a choice about the number of words per day you write, if you want to stay within the deadline for your launch.

Don't sweat it. If the deadline is rigid, it's not cast in stone that your book has to be 50,000 words. You can adjust the final figure to 40,000 words or even 30,000 words (the standard minimum for most eBooks).

Just make sure your book ends up as clear and concise and readable as possible—and fulfills its promise to the reader—and you can't go wrong. You've probably experienced this yourself: Finding more value in a short eBook that delivers the goods than in a long one that numbs your brain or you just don't have time to read—and you've actually appreciated its brevity.



Remember this:

Sometimes minimalist writing can have maximum impact.

A final point to keep in mind for your writing process: You will need to factor in time for research.

“Research” can be as simple as finding the right worksheets and notes in your archive files and organizing them to be transcribed into your book or it may involve:

- Setting up interviews with experts
- Interviewing experts
- Organizing notes you have taken
- Visiting libraries, stores or other external locations
- Reading through research material
- Locating reliable primary sources
- Vetting out interesting secondary sources

And so forth.

So do factor research into your daily writing time—or commit a week before you start writing to get all the research set up and completed. Be sure to factor **editing** time in your plan too!



Step Two: Finding Your Writing Rhythm

Finding your writing rhythm starts with setting a deadline and deciding how much you're going to write daily. Then it goes on to include other factors—such as your perfect time of day (or night) to write.

Plan your writing time when your mind is sharpest and your energy greatest. If you're a morning person, schedule yourself for a morning writing session.

Better yet, plan to get up even earlier—it's amazing how much writing one can accomplish when everyone else in the house is asleep! You can then take a break to walk the dog or even have a nap before writing again or before clients arrive—because you will have written your daily minimum number of words already—before your day has officially even begun.

If the early-morning scenario makes you shudder, however, and you are most alert at night, after the kids are in bed, no problem! Plan your writing as a wind-down activity: Something creative and fun just for you.

Take care of yourself. You'll write best if you're not stressed, exercising, getting adequate nutrition and making time for relaxation. (Hey: This is only what you regularly tell your clients, right?)

Make writing fit your goals and your energy patterns. Develop a good attitude towards writing. See it as something uplifting, joyful, and creative. Make sure you set it up to be fun.

Remember that writing is a process. It can be a healing, liberating, and exciting process, if you combine intuition with a dose of self-discipline and a good dollop of wisdom in knowing yourself. But don't beat yourself up if you don't turn into a little writing robot! Do the best you can and don't let yourself stress about it. If you don't enjoy writing, your readers won't enjoy reading—so make sure you enjoy it!



Step Three: Sticking to the Point and Weeding out the Clutter

You've learned to create powerful outlines. Don't worry if they don't feel very powerful right now—you will get better at refining them as you go. (Yes, even within this one book!)

The important thing is to refer often to your outline. Make sure you are sticking to the point—but do this “referring” *before* you write a chapter, to refresh your memory about points you want to cover, not during its actual writing.

If you want to prevent mind-clutter from creeping in, de-clutter everything else about your writing process first.

- Tidy and organize your office and desk
- Set up and organize any files you will need
- Make a list of research to be done
- Make a list of people to be contacted as soon as possible
- Make a list of facts to be checked

In fact, some authors find it invaluable to set up one or more Excel files, so they can not only keep track of what's been done and what hasn't, but also keep notes and add in valuable resources—so they will have them on file for the next book they write.

Data such as “NEVER call Fran B. Wonderful in the morning!!!” or “Likes to talk about her dog—its name is Pepper” can propel you from being an efficient researcher to being a laser-focused one that people love to talk to.

And you can save time, when you can glance at your Excel sheet of resources and note that the downtown Reference Library is closed on Tuesday afternoons.



Especially make sure you contact people who need a longer lead-in time early on in your writing process. This especially includes:

- Experts or celebrities you want to interview
- Artists you commission to create an eCover or graphics for your book
- VAs or other service experts who are in high demand (you want to book them early)

The more you can anticipate, set up and organize in advance, the less stressful your actual writing time will be.

Step Four: Staying in Love with Your Book—and Editing Like a Pro

Sad but true: Most book-writing breakups occur at the editing stage. That's when writers get cold feet and projects lie abandoned.

