

WRITING SHORTCUTS FOR BUSY NON-WRITERS



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Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

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Nitara Lee Osbourne

Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

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Table Of Contents

WRITING SHORTCUTS FOR BUSY NON-WRITERS	3
Your Life Story	3
Fear: Do I Have a Story?	6
Vulnerability	8
Get Real	9
Do What You Have to Do	11
My Story Inspired and Landed an Amazing Client	11
“What Do I Write? A TV Script? A Movie Script? A Manuscript?”	15
Mindset & Self-Help	18
Meditation	19
Visualization	20
Scheduling Time to Write	22
SCREENPLAY & TV PILOT GUIDANCE	24
Character Bios for Those Writing TV Scripts & Screenplays	24
Plot Outline for Those Writing TV Scripts & Screenplays	28

Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

Rough Draft of a Screenplay or TV Pilot	37
Revision, Feedback & Revision Again	39
Feedback	41
SELF-HELP MANUSCRIPT GUIDANCE	44
Branding for Those Writing Self-Help Manuscripts	44
Reasons Behind Your Manuscript: Objectives vs. Goals	45
Professional Advice, Lessons, and Tips in Manuscripts	48
Keep in Mind the Ideal Client when Writing a Self-Help Manuscript	52
Outlining for a Self-Help Manuscript	54
Rough Draft/Rewrite/Editing of a Manuscript	59
About the Author	67
Sources	68

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WRITING SHORTCUTS FOR BUSY NON-WRITERS

Your Life Story

Your life story may not be exactly like mine. As a matter of fact, I know it's not. You've had your own path that has led you to this very moment. It may not be about coming out. Getting a divorce. Being a college professor. Or making a movie about your life. That's all part of my story and brand based upon the values of integrity, honesty, and authenticity that are important to me.



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What makes you unique is YOUR story, YOUR brand and YOUR own values, which are all reflected within the image of your business or professional career and personal life. All of your experiences that you've had up to this point in your life have contributed to how you see the world, and when you look deep enough from within yourself, you'll also discover how you can impact the world with your unique abilities.



Some successful entrepreneurs have overcome drug addiction and alcoholism—either with themselves or from having to face those dependencies with certain family members. Some have survived horrible car accidents or house fires that have left them paralyzed or disfigured. Others have overcome life-threatening illnesses, traumatic and abusive childhoods, teen pregnancies, gang violence, rape, and multiple failed business attempts and have lost millions of dollars.

Or maybe you are in the same position that I was in at one point: a gay woman in a heterosexual marriage with a child trying to figure out how you can make it all work.

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I don't know what you've experienced in life. However, I do know that you more than likely have a story within you, or will eventually have one. If you're fortunate to live long enough to learn from your experiences and to do something with that result, you more than likely have a story.



Once you realize what that story is, the next step is to determine how your triumph over obstacles, trials, and tribulations in your story can help others.

So many business owners, thought leaders, or industry professionals want to write a book, TV script, and/or a movie script, but few want to reveal the ugly side of themselves and their lives.

The times they lied. Cheated. The first one hundred fifty-two failed business attempts before the success of attempt number one hundred fifty-three. The time they had to deal with their drunk teen. The time they yelled at the dog just because they were frustrated about a client who backed out of a deal at the last minute. I mean, in all fairness, it wasn't Fido's fault, but the wrath sure did rain down on the poor guy.

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In pretending to be perfect, you are not sharing your authentic life where all your learning experiences are locked away in some time capsule waiting to be opened. Your inauthenticity means that your readers will lose the benefit of your wisdom. Afterall, your reality served as learning experiences for you. Of course, they can serve as learning experiences for others. The authenticity is within your vulnerability, which is where the true story exists.

Fear: Do I Have a Story?

When clients approach me with their book, movie, or TV idea, they're extremely nervous because they don't know if their life story is worth telling. And to those who make it successfully past this line of inquiry, are then concerned with how much of their personal life they are willing to share with the world.



