

# The Write a Book Challenge

## Weekly plan

	Plan	Research	Draft	Rewrite	Editorial review	Design & Production	Promotion
Week 1	X	X					
Week 2	X	X					
Week 3		X	X				
Week 4		X	X				
Week 5			X				X
Week 6				X			
Week 7				X			X
Week 8				X			
Week 9					X		X
Week 10						X	X
Week 11							X
Week 12							X

## Week 1: Create a business plan for your book

Create a 1-page business plan for your book:

- Define what you want to accomplish with this project. Do you want to write this book
  - To establish yourself as an authority on a subject?
  - To make money from the book itself?
  - To promote a course, program or product?
  - Because you're just really interested in the subject?
- Who's the audience?

- What's the main subject area for this book?
- Think of about five possible “angles” or approaches you could take to writing this book, and write out the pros and cons to each approach
- What other Kindle books have been published in this subject area? (Limit yourself to the five most relevant books)
- What books or resources do you want to read as prep for writing this book? (No more than five if possible! Do NOT get stuck in “analysis paralysis”)
- What "add on" resource will you create for this book to build your email list?
  - What resource would your ideal clients/customers/audience be most interested in?
  - Will you also ask people to connect with you on LinkedIn or on other social media platforms where you have a presence?
- Books that get quotes from experts in a given field tend to be better books. The “experts” you get quotes from can also be prospective clients or influencers in your subject area that could be helpful to you if they promoted your book even lightly.
  - Create a list of about ten to thirty people you’d ideally like to get a quote from or interview for your book.
  - Keep in mind that half of the people you reach out to may not respond to you.
  - What will you ask these people? How will you use what they share with you in their book?
- How will you promote this book once it’s published?
- What promotion tactics can you do now to start building interest in this book?

## Week 2: Write an outline of your book

Create a 5-page outline for your book:

- What 3-7 main points should it cover? Each of these is going to become a section.
- What are 3-5 secondary points that each of those main sections really needs to include?
- Are there any people you'd like to get interviews with or quotes from? (Like prospective freelance writing clients...)
- Will you be doing any original research for this book, like a survey or a study?
- What do you want people to know or be able to do after they've read this book? In other words, how will people be different once they’ve read this book?

## Week 2: Begin drafting your book

Write 1,000 words a day. It's great if you can follow your outline, but if you stray off course a little, that's OK too. Just start creating a body of content for this week. Start really digging into your subject and getting words on the page. By the end of this week, you should have 7,000 words written.

## Week 3: Continue drafting your book

Continue writing 1,000 words a day. Again, follow your outline as best as you can, but we are still at the phase where you should just be getting words down on the page and really digging into the issues your book tackles.

By the end of this week, you'll have around 14,000 words written. That's enough for a short Kindle book, but we're going to keep going because you'll also want content for your "add on" resource, and a few blog posts. It's also highly likely that you'll want to write a draft that's longer than your final version. Maybe you'll end up writing a section that ends up not fitting with the rest of the book. Maybe you'll find a new aspect to your topic and you'll want to explore that. Maybe you want your final book to be 21,000 words long, not just 14,000.

## Week 4: Last full week of drafting your book

If you've been writing 1,000 words per day for the last three weeks, you now have a 21,000-word draft of your book. Congratulations! That's amazing!

## Week 5: Editing and reworking your content begins

In some ways, now the hard part begins. You're now going to start taking the considerable pile of words you've created and hammer it into an organized book.

The best way to start with this is to print out what you have. I like to print out my drafts with two pages per sheet, one sided, with margins large enough to write in.

Then I'll start reading with a few colored pens. I draw squares around sections that are specific to a particular topic. I might do some editing as I go, but really I'm looking at my

work so far at the section and maybe paragraph level. I want to organize the large chunks into logical sections. If this means I cut up the printed paper, I'll do it.

Just remember to save each version of your draft. Save all your documents from the last three weeks before you go in and start moving around. You should be saving completely versions of your book every day, especially if you're going in and "doing surgery" organizing it into a coherent whole. Preserve each iteration of your work!

Some of you will have very carefully followed your outlines. If you did, great. Read through your draft and start editing. Start thinking about images, quotes, research studies, and any resource you can add to this draft to make it better.

By the end of this week, you should have re-read everything you've written so far and have a heavily marked up draft.

## Week 6: Start updating your marked up draft

This may take more time than you'd think. It can be slow work. So just dive in and start fixing all the stuff you marked up on the printed pages. Save each version. Commit to cleaning up even five pages per day if that's all you can get done.

By the end of this week, you should be close to incorporating all the changes you made to your printed out draft. You won't have a perfect draft at all, but all the "chunks" you wrote before will at least mostly be in the right places.

If you are getting quotes from influencers and experts, now is the time to start reaching out to them. You don't have a perfect draft yet, but you definitely know what your book is about and what it covers and how it refers to specific things. So you know enough to reach out to at least ten people to get quotes about specific sections or aspects of your book.

Ideally, these will either be your ideal freelance writing clients, or they'll be subject experts and influencers who could be amazing referral sources.