That's a tragedy. You've invested all this time! Editing is tricky, and there is no one cast-in-stone method for doing it. You will most likely develop your own best routine, as you write more books and articles. However, there ARE several ways how ***not*** to edit. Ignore these recommendations, and it is virtually guaranteed you'll drain the life out of your book!

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, **resist the urge to start editing while you are actually still writing your first draft.**

What this will accomplish, if you do this, is take all the life right out of your book until there is nothing left for your readers to love.

Remember, when a reader loves your book, she has really just made a strong personal connection to you. Even a book as cut-and-dried as "How to Fix a Toaster in Ten Easy Steps" will have its fans and detractors. Some people will love the visuals and find them really helpful, others will love your conversational



tone—and still others will hate the book because you used a serif type face instead of sans-serif, and they find sans-serif easier to read.

But the connection won't be personal unless you have a strong voice, so that your personality and rhythms shine through. This won't happen if you have obsessed over grammar and rewritten each sentence eight or nine times so that it sounds like the manual for that toaster we were just talking about.

If you edit when you are still actually in your first-draft writing process, you will also blow your timeline and deadline sky-high.

Any editing at this stage—if you *must* do it—should be restricted to:

- Spell checking
- Making sure you've hit all your outline points

If you are “not a writer”, once you've finished your first draft, **put your book aside for a while** (factor that into your schedule too) And remember, the more you resisted the urge to go back and tamper, the more you will have forgotten about your earlier writing. That's a great thing, because now you can leave only a day or two between finishing your first draft and editing. (If you've been tweaking and re-reading your daily output, you may need to put your book aside for the next couple of weeks).

Why is it essential to put your book aside before doing your first post-first-draft read through?

If you give your mind time to clear, when you do perform that first post-draft read through, you will instantly and easily catch things like:

- Paragraphs that are repetitive and superfluous
- Paragraphs that ramble



- Paragraphs or instructions that simply don't make sense
- Paragraphs that really belong in another section

This alone is one of the biggest benefits of waiting until you've completed your first draft before editing. You will be reading your book like a reader—and that's the best time to highlight, strike out or make notes about sections to be adjusted. Just make notes and highlight. **Don't edit as you go on the first read-through**, or you will lose that reader's-eye view!

Once you've done this, go back and do your editing. At this point, editing ought to be a painless mechanical process, with all the emotion and confusion taken out of it. You are simply following your notes and doing the tasks you previously noted.

After you have done this, run the spell checker over it one last time—and give it to another writer, to read through. NEVER give your book to a non-writer. Though if you are doing something instructional, you CAN beta-test it on someone who badly wants to learn the skill or task you are teaching.

Non-writers (e.g., family members) are useful for “de-bugging” purposes. (E.g., get them to go through your manuscript looking for spelling mistakes.)

After this cursory editing process, do consider sending your book out to a professional editor for further tightening. Be sure to choose an editor who specializes in the precise function you want her to do and prepare for this by familiarizing yourself with the different types of editors. Start by checking out this article on 4 Levels of Editing Explained: Which Service Does Your Book Need? <https://www.thebookdesigner.com/2014/04/4-levels-of-editing-explained-which-service-does-your-book-need/>



Step Five: Formatting Survival Secrets

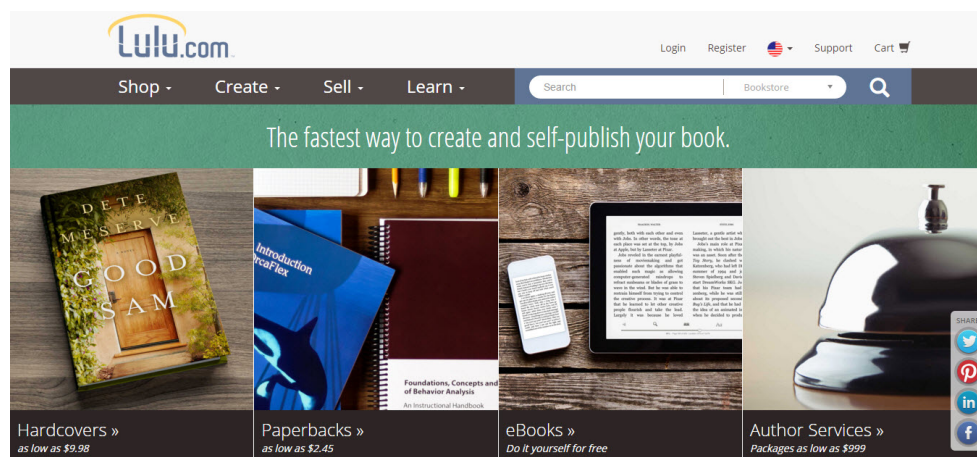
Also sad but true: If you survive the editing process, you may find yourself stuck right before the gates (i.e., when it's time to format your book for either a traditional publisher or for a particular online platform, such as Amazon Kindle).