First of all, as a screenwriter, ghostwriter, or writing mentor, I'm going to be honest with the client. I'll have a meeting with them, preferably in person (at least over the phone if face-to-face isn't possible) to find out more about them, their business or their professional career, and the general idea that they have about their story.

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You don't need to be a famous rockstar, actor, or be a millionaire to have a story. Overcoming ordinary obstacles can yield extraordinary tales. It can be as exciting as having accomplished an award or to have overcome a tough workplace situation. It's helpful to share information that benefited you or made an impact in your life in some way. Chances are, that knowledge can help someone else.

I'm not saying that having a bunch of bad things that happened in your life qualifies you as some expert (or God forbid, a "guru") if you haven't learned from those experiences and used them as building blocks to get you to another level professionally or personally. But I am saying to use those experiences. They matter. You matter. If you experienced a series of unfortunate events, overcame them, and learned from them, you can share with others how you've done it. And that can make all the difference in the world.

So, whether you're endeavoring to write your own story or you're hiring a screenwriter, ghostwriter, or writing mentor, come prepared to share the very experiences that you worked through that made you the human that you are today.



Vulnerability

As successful as business owners (or professionals) are, inclusive of the courageous steps that they had to take to get to where they are, many are still afraid of vulnerability in front of strangers. Maybe this is you. They are nervous about revealing compromising information regarding themselves while trying to be as honest as possible. There is a balance.

Do you get as intimate with your reader by discussing the birthmark on your left butt cheek? Or do you simply discuss what the weather was like the day you graduated from college? With this, I say it depends on the context of your story and if this information should be integrated into it. Thus, when I'm screenwriting, ghostwriting, or mentoring for a client, the interview process is where I discover their authentic story. Your authenticity—*your vulnerability*—is where your readers will connect with you. And with connection, they simply want more of who you are. Finding your story is within you, so you don't have to look far to retrieve it.

Get Real

Writing a TV pilot, a movie script, or a book... truly writing the hell out of a piece of work is putting yourself on the line and not apologizing for the life experience that you bring to the world. Not letting fear of judgement, ridicule, unwanted (and un-asked for) social media opinions control your choices. Sure, you might have regrets. Things you wish you could do differently if you had an opportunity to re-do them. But unlike the *Back to the Future* franchise, we can't go back to the past in a silver DMC DeLorean and create another reality. The past is already set in stone. And we're right here. In the present.

What are you going to do with it?



The power to move and inspire people with your life story is found in your ability to be authentic and vulnerable. Having to admit to an affair with a woman who I fell in love with when I was married to my son's father was not a comfortable truth that I enjoyed exposing to my son. Admission to falling short of perfection in the eyes of a loved one is honest, but it made me look bad. And like most humans, I'm driven with the ambition to look good. And at the time, to look like an upstanding citizen, dutiful wife, and nurturing mother—and to somehow actually BE those things.

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My pain, my choices, and my life have led me to where I am. Experience is one of my favorite life-long college professors, constantly pushing me to think for myself and testing me without the red ink to point out mistakes. Instead, she offers me an opportunity to choose differently next time—a perpetual journey of higher learning that opens my eyes to new perspectives.

When I wrote, produced, and directed my movie about my life, my own infidelity was the truth that came out of that creation. It forced me to look at myself and to have a “coming out” conversation with my son. Obviously, the conversation was PG since he was around ten when I kicked open the door to my proverbial closet. Being less explicit didn’t sugarcoat anything. I still remember shots of the moment. Like mini scenes in a movie.

Can you open up to your readers?

