

Put Your Best Foot Forward When Submitting Your Manuscript

Every week, editors and book agents, receive many first-time authors' manuscripts for review purposes. Some authors want them to read their manuscript and give them a complete written report while others simply want them to look at their manuscript and see if the possibility exists that they can help them to publish it as a book.

Still others, while acknowledging the rough draft form of their manuscript, only want professional thoughts of what they believe to be a bestseller. Most editors believe everyone possesses a story inside of them; although they know that people also encompass varying degrees of gifts and level of skills.

Some even maintain the uncanny ability to "look beyond the faults" of most new authors and can see their story or book idea - regardless of their ability to write it. So while many of their manuscripts come to them, apologetically, many do not expect most of them to write on the order of a Rick Warren.

These manuscripts come in all manner of formats, including being written by hand on yellow legal pads or typed on an old-school styled typewriter. Regardless of the format, and although some editors still consider it an honor to receive their interest, the lack of reasonable care that some people employ takes most of them aback.

In the self-publishing arena, author services companies get their share of clients who can pay in full for their publishing projects. Yet, many common, everyday men and women whose dreams of being published may be stymied by financial resources.

But there is an old saying which circulated in the inner-city streets of Houston, Texas, by proud, working mothers, "You may not be rich, but you don't have to be dirty."

Can you imagine what happens when some of the manuscripts are sent to major publishing concerns or agents for possible representation - in the same shape?

Every author owes it to his or herself to learn the generally accepted manuscript formatting style and should at least use the spell-check function in their word processor. Author and writing coach Jessica Morrell, allowed me to reprint her report, "The Top Ten Reasons A Manuscript Is Rejected," in a book for writers.

I often refer others to it regardless of whether they want to pursue a major publishing contract or self-publish a few copies for their family members. The majority of the top ten reasons pertain to fiction books, however the first three applies to everyone - even if your book falls into the non-fiction category.

1. The manuscript format is inappropriate or contains errors. There are no exceptions to the guidelines for manuscript submission. Margins, line spacing, formats must be adhered to or your manuscript will be ignored.

Note: Do not send it to the wrong person or place. An editor or agent wants to know that you have chosen him or her for a specific reason. Submission requires meticulous research and care. Whenever possible, make contacts in the industry and in general, send brief inquiries before sending any manuscript pages.

2. The writing style is sloppy, flowery, cluttered with modifiers. Overuse of modifiers is one of the most obvious indicators of an unsophisticated or sloppy writer at work. The simple solution is to limit your use of modifiers and use them only when they contain information that a noun or verb cannot.

3. Mechanical errors such as spelling mistakes, grammar slip-ups, poorly constructed sentences, or punctuation problems. In an increasingly competitive marketplace, these errors will knock you out of the running. Editors and agents are only interested in professional, polished and error-free writing.

I'll save you the horror stories, but suffice it to say that the preceding three points underscores by far the state of the manuscripts received by book publishing executives. The saying still rings true: "You may not be rich, but you don't have to be dirty."

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

About the Author

Marvin D. Cloud provides a self-publishing alternative through <http://www.mybestseller.com/>. For a free writers' workbook and online marketing ideas, go to http://www.mybestseller.com/html/marketing_tips.