Preparing Queries for Traditional Publishers:

If you are hoping to impress a traditional publisher or agent, what you need to do is reassure them with the sort of query and topic outline they expect—nothing too radical—but with unique twists here and there which are truly exciting.

If you are planning to go the traditional print route, you also need to be aware of three major factors:

- There is absolutely no money nowadays in traditional print books—unless your book becomes a New York Times best seller (no exceptions!)
- You can use per-unit fulfillment services like Amazon's **Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP.com)** or LuLu Press (**Lulu.com**)



The one big plus about going the traditional print publishing route, however: You don't have to write your book first.

It's standard practice to send a Query Letter pitching a book idea to several publishers. If you get a nod from a particular publisher, take it from there and start writing. What you will often find, however, is that publishers may respond with comments like: "We love your idea for "The Ice Cream Coach: 36 Ways to Lose Weight while Eating Ice Cream" but we would prefer to see 36 Recipes for Low Fat Ice Cream included".

You then get to decide whether or not you can happily adjust and accommodate them, or whether you need to tell them to take a hike—you're not a cookbook creator. (Do it tactfully, if the latter—and realize they may be much less interested in your next book pitch.) Once you've got the green light from a publisher, put your already-set-up writing plan into action, and don't stop until that book is hot to go! But don't send it to the publisher yet. **Find an agent** and let her negotiate the contract for you. (Expect to pay around 15% to your agent—and if you've found a good one, that can be more than worth her fee.)

But what if you are planning to produce an eBook?

The big advantages of this route:

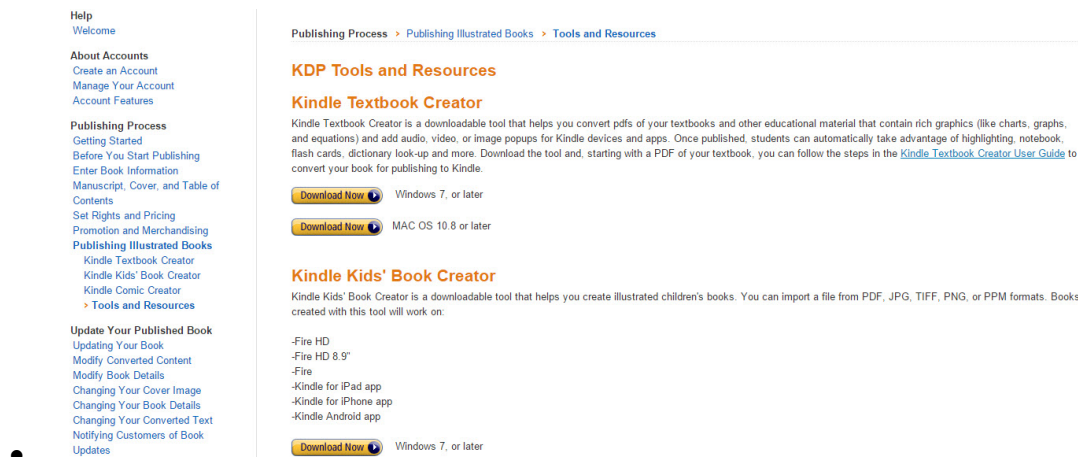
- You won't have to deal with agents and publishers
- You can get your book out and selling in record time—even in thirty days or less
- You will make way more money than if you count on a publisher's advance and royalties

When it comes to formatting your eBook, be aware that there will most likely be different formatting instructions or even platforms for different types of books:



Let's take Amazon.com as an example:

- For product-fulfillment print books, use Amazon's Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP.com) platform.
- For any type of graphics-based books, find the exact Amazon Kindle formatting tool by checking out KDP formatting help (<https://kdp.amazon.com/help?topicId=A3IWA2TQYMZ5J6>). You can use this help page as a kick-off point to find out other Kindle formatting information.