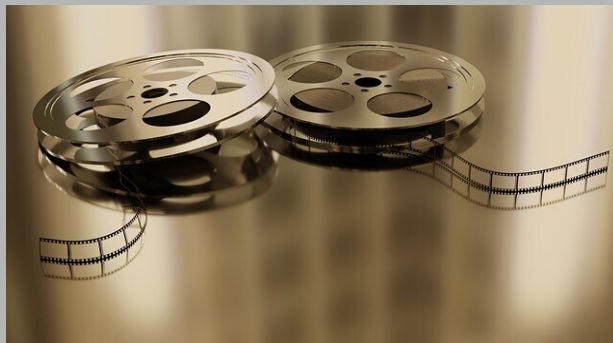
To let your guard down and allow them to see the real you?

Do What You Have to Do

Can a book, a TV script, or a movie script on your life be what you need to expand your business or your brand? Only you and the market can answer that. But should you decide to move forward with telling your story, be aware that there are going to be must-do tasks that you don't necessarily enjoy and obstacles that are going to make it seem like it's not even worth pursuing your dream any longer. It's all a process towards getting what you want.

My Story Inspired and Landed an Amazing Client

As Shaun Cassidy (my business strategist at the time) and I completed a series of practical and applicable consultation sessions, he constantly invited me to as many San Diego networking events as possible. I felt that I needed to attend as many of those as I could because I knew that connecting with people and adding value (solving at least some of their problems) to their lives are qualities that would make me a success. I had to focus on the needs of the clients I wanted to serve.



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One of the events that Shaun invited me to was in April of 2018; he was one of the speakers. He introduced me to Megan R. Fenyo, a licensed clinical mental health therapist. Megan and I hit it off immediately. She was down-to-earth but equally professional. She seemed excited that I had written, produced, and directed a movie on my own life story.

Many people seem to be impressed by this when I first meet them—not because I’m someone special—but because it’s rare that people meet others who have produced a movie or who have written a screenplay. So, I usually make an impression just by saying I accomplished these feats. It’s often short lived; eventually, they move on to their next contact and business card.

But there was something refreshing about my conversation with Megan, who happened to be one of the speakers that night. We were both genuine. In other words, neither one of us was that person who took a sip of whatever she was drinking while strategically glancing around the room to see if there was someone more successful she could mingle with.

Megan wasn’t like that. She was the real deal. I was actually in awe of her, especially when I discovered that she was running a booth for one of her businesses.

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During the meet-and-greet pleasantries, our conversation evolved into something more meaningful than many networking event “one-on-one conferences.” She told me that she was writing a book and was almost done with it. Part of it was about her life story, but because it was a self-help book that she was creating, she was providing applicable steps to help people move from struggling in their life to actually feeling empowered and strong by taking action.

I was intrigued, but I didn’t see an immediate opportunity for business; after all, she was writing her book. She didn’t need me. Nevertheless, we exchanged contact information, took some selfies, and had Shaun take some pictures of us as well. That’s where we left things.

Little did I know, Megan would watch my movie that same weekend, get inspired, then text me the following week to ask if I would edit her book.

Megan’s decision to write her book, to ask me to edit it, and my decision to say yes has led to *You are Enough: 5 Steps to Move from Struggle to Strength* being a #1 New Release on Amazon in August of 2018 and has made Megan a Bestselling Author.

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The power of my life story in the form of a movie inspired Megan enough to ask me to edit her book. Imagine that.



My movie serves as a lead generator for me—a lot of the times I don’t have to say or do very much upfront. The power of her story has led her to becoming a Bestselling Author, which increased her speaking engagements, media coverage, and has led her to start “I Am Enough” 501 c3 non-profit, now a global movement. What can the power of your story do for you?

“What Do I Write? A TV Script? A Movie Script? A Manuscript?”

What do I write about? If something happened to you that forever changed your life or made such a huge and profound impact on you and your life, and it's begging to be told, write it.

This is very important. Choose wisely. You don't want to frivolously choose a topic just for the sake of completing a script or a book. Writing is about letting your voice be heard. Your voice. Your story. Your pains. Your joys. Your experiences.

