



## Non-fiction Book Proposal Outline

### Purpose

This document provides an outline that Sastrugi Press recommends as a tool for proposing a nonfiction book to us. Without all the material in this outline, evaluating the merits of your book is difficult. Knowing the target market and potential value of the material will help us greatly in understanding where your book is going and what it can deliver to potential readers.

Also, the book proposal is a valuable outline for you, the author, to better develop, present, and actually write your book. Without completely understanding all of the material in this document, you will be hard-pressed to write a commercially successful nonfiction work.

The expected format of the book proposal is:

Word .DOC or .DOCX format or RTF only.

Maximum 20 pages double spaced, 12 point New Times Roman, letter size paper, 1 inch margins. Please do not use special formatting, characters, or graphics in your book proposal unless they are an integral part of the document. We are interested in the content of your proposal, not your typesetting ability. The maximum 20 page length keeps the review process manageable.

Below are the descriptions of each section, expected length, and what to include in each section. There are seven major sections that we require. You may add more if it adds value to the proposal.

### Overview - Describe the motivation and vision of the work (1-3 pages)

This is the hook. You must excite us straight away. This is where you make your writing skill shine and show that your actual book will be just as good throughout. Get our attention immediately.

Introduce the subject, its importance, how many people it impacts, what pain or problems it solves, and why you are the ideal author for the subject.

- Identify the target market.
- Explain how your book is unique.
- Show why you are the most qualified author to write this work.

Incorporate a working title on the first page. Keep the overview concise, quick, and informative.

### Market - Identify a SPECIFIC target market for the book

Who will buy the book? Don't say "everyone". Instead, say "single working mothers, all races, 20-40 years old with one or more children in school while they are working, with an average annual income of \$25k-\$80k." This helps us identify to market potential of the book.

State percentages of populations, provide demographics, percentages, and other valuable numbers.

### Competition - List 3-5 competitive and similar market titles

List 3-5 competitive and complementary titles. Include author, publisher, title, ISBN, publication date, noteworthy awards.

Include a 1-3 sentence differentiation of how your book is superior or more valuable. Avoid critiques but rather promote the value of your book and how it will sell compared to the competition.

### Author profile - Why are you qualified to write this book?

Tell us about yourself in relation to the authorship.

How do you already connect with readers? Do you have a blog, speaking forum, groups you are actively participating in?

You may write this section in the 3rd person.

Include awards, previous publications (minor or major), previous long-form writing experience, sales and



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circulation experience.

Please do not include a resume, only relate how you will be able to write, market and sell your book.

Promotion - How will you help sell your book?

List any direct sales experience you already have

What will you be able to commit to your book sale (time, talent, financial support)?

List out any contacts who may be willing to provide a blurb or directly support your publicity efforts?

Show us how you are available and willing to put in the work to make your book a commercial success.

Use creativity and provide specific names and numbers for your promotion.

Chapter Outline - This is an overview of the contents of your book

Create a table of contents listing each section of the book.

Include front and back matter

Create a draft outline for *each* chapter. This is not only a summary of the chapter but what the benefits and values are to the reader.

Each chapter description should be 1-2 pages.

Sample Chapters - Your actual writing

This is where you actually write one of your chapters for submission! Choose the best chapter that represents your writing and the book as a whole.

If your chapters are roughly 20 pages, the sample chapter should comprise 10% of your total proposal length.



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#### Tips for nonfiction book proposals

1. Paginate the entire proposal from page 1 to the very end.
2. The entire proposal must be complete to be considered by an agent or publisher.
3. The book proposal is different than the actual book. You are selling the book to editors, not actual readers. They need to know how your book will sell.
4. Double-space proposals as described in the Purpose section of this document.
5. Include references of previously published material, relevant information, speaking appearances and any other information useful to the sale of the book.
6. Purchase, read, and employ tips from other Book Proposal books.
7. Spell check your document. Have someone else read it for errors. Typos creep past even the best writers.
8. The book proposal must be as good and ideally better than the book itself.
9. Do not bind the proposal or materials.
10. The book proposal is not the entire nonfiction work but rather a sales tool for it.
11. The opening sentence and paragraphs describing the book will be used for our marketing material. It has to sing.