

# Write Your Best Newsletter

December, 2008 Newsletter

## Greetings,

You received this newsletter because awhile back you expressed an interest in writing. Enjoy!

## GIVE YOURSELF A PRESENT THIS CHRISTMAS

Are you determined to start writing in the New Year? Or to finally finish the book you began? If so, make it happen. Give yourself a gift of writing coaching. To learn more about how coaching can get you where you want to be, visit my website at <http://www.WriteYourBest.com>

## QUOTES FOR WRITERS

"Attention is like light and air and water. Shine attention on obstacles and problems and they multiply lavishly."

Rosamund Stone Zander & Benjamin Zander,

"The Art of Possibility"

## RECOMMENDED BOOK OF THE MONTH

*"Writing for Story: Craft Secrets of Dramatic Nonfiction"*

by Jon Franklin

One of my writing bibles, this book gives practical, clear instruction on how to use storytelling techniques for nonfiction writing. It's a pleasure to read, mark-up, reread and put to use.

## WEBSITE FOR WRITERS

<http://www.startawritingbusiness.co.uk>

If you want to turn your writing into a business, this excellent website is for you. It offers articles by writing experts on all aspects of freelance writing, from specifics on each genre to writing skills to marketing.

## 5 TIPS FOR SURVIVING YOUR BOOK PROPOSAL

I'm working with a number of clients on their nonfiction book proposals, and they all are feeling fed up with the process.

Many of you have already written proposals, and are smiling with recognition. With 20/20 hindsight, you know that they will get it done and that it will be worth the effort.

Writing a book proposal really is a pain in the butt, for oh so many reasons:

- You want to be writing your book, not using your scarce writing time to work on a proposal.
- The proposal is a business document; it's sales, and writing it is like writing in a foreign language.
- You want to throw together a down-and-dirty proposal quickly, that does the job but the fate of your book rests on the quality of your proposal.
- Writing an excellent proposal takes time and effort.

Most writers get discouraged and fed up just before they are finished. They just want the damn thing done and now!

You don't have to become a plumber to stop the suffering. The tips below will help you survive the book proposal with less suffering.

1. Read everything you can about proposals long before you begin. Yes, that means now, when you barely know what your book is about.

Suggested books: "*The Idiot's Guide to Getting Published*," "*Write the Perfect Book Proposal*," "*How to Write a Book Proposal*," "*The Art of the Book Proposal*," "*2009 Writer's Market*."

2. Keep your expectations realistic. Plan on 3 – 6 months to put together a powerful, persuasive proposal.

3. Write the two chapters of your book that will be included with the proposal while you work on the proposal. That will keep you connected to your real purpose, your book.

4. Remind yourself often of this truth: the proposal makes you get clear about your book, which makes writing it much easier later on.

5. Relax! Stop pressuring yourself with an imaginary deadline. The publishers aren't going anywhere, and no one is going to steal your idea. Stay focused on producing the best possible proposal.

## **Just Call Me Pollyanna: Queries, Rejection, and Hope**

by Ruth Pettey Jones, Cookeville, TN. (Guest Contributor)

[Note: I occasionally invite clients or other writers to share their experience or insights. I met Ruth at the Editors and Agents Conference in Austin, TX, and was impressed by her businesslike attitude to getting published.]

Another rejection letter arrived yesterday, the lone remaining response to a flurry of queries I sent out over the summer.

Disappointing but kind, it noted my strong prose and attention to detail. The agent liked the "refreshing energy" and declared my writing far better than most that crosses her desk. In the end, though, she declined to take the next step.

Every night during the time I waited oh-so-patiently for that last response to my queries, I'd tell myself a cozy little bedtime story that this agent, the foot-dragger, would soon FedEx a contract begging me to hurry please and sign with her, never mind that she'd only read the first four chapters. She'd apologize for having dawdled, especially now that she'd discovered such brilliant writing talent.

Such are the sweet dreams of a fairy tale dashed against the jagged rocks of reality. But it's okay. Dreams can be dashed.

Hope, however, should never be.

I'm discovering it's a right of passage, this rejection business. And truth be told, not all rejections are bad. So on those days when I need a pick-me-up, a little writer's tiramisu, I'll open my rejection file to read her kind words again – maybe four or five times, especially the part about my energetic prose.

Today's to-do list includes banging out two thousand words for a new book I'm writing, and emailing another batch of query letters.

Why the queries? Not because I'm brave, but because I know in my heart, somewhere out there an agent is hoping to discover my book.

And unless I send that query, the discovery will not be made.

**I wish you and yours a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year full of the joy of writing!**

### **TAKE ADVANTAGE OF WRITING HELP**

I encourage you to take advantage of the all the writing help that is out there. If you're interested in how writing coaching helps you solve writing problems, check out my [Introductory Special](#) at my website [www.WriteYourBest.com](http://www.WriteYourBest.com)

Happy Writing!  
Cindy Barrilleaux

If you know someone who is writing or wants to write, and think they'd be interested, forward this newsletter to them.

If you want to receive monthly newsletters with writing tips and advice, sign up at [www.WriteYourBest.com](http://www.WriteYourBest.com) .

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