Once you know the idea that you want to do, the next question you have to ask yourself is this: *How do I know if my idea can be written as a TV pilot versus a short film script or feature-length screenplay? Or even a manuscript, otherwise known as a book?*

It's true; not every idea is meant to be a TV series, a movie, or a book. And for the sake of this eBook, when I refer to “manuscripts,” or “books,” I'm specifically referring to non-fiction self-help and/or personal/professional development books. I'm not referencing short story collections, poetry, or any type of fiction.

The differences between a short, a feature, a series, and a manuscript are as follows:

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A **short** is a visual story that can be told within approximately 1-15 properly formatted script pages with a protagonist, minimal locations, minimal characters, and a simple plot that feels fully realized or executed within the given pages.

Nothing should feel like it's missing or have an abrupt ending that leaves the reader and inevitably the audience, feeling incomplete. Or, quite the opposite, in that there shouldn't be too much information being forced into 15 tiny pages.

A **feature** is a visual story that can be told within 90-120 properly formatted script pages, follows a protagonist, has a complex plot, 1-2 subplots, and should feel resolved within the given pages.

That doesn't mean the readers will necessarily be content with the ending, but just that it is a script that is executed effectively within the context of a feature. It should NOT feel crowded like there's way too much being placed within that page count limitation (meaning, it would be better as a series) nor should it feel so simple that the protagonist has nothing to do for 105 pages (meaning, it would be better as a short).

When writing a **series**, what you first need to ensure is that it can be a visual story and that the characters' storylines can realistically last over the course of multiple episodes or multiple seasons.

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In other words, your characters and story should have so much to say that it all can't be contained within a short or a feature. And if you have a story that can be told within the context of a series, then the first objective is to write the TV pilot, the first script of a limited series or a potential season one.

A half-hour TV pilot can range from approximately 20-35 properly formatted script pages and an hour-long TV pilot can range from approximately 45-70 properly formatted script pages. As with all scripts, ones written for a series should be visual as well.

A **pitch deck** and **series bible** are also necessary should you plan to pitch and sell your TV project, but there can be an entire eBook dedicated to just those two items alone and require more attention than this particular eBook can provide.

Finally, maybe you feel like you should write a **manuscript**. It's best to write this if you have an existing business and/or career and have a specific topic or subject matter that you would like to share with your potential and/or existing ideal clients/customers. This should be information that adds value to their lives. Something that you learned through experience. And although you are taking this approach, you can integrate relevant parts of your life story to not only connect with your readers, but to be able to be relatable with them as well.

Mindset & Self-Help

I feel like I'm a pretty disciplined person in general. But there are days when I get discouraged, feel overwhelmed, or I'm just so tired that I don't feel like doing anything except watching TV. I'm human. You're human. It's not a big deal to be less than perfect. We all are.



Maybe through taking on this endeavor to write, some circumstances beyond your control arise and it interferes with your writing schedule or messes with your mind that you find it challenging to be creative or to continue to write. Be prepared to handle these obstacles and to pivot so that you can continue on this journey instead of letting it stop you.

One of the tools that has helped me to move forward through all of life's distracting and "beyond-my-control" moments have been self-help books. I need them. I need to read stories from people who failed multiple times, overcame huge obstacles, and succeeded. These stories give me perspective, inspiration, guidance, and hope. All things that a writer needs so that he or she can move forward with a project.

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Years ago, I was reading books. With my current busy schedule, I now listen to self-help audiobooks so that I can fill my head with information I need to keep me on track without missing a beat in regard to all the demands of my schedule.

I listen to audiobooks, podcasts, or webinars while in my car running errands, while in the shower, when organizing and doing light cleaning, or even in the background at times when I'm working at my desk—depending on what I'm working on. Make your own running list of audiobooks, listen to what you're needing to hear regularly, and keep adding to the list.

Meditation

I would suggest taking time for some sort of meditation, prayer, reflecting, chanting, or whatever it is that you do to get centered.