And be sure to first check out the help section: Getting Started—Preparing your Book (<https://kdp.amazon.com/help?topicId=A2NBSNHQIHR4W3>).

TIP: You may wish to avoid the Amazon Kindle Unlimited program for now. (People have been reporting conflicts with it, since its rules are highly restrictive.)



Our best formatting advice: **Budget for a formatting specialist to do it for you!**

This is well worth your investment. There are glitches and quirks about most ePublishing platforms that can drive the neophyte insane—even if they follow the ePublisher's instructions to the letter.

And if you are planning to include **a fixed layout** (where everything has to be in a certain place on the page) or **graphics** of any sort at all, using a formatting professional is a must.

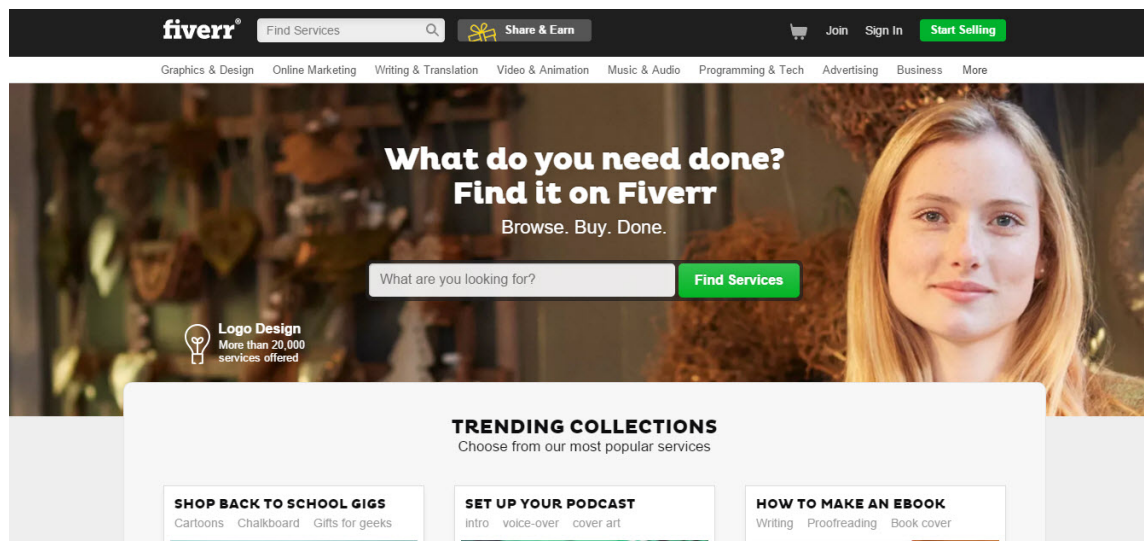
The real problem is that there are an infinite variety of eReader devices and mobiles out there - different models, screen sizes and variations, as well as different manufacturers. Since layouts are fluid on platforms like Kindle, you can't use page numbers. This means it is incredibly easy for images to be "broken" and instructions skewed to the point of unintelligibility. So save yourself (and your readers) a big headache, and plan to get your formatting professionally done.

Ask around. Ask your VA to recommend someone, if she doesn't do formatting herself. Put it out in your writer's group or social media that you are looking for a formatter (and be specific about the platform and type of formatting you need).

Try out formatters on Fiverr.com. Start with something small—a sample chapter or an article, to check your chosen formatter out.

Take care of your editing and formatting as efficiently as you've tackled the writing process, and you will soon produce a powerful, professionally-presented book... with a minimum of pain and fuss.





Step Six: Launch and Promotion

This Bookcamp is all about getting your book written and completed in thirty days, but it wouldn't be complete if we didn't touch on essential facts you need to know about launching and promoting your book.

Our number one tip: Do create an actual **book launch**!

Just mentioning it on social media will barely get you noticed. You'll be a single tiny bubble in a vast ocean.

Coordinate and plan your promotions. If you have decided to join the KDP Select program, allowing them to feature your book in their library for free for ninety days, be aware that you will have five "free days". These can be invaluable!

