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HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR WINNING NON-FICTION BOOK

After writing your book, check to ensure the following parts are included for maximum success.

BOOK DESIGN MAP: Start with a written Book Design/MAP. Write and evaluate the book in light of your MAP. The book design will also help shape your introduction and your subtitle.

M: What is the main **Message** of the book? Is it emerging in every chapter or are the chapters leading you to get the main message?

A: Who is the primary **Audience** for this book? Do not write for everybody. This is a recipe for disaster in book marketing. Write with the needs of this audience in mind, even if it is a memoir. Be as niched as possible. Don't go wide here. It can be a group.

P: What is the main **Problem** or **Pain point** this book solves?

Why did you write it (**Purpose**)?

What is the **Prescription/solutions/strategies** to solve the problem?

What is the **Plan for use** of this book? How might readers use it? What is your backend program, business or cause associated with this book?

All of the above affect how the book is written and the professional editor should bear these in mind. You should also self-edit with this MAP in mind.

Book Title: This ideally should be 1-3 words in length. It can be longer but many bestsellers have short titles. It should be intriguing and catch the reader's attention.

Subtitle: This should explain the title or highlight the top 1-3 benefits of the book or the major transformation the reader will walk away with. What's in it for the reader? It can be keyword search rich (words people use when searching for your topic on Google or buying books on Amazon) and does not have to be short.

Copyright Page: In addition to the usual copyright statement, ensure the following are included:

- Editor's name and contact information
- Cover designer's name and contact information
- Photographer/Illustrator's name and contact information
- Scripture copyright information for all versions used
- Your contact information

Dedication: Readers look forward to reading these.

Acknowledgements: An acknowledgement of contributions and/or other support from other than the author(s) for this work or the authors work as a whole. Put this at the back for the Ebook version.

Foreword [Optional but helpful]: A statement about the book and written by someone other than the author(s) who is an expert or widely known in the field of the book's topic. Commonly found in non-fiction only. Not to be confused with an Introduction or Dedication.

Endorsements: 3-5 is ideal. Short influential ones can go on the back of the book.

Preface [Optional]: Usually written by the author as opposed to the Foreword, not to be confused with the introduction. The preface describes why the author wrote the book, their research methods and perhaps some acknowledgements not to be included in a separate section. It may also establish the author's qualifications and expertise as an authority in the field of the book. A preface is more common in nonfiction vs. fiction.

Introduction: Not to be confused with a Preface, it describes what the reader should know before reading the book's main content. Outline what the book is about, the topics to be covered or sections and the benefits of reading this book and its main message. Let readers know who the book is for.

Overall Book Division (Optional): Divide the entire book (subject to be covered) in 3-10 parts/themes and assign 3-6 chapters to cover each part. It depends on how big the book is. I encourage short books and divisions may not be necessary.

Chapter Organization/Format: Unless it is a narrative non-fiction to be read like a novel, add subheadings after every three -four paragraphs to cover major sub-points within the chapter. A chapter can be 1500-3000 words for short books. If you discuss several points in a chapter, this is most useful. It makes the book reader-friendly and easy to follow.

- *Chapter Titles:* Ensure your chapters have interesting titles. These should be short and related to the central point of each chapter and linked to the main message of the book.
- Check if the chapters are organized properly and have a logical flow to make the point the book is making. Take the readers on a logical journey. Build the case chapter by chapter. Let it flow like a road map, a step-by-step process to get to a destination, even if it's a memoir.
- *First Chapter, First Line:* This needs to be attention grabbing and intriguing. Hold the reader's attention in the first paragraph. Do likewise with introduction.
- *Chapter Summary/ Learning Activities:* If it's a how-to, teaching, devotional, personal development book – Include reader activities, questions, reflection activities, main points or chapter summary to help readers grasp the concepts shared. It also depends on how you plan to use the book.
- If it is not an academic book, write in a conversational tone for an audience of one.

Tell your story and other stories. Make the book personal. It can be short examples and anecdotes to support your points.

Quotes, Scriptures or Proverbs: These embellish the chapters and many readers like them especially in how-to books, devotional, inspirational and other kinds of self-help books. Use at the beginning just below the chapter title or at the end of the chapter or in both places.

List Building Material: Include a link to give away something valuable for FREE in order to get the contact information of your book readers. This can be another book, a checklist, a course etc. You want the reader's name and email address for continued communication as part of your content marketing. For the ebook, include it at the front before the table of contents or introduction. Make sure it is in the first 4% of the book that is previewed online. You can use a graphic to help with display. It can also again be included at the back.

Promotional Items: Promote your other publications and resources. Describe them and where to get them. Put this at the back of the book or mention from time to time in different sections.

Book Reviews: Ask for book reviews at the end.

About the Author: Use this to describe your skills, expertise, experience, education and showcase your overall credibility. Bear in mind this should be like a speaker's profile/introduction. It might just be read by someone inviting you to speak at a function. It can include a fun thing or two. It can be about 300-500 words.

Conclusion: This is helpful. End nicely. You may not call it conclusion but have one. Don't just end abruptly.

Reference/Bibliography: Credit the sources and use APA style or Chicago Manual Style