I meditate seven days a week first thing in the morning. I use a guided meditation app called Envision. It helps me to not only be consistent, but to remain mentally focused on my goals while minimizing my overwhelm.



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You don't have to do this every day if you don't do this at all right now. Try 1 or 2 days out of the week for 1-5 minutes, and expand those days and lengths of time as you evolve. Maybe you simply want to reflect and journal. Whatever helps you to get centered and grounded. There's no one way. There's just the way that works for you.

Visualization

I suggest that you create a vision board.

You can do one for all major areas of your life or if you just want to focus on the professional and writing areas, that's fine as well.

I love doing vision boards. I tend to do mine at either the very last week of the year or within the first couple of weeks of the New Year. The vision board lines up with my goals and serves as a visual display of what I plan to accomplish.



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So, if you've already done one for the year, maybe you want to revisit that one to adjust to accommodate for the goals and visualizations for your writing. Whatever you do, make sure that the images that you choose reflect what you actually want and NOT just something that would be "nice to have."

I used to put everything on my vision board years ago. Travel plans, money dreams, a house. Everything. And while all those things were important to me at the time and are still important to me now, not all of them were pressing. And not all of them were connected to immediate goals that I plan to execute. This meant that they were just things that would be "nice to have." Nothing on your vision board should be labeled under that category.

Additionally, don't put things on your vision board that you've seen other people put on theirs because you can't think of something that you actually want to achieve. Be intentional. Put images on your vision board that genuinely mean something to YOU. Something that you're passionate about. Think about. And something you plan to connect with goals and plans.



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Your vision board can be made out of a big poster board or cork board with cut out images from a magazine, it can be digital and be your screensaver on a laptop or desktop, or you can purchase a vision board kit that comes with everything you need. Do what works for you.

Scheduling Time to Write

Part of successfully executing a script or manuscript in an efficient period of time is:

1. Scheduling the time to write.
2. Planning ahead of time what you plan to complete during your writing session.
3. And doing the actual writing itself.

Determine if writing early in the mornings work for you. And if so, would you prefer to write Monday-Friday, Saturdays & Sundays, or two days during the week and one weekend day? Or do you prefer working late at night? Or perhaps the middle of the night? Or the middle of the afternoons a few times a week because your schedule permits it?



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I'm not encouraging you to miss out on any needed sleep or to write during business hours at your job. If you have any health issues and this new schedule may impact them, consult your doctor ahead of time to make sure your writing schedule is something realistic that you can take on—especially if it's going to occasionally impact your sleeping habits. And if you decide to write on your lunchbreak at work, make sure you're able to do this on your own laptop and that it's not an issue with your supervisor/employer.

Plan ahead to complete a specific and tangible task for each particular day that you write so that it is supporting your overall goal of completing the TV script, movie script, or manuscript. In other words, don't commit to writing for three hours and spend the time surfing the internet for character names or a topic for a chapter. That's not a good use of your time.

Go into each scheduled writing session with a specific goal to accomplish. For screenwriters, it may be to complete 5 script pages or to complete a scene for a plot point. For writers of a manuscript, the goal may be to complete 2,000 words for the day or to complete a chapter. Those are tangible and measurable goals, which inevitably lead to the end goal of completing a script or manuscript.

Whatever you choose, pick **days and times that are consistent** and let those days and times be when **your brain is at its most creative and open**.

SCREENPLAY & TV PILOT GUIDANCE

Character Bios for Those Writing TV Scripts & Screenplays

Character biographies are very important. Understanding your characters' deepest desires, wants, needs, motivations, and where they come from and why they have them, will empower you and your characters to make "choices" within the landscape of the script that are authentic to your character.

This is how they become living, breathing, three-dimensional human beings.

One of the worst things that you can do is randomly make up stuff for your character to do while in the middle of writing your script; it will only make the plot difficult to maneuver through effectively.

Making up stuff, unless inspired, is about strategically planning a story that not only works effectively, but actually can be enjoyable to read.