What it means: You get to offer your book "for free" to all Amazon readers on days specified by you—and you can integrate this with emails to your list or with specific promotions. You select which days you want as free days—and they don't all have to be taken at once.



One big tip: DO NOT offer your book for free the exact day you publish it. There is a short review period, and your book may not actually be available in the catalogue for a few more days! Plan your first Free Day on the official launch day of your book—which should be at least five days after your book is published, to allow for Amazon review time.

DO make sure you have a “Look Inside” section on your Amazon listing, as well as a powerful, keyword-optimized description. Create a Facebook event for your launch and a Facebook Page for your book—especially if you want to take advantage of Facebook Advertising. Just make sure you specify your EXACT demographic—from your ideal reader research—when selecting an audience; otherwise you’ll notice some “garbage” comments and audience results.



APPENDIX A: ACTION PLAN - PLAN YOUR PROMOTION

Your Company Name/Title_____

Tagline: _____

Date: _____

Complete this action plan and the accompanying exercises to plan your promoting—and start the process by setting up your necessary book-creation “housekeeping”.

BOOK
LAUNCH

Launch Date: _____

Join KDP Select?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Free Book Day:
__/__/20__

Free Book Day:
__/__/20__

Free Book Day:
__/__/20__

Free Book Day:
__/__/20__

Free Book Day:
__/__/20__



Read the following resource articles:

- It's Party Time! Book Launch Parties for Indie Authors by Joel Friedlander
- 89+ Book Marketing Ideas That Will Change Your Life from AuthorMedia.com
- 25 Goodie Bag Ideas for Your Book Launches, Readings, Signings and Other Promotions from The BrainAlchemist.com
- The Book Launch Strategy of A #1 Amazon Bestseller by Tyler Basu

CAUTION:

Amazon has strict review policies. Do NOT solicit reviews from friends, relatives or anyone that shares the same IP address (e.g., someone at the company where you work) or whose IP address you have shared.



Book Launch Essentials “To Do” list

- **Create an Author Profile** after your book is uploaded.

***TIP: STUDY other similar author Amazon Profiles** of established authors, so you will know exactly what types of information and graphics you wish to upload.*

-
- **Decide on your Amazon Free Days.**

REMEMBER not to schedule the first one until your book is live—usually 3 or 4 days after uploading.

-
- **Create a Facebook Page** for your book.

***TIP: PUT A SIGN-UP BUTTON** in your Facebook Page. Engage with it frequently.*

-
- **Sell to your subscribers!**

***TIP: THIS IS YOUR BEST AUDIENCE** because they have already trusted you enough to subscribe and/or buy from you.*

OPTIONAL STRATEGIES

- **Create Press Releases** and line up directories and publications (online and off) to send them to.
- **Run a Giveaway.** Set a date. Let people know that those who buy before that date can email you a copy or screenshot of their receipt to receive a free gift from you.
- **Offer to be a guest speaker or author.** This is a wonderful way to get others to spread the word about you—and your book.



GET CREATIVE

What other strategies can you think up, to encourage others to share the buzz?

Use this as a worksheet. CHECK OFF strategies you have used—and make notes.

My Strategies	NOTES:
<input type="checkbox"/> _____ • • •	
<input type="checkbox"/> _____ • • •	
<input type="checkbox"/> _____ • • •	
<input type="checkbox"/> _____ • • •	

EXERCISES: HOUSEKEEPING

1. **Write down your Research sources, goals, and tactics.** Use this as a handy reference worksheet, when you begin your research inquiries. MAKE NOTES.

Online sources	URL or Contact info	What I am researching:

To Do:

2. Write down the names and contact information of people you want to interview. Fill this in completely and early—so you will have plenty of lead-in time to arrange interviews or wait for email replies.

