

Successful Synopsis Writing Tips

Writers hate the job of writing a synopsis. For you, it might be right up there with death and public speaking in terms of the fear factor. If you're having trouble and are procrastinating about writing your synopsis, you're in very good company. Here are a few tips to make everything a bit easier:

Write A Mini Synopsis:

If all else fails, write a short paragraph that hooks the reader. Use this paragraph in your query letter. It is better to include this mini synopsis and get your manuscript mailed to an agent rather than suffering over it, wasting precious time trying to create the perfect synopsis.

Use Similar Formats:

Write a synopsis in the same format as your manuscript. If you're not sure of the industry standard, find someone who might be able to aid you by providing industry-standard format requirements. Double-space your synopsis. Use one-inch margins all around. Use left justification only, and stay away from right justified text. Make sure you place a header on every page, and use Times New Roman or Arial font instead of Courier.

Describe The Story:

Begin by describing your story in 25 words or less. You must capture the agent's or editor's attention. If you succeed in creating this "hook," you'll be farther ahead than most people submitting their work. Editors and agents read hundreds of submissions every day, so don't get cutesy. Keep the reader awake, and don't be boring!

Summarize:

Include a COMPLETE summary of your story from beginning to end, written in present tense. Focus on major plot points or turning points. Omit secondary characters, subplots, and minor events. Don't go into too much detail.

Focus:

Focus your synopsis by telling what the book is about, not how things happen. Keep focused on your primary characters and major events. As is always the case--show, don't tell.

Do not ask empty questions in your synopsis. They will not fool the agent into asking for the remaining pages of your manuscript. Include the setting, main characters, and the all-important CONFLICT. Identify conflict between characters. Include motivation. Then, show the resolution of this conflict.

The END:

Finally, TELL YOUR ENDING. Wrap up the story. Everyone knows (removed the word the) writers like to tease the reader and keep 'em guessing, but stay clear of this trap.

Finalize and Test:

Once all is completed, proofread your synopsis. Make sure grammar, punctuation, and spelling are perfect. Test your synopsis on a qualified friend or relative. Would they be interested in reading the entire book based on your synopsis? If not, ask how you can make it more interesting. Ultimately, use your own "gut" to determine what works.

Limit your synopsis to one or two pages and make sure you include enough information to tell your story. Remember, the goal is to get the agent or editor into the first pages of your book. That's where the real story begins!!

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

About the Author

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