How characters respond, react, speak, and their overall way of being should all be defined ahead of time while still giving them the space to organically evolve through their arcs and your plots.

Actions define who we are. Isn't that the truth in real life as well? What we do when we believe no one is looking is what tells people who we genuinely are.

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It's important to know your characters inside and out if you're writing a short, a feature, and *especially* if you're writing a series. You're placing these "people" into a world, or landscape, that you've created, and your readers and potential viewers need to buy into who they are.

The purpose of your character biography is:

1. To establish your character's voice.
2. To create and/or discover their life experience, perspective, and likes/dislikes.
3. To know them intimately, to know who they are at their core.
4. To know their history as it relates to themselves individually, to their family, and friends.

So, how do we do this? I've created a process that works pretty effectively for me. I recommend you try it and adjust accordingly to fit your writing style as you continue to write multiple scripts.

Write your character biographies in first person.

Writing in first person allows you—the writer—to become that person. Why is this important? You want to be able to write authentic dialogue in your script and this becomes easiest when you know your character's voice.

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Write in present tense prose.

Use past tense obviously when needed. However, write your character biography as if your character is on a first or second date with someone and sitting across the table from them at lunch or dinner. The character biography is a "getting-to-know" part of the process.

Write anywhere from 4-10 pages single spaced for your main character and 2-5 pages single space for your supporting characters.

Obviously, the more you write, the better you will know them, but this is a solid range to at least have direction.

You want to establish a full birthdate for your character. Month, day, and year.

And if you really want to get specific, even the exact time they were born could help. The more you know the better. But you have to at least know the month, day, and year. Why is this important? Someone born on March 13, 1920 and is placed within a script that takes place in present day, is going to view the world a lot differently than an individual who was born August 23, 2000, and is placed in a present-day script. These individuals are from different generations and have experienced the world differently because of that. This will impact how they behave and how they will speak.

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Establish who their parents and siblings are, if any.

Where your characters come from and the experiences that they shared with their family while growing up will have an impact on who they are. We are the sum of our experiences in some way or another. So are our characters.

When writing your character biographies, MENTALLY divide each of them into categories I call “independent life,” “community life,” and “career life.”

The reason I say to do this MENTALLY is because I don't want you making the experience of the biography “unnatural” by dividing a character's life up like slices of cake. Everything is connected. So, it's important that when writing the biography, you address these three areas in a way that unfolds organically throughout your writing.

Independent life. This is who your character is when no one is looking at them. When they are by themselves. What are their inner thoughts? Wants? Desires?

Community life. This is who your character is in the community. Are they married? Single? Divorced? Widowed? Poor class? Working class? Middle class? Popular? Extrovert? Introvert?

Career life. This deals directly with what they do for a living, their educational background, how much money do they make or not make, and if what they do for a living defines them or not.

Plot Outline for Those Writing TV Scripts & Screenplays

You need to know what is going to happen in your story. Meaning, what are your characters going to be faced with? What is the journey that you're creating? This is your plot.

To create a strong plot, it's advisable to create a plot outline. And the purpose of the plot outline can be likened to a GPS. You know, Google Maps or MapQuest. Those GPS apps tell you how to get from where you are to the destination you would like to arrive at.

You need to know this same information when navigating through a script. Whether it's a short, a feature, or a pilot for a TV series. And especially for a TV pilot. There are so many moving parts that go into telling a story effectively with the end goal of having several episodes from which it should organically unfold.

There are seven elements that should be included in a plot outline.

This includes:

Hook

Catalyst

Turning point 1

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Midpoint

Turning point 2

Climax

Ending

These same rules apply whether you are writing a short, a feature, or a TV pilot. You may hear conflicting information on writing plot and how there are different ways that writers go about doing this, but in the end, these seven elements will yield you a script that works, contingent on writing ability, rewrites, and applying feedback effectively.