EXPERT	URL or Contact info	My request:
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sent: __/__/20__ <input type="checkbox"/> Response __/__/20__ Details:
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sent: __/__/20__ <input type="checkbox"/> Response __/__/20__ Details:
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sent: __/__/20__ <input type="checkbox"/> Response __/__/20__ Details:

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EXPERT	URL or Contact info	My request:
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sent: __/__/20__ <input type="checkbox"/> Response __/__/20__ Details:
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sent: __/__/20__ <input type="checkbox"/> Response __/__/20__ Details:
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sent: __/__/20__ <input type="checkbox"/> Response __/__/20__ Details:



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Offline Sources	Telephone/contact person/address	What I am researching:
Name: Rates:		<input type="checkbox"/> Sent: __/__/20__ <input type="checkbox"/> Response __/__/20__ Details:
Name: Rates:		<input type="checkbox"/> Sent: __/__/20__ <input type="checkbox"/> Response __/__/20__ Details:
Name: Rates:		<input type="checkbox"/> Sent: __/__/20__ <input type="checkbox"/> Response __/__/20__ Details:

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OUTSOURCE CONTRACTORS:	URL or Contact info	Task I need them to perform
	Email:	<input type="checkbox"/> Sent: __/__/20__
	Tel:	<input type="checkbox"/> Response __/__/20__
	URL:	Details:
	SPECIALTY:	
	Email:	<input type="checkbox"/> Sent: __/__/20__
	Tel:	<input type="checkbox"/> Response __/__/20__
	URL:	Details:
	SPECIALTY:	
	Email:	<input type="checkbox"/> Sent: __/__/20__
	Tel:	<input type="checkbox"/> Response __/__/20__
	URL:	Details:
	SPECIALTY:	
	Email:	<input type="checkbox"/> Sent: __/__/20__
	Tel:	<input type="checkbox"/> Response __/__/20__
	URL:	Details:
	SPECIALTY:	

APPENDIX B: CHECKLIST

- I have created a writing schedule that works for me, including factors such as:
 - The total number of pages I wish to write
 - The time frame in which I want to produce my book
 - The specific type of book that will please my readers—and suit my schedule
- I have factored in time-saving strategies such as writing my book by re-purposing material I have already written, including:
 - My signature program
 - Worksheets, notes, checklists, et cetera
 - Blog posts I have built up that deal with my book's specialty topic
 - Other _____
- I understand I can adjust my final word count to fit my daily schedule/launch schedule
- I am not getting hung up on the precise number of words. Rather, I am concentrating on making my book's message as clear and palatable as possible
- I am allowing necessary time in my schedule for research, including any or all of the following types:
 - Setting up interviews with experts
 - Interviewing experts
 - Organizing notes I have taken
 - Visiting libraries, stores or other external locations
 - Reading through research material



- Locating reliable primary sources
 - Vetting out interesting secondary sources
 - Other _____
-
- I have also factored editing time into my promotions
 - I am planning for my editing process in an informed manner, to make the most of my time
 - I understand that if I start editing repeatedly while still in the process of writing my first draft, I risk destroying:
 - My book's unique voice
 - The flow and pacing
 - My confidence as I repeatedly second-guess myself
 - I understand that resisting the urge to edit during first-draft writing can greatly reduce the "resting" period I will need between writing and the editing stage
 - I have factored in time for putting my book aside between completing the first draft and editing, so that I will have fresh eyes (and mind) when I start to edit
 - My editing process will follow this order:
 - Spell-checking
 - A straight read-through, to gauge readability and clarity
 - Making swift notes during (or after) the read-through stage, so I can later edit the changes I need to make without stress
 - On my read-through, I will focus on readability, including watching out for:
 - Paragraphs that are repetitive and superfluous
 - Paragraphs that ramble



- Paragraphs or instructions that simply don't make sense
- Paragraphs that really belong in another section
- I am only allowing other seasoned writers to read through my book
- I understand that the only time I should let a non-writer read through my book is to help with simple, mechanical "de-bugging" (finding spelling mistakes, missing words, etc.)
- I have considered sending my book out to a professional editor, after my own preliminary editing
- I have familiarized myself with the different types of editors I could use—or don't need
- I am aware that I need to prepare books to be submitted to traditional publishers differently than eBooks
- I have considered using a product-fulfillment company like KDP.com or Lulu.com as an alternate way to produce printed hard-copy books on demand
- I have thoroughly checked out my ePublishing platform's guidelines and instructions to see if I feel up to formatting my book myself
- I have considered hiring a formatting specialist in my exact ePublishing platform instead of doing it myself
- I have planned an actual book launch and I am coordinating it with my promotion plan