As you communicate with these people, when the right moment hits, mention to them that you'd love a referral if they know someone who needs a [insert your subject area] freelance writer. Asking for referrals is often more effective than directly asking for work. It doesn't put people on the spot and make them uncomfortable, it compliments them and their network and influence, and you're tapping their considerable network, which could lead to multiple clients instead of just them as a client. And it's usually easier to ask for a referral (or to just mention that you really appreciate referrals) than it is to ask for work.

## Week 7: Continue rehauling and editing your draft and doing outreach

This week may be similar to last week. If haven't completed re-ordered your draft and incorporated your first round of edits, keep going that should be finished by the end of this week.

If your draft is cleaner, aim to reach out to another 10-15 ideal clients or industry influencers for quotes.

On social media, start announcing your upcoming book. Share about how you're editing your draft and looking for quotes and getting excited about your publication date.

See if you can't find even one or two people to be "readers" for your book. These are ideally people who are familiar with your subject area, but not necessarily experts. These people are basically "content editors" – they'll tell you what they think of your book overall, and possibly make suggestions about some additional topics or issues or resources you want also want to include. They aren't proofreaders, but they can give you valuable insights into how your book might be received by real readers, and what you can do at a high level to make your book more valuable and better received.

Your book will launch about a month from now, so consider setting up some things to make you extra-visible the week of publication. For example, could you...

- Appear on a couple of podcasts.
- Have a few guest posts appear.

This is a good week to send out 3-5 queries about each of those things and see if you can drum up some extra excitement for your book launch.

## Week 8: Continue editing, continue getting quotes, begin your "add on" resource

This next week you'll start doing the line editing and rewriting needed to bring your book into its third draft. All the guts of your book are there, and they're in order now. So now you go in and make those paragraphs tight and those sentences clear. You start adding images and

citations and the quotes you're getting in from people. You are working this draft into something that is getting ready for readers.

Speaking of quotes... keep getting more. Aim to reach out to at least ten more influencers and potential clients this week to get their input on different parts of your book. If you can, get on the phone with them to talk about your project. You don't want general quotes from these people - you want their specific take on very specific aspects or things in your industry. Ideally, you'll want to get a quote from someone at least every 1,000 words of your book. And ideally, of course, you're still mentioning how you value referrals, and making friends with the people you contact.

Another thing you need to do this week is to finalize what your "add on" resource will be for your book. This is an ebook or similar resource that you'll offer people who read your Kindle book. It's to build your list, and to give people a "next step" with you after they've read your book.

So by the end of this week, have that topic finalized, and ideally, have your draft of this resource almost done. It should be "done" enough to be reading for line editings and proofreading by the end of next week.

Also this week: Find your proofreader and confirm they're available. Or, if you've got a couple of people to be readers for your book, reach out to them again and let them know you'll have the book ready for them by Friday. Send it to them on Friday.

Also this week: Find your book cover designer and get them started on designing your book.

## Week 9: Keep cleaning it all up. Get your add on resource set up.

By the end of this week you should have a *very* clean draft. As in you've run it through Grammarly and you fixed what Grammarly recommended. As in you've read your book out loud. As in you're ready to send this to a proofreader.

You may also start getting feedback from your readers this week.

While you wait for readers and proofreaders, get your add on resource set up. Hire someone to make it into a nice-looking PDF (or do it yourself). Create the landing page for the add-on. Set up the form so it captures peoples' email addresses and adds them to your email list.

If you don't have an email list, check out MailChimp. They're widely used and have a free plan for up to 2,000 subscribers. If you want a more sophisticated email service provider, check out ConvertKit or ActiveCampaign.

By the end of this week you should have your add on resource ready to go.

## Week 10: Incorporate what your proofreaders and readers suggested. Get your marketing materials ready.

After these suggestions are incorporated, you have a publish-ready document. WOOT!

Send the book to your book formatter, or settle in to format it yourself.

Write the meta data for your book per Amazon's best practices. Also write the copy for your Amazon author's page.

If you told anyone you were going to send them a copy of the book before it was published, send them the draft now.

Create at least 10 social media posts for promoting your book. Just publish one ("Getting ready for publication!") and queue up the rest for the next few weeks.

## Week 11: Reach out to reviewers, publish, and begin your promotion.

This is the big week. You will publish your book, then immediately try to get at least five to ten reviews for it. Everyone who gave you a quote needs to be contacted and publicly thanked.

If you've got an email list, send them an announcement. And schedule all those social media promotion posts you created. Consider even boosting a couple of posts with advertising if you can afford it.

Update all your profiles with "author" and your book. Include a link to your book's Amazon page.

Publish your author page information on Amazon.

Other great things to do this week:

- Appear on a couple of podcasts.
- Have a few guest posts appear.
- Test doing one or two Facebook, Instagram, or LinkedIn “lives”

## Week 12: Do a bunch of outreach to your network to let them know about your new book, and to ask them for referrals.

Having a new book is a fantastic excuse to reach out to everyone in your network (and beyond) to let them know you’ve got a new book AND you’d love it if they could refer any freelance writing clients to you.

You will have just debuted as a subject expert on this topic, so you can now go re-connect with everyone you know.

Mention that you’re taking on [your subject] freelance writing clients and that you’d love a referral if they know of someone.

And, of course, share the link to your book and tell them you’d be so thrilled if they got the book, and if they liked it – if they’d leave a review.