So, let's break each of these down.

The **hook** is the attention-grabber.

You have to grab your reader's attention immediately in order to get them to pay attention to the rest of your story. How do you open your story? And why? What would be the best opening? You don't want to choose an event that has nothing to do with your story or your characters. A good attention-grabber needs to work effectively **WITH** your story and characters.

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The hook can potentially be the first 1-5 pages of your script. It can be considered the entire “cold open” of your pilot episode. What is it that your story and/or your characters have to say to the reader immediately to get them to pay attention?

Do we open in the middle of a car chase? Or will we open in the middle of a heated argument between lovers in a mansion? Or a heated argument between a mother and daughter in a homeless shelter?



*[*Spoiler alert]*

In the hit drama series *Breaking Bad*, the pilot opens in the American desert with a pair of pants floating in the air, and for us to then find that the pair more than likely belongs to a middle-aged white guy driving an old RV wearing only his tighty-whities and some sort of gas mask.

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He has a passed-out passenger who is also wearing a gas mask in the seat next to him and two guys on the floor behind them—either dead or passed out. We don't know at this point. There is a clear sense of urgency with how the driver is driving. He crashes and we hear sirens in the background.

Through a video message that he leaves his family on a digicam, we discover that this is “Walter.” He puts the camera down, sirens get closer, he stands on a dirt road pointing a gun in the direction of the sirens, waiting for the inevitable.

The opening works effectively, introduces characters, and sets the tone of the show immediately.

Next, we have the **catalyst**. A catalyst is what sets the story in motion.

Contingent on the length of your script, it can range anywhere from the first 1-10 pages of the script (following the hook).

It can be a specific event or specific line of dialogue and without it taking place, the rest of the story couldn't exist.

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In the pilot episode to *Breaking Bad*, the catalyst is when “Walter” watches a news report on TV about the seizing of a meth lab and sees all the money involved within the footage. After it’s already been established just who he is earlier in the episode—a 50-year-old high school chemistry teacher who has to work a part-time job at a car wash—this event of seeing this news report sets the entire pilot, and ultimately, the series, on a specific trajectory.

Next, we have **Turning Point 1**. It’s an event that turns the story around in a different direction.

In other words, the story seems like it’s headed one way and a particular event occurs that puts the story and characters along another path altogether.

In *Breaking Bad*, turning point 1 is when “Walter” is told he has a couple of years left to live (best case scenario with chemo) due to a lung cancer diagnosis. As if life hasn’t beaten him down enough, knowing that he’s going to leave his family behind with very little to no money scares him. He’s more motivated to take back control of his life.

And it was at “Walter’s” own 50th birthday party in his home that his DEA agent brother-in-law, who was part of the meth drug bust that they watched the TV news report about, shared that he would be willing to take “Walter” on a ride-along for the next time he does a meth drug bust. “Walter” now has a reason to follow through on this offer. See, his cancer diagnosis changed the story around in a different direction.

Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

Next, we have the **midpoint**. The midpoint connects the first half of your script with the second half, and it is the point of no return for your protagonist, or for one of your main characters on a TV series, or it's an event that marks new territory for the episode/series itself.

Whatever actions are taken at this point, there's no going back to how things used to be prior to taking these actions. They have now entered a new world or new way of being for themselves.

In *Breaking Bad*, the midpoint is when "Walter" approaches "Jesse" about what they can offer one another under the circumstances. ("Walter" is a man desperate to get money. "Jesse" is his former high school chemistry student from years ago. He just had his meth lab raided and lost his business partner in the process. "Walter" figured all of this out while on a ride-along he went on with his DEA agent brother-in-law, where he happened to see "Jesse.") There's no coming back from this offer, especially since "Walter" blackmails "Jesse" to work with him. He either partners with him or "Walter" threatens to turn "Jesse" in to the authorities.

Next, we have **Turning Point 2**. Turning Point 2 changes the story around in a different direction ONCE AGAIN.

In other words, the story seems like it's headed one way and a particular event occurs that puts the story and characters along another path altogether.

Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

In *Breaking Bad*, the turning point 2 is when “Jesse” is forced to bring his former business partner (who just got out on bail) and his cousin to where “Walter” has cooked his meth in the RV/desert.

At this point, “Walter” has made his first batch of high-quality meth, which impressed “Jesse.” Because “Jesse” attempted to sell some to his former partner’s cousin, they became interested in the meth and possibly wanting to kill both “Walter” and “Jesse.” This is why this is an event that changes the story around in a different direction.

Next, we have the **climax**. The climax is the final conflict of your episode or movie right before the very ending.

This is a huge conflict and can even be tied to or be the actual cliffhanger of an episode. How will our protagonist escape? Will she find her daughter? Will she get the girl? Will she get the guy? But if what you’re writing is a sitcom, the stakes more than likely will not be so high. And if it’s a movie, there may be those same questions, but they soon get answered by the ending that is to come shortly thereafter (contingent on potential sequels).

Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

In *Breaking Bad*, sirens are wailing in the distance (“Walter” thinking it’s the cops) as he’s trying to figure out how to get out of the mess with what we believe are two dead bodies in a broke down RV. The emotional and legal mess that a guy who led a simple life at the beginning of the episode is now facing something that he could’ve never imagined. And now, the opening hook that introduced “Walter” in a crazy situation comes full circle.

Next, we have the **ending**. The ending is the final scene right before the credits.

In TV, this can be the cliffhanger at the end or should quickly follow the climax/cliffhanger within 1-2 pages. Dragging the very ending out any longer can result in the story “feeling” like it’s being dragged out.

In *Breaking Bad*, the last scene is when “Walter” gets his long-lost confidence back and makes love to his wife. (We haven’t seen a confident version of him throughout the entire episode).

Rough Draft of a Screenplay or TV Pilot

Using your knowledge about your characters from the character biographies, your plot outline, and rules of the world (if any), you should be able to move forward with confidence.

Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

What you'll need:

- A laptop or desktop computer. In some instances, a tablet may work if you have a screenwriting app that you plan to use with it.
- Screenwriting software (ex: Final Draft, Movie Magic, Writer's Duet, Fade In)

Guidance with writing your rough draft:

- Choose the screenwriting software that works within your budget, but please do NOT write in Microsoft Word or any other non-screenwriting software. It will take the joy out of writing your script if your main focus becomes formatting. And if this isn't enjoyable, you shouldn't be doing it.
- Begin writing your script in a way that resonates with you, keeping your plot outline and character biographies close by for reference (and any other items you feel you need at the ready). Write from instinct, but if you ever get off track, you have your plot outline that will get you back on track and ground you.

**The software programs can take care of sluglines, character cues, and dialogue placement, but it is your responsibility to know how to put words on the page effectively as a screenwriter.*



Revision, Feedback & Revision Again

You now have a rough draft of your script completed. Congratulations! Now, you're going to set your script aside for 14-30 full days.

This helps you to separate yourself and your mind from your story.

The separation gives you perspective. During this time, you should not even open up the document to make changes. Even if you get a flash of inspiration, avoid the temptation to continue writing. If you get a great idea for the script during this time, write it down in an actual notepad or a virtual one on your phone. You definitely want to keep your ideas in a safe place, but you don't want to interfere with this writing process.

This 14 to 30-day vacay from your script will allow you to think about things other than your story. And if your mind goes to your story, let it. As long as you still keep your distance from the actual document itself—on your electronic device or a hard copy.



Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

After your hiatus, do the following:

- Read it from beginning to end, mentally noting what you like and don't like. Don't get caught up in making changes within this first read-through unless they are minor typos that you happen to catch.
- Read through once again, making notes of the changes you would like to make, or you can dive right in and begin making those changes immediately.
- Once you have a solid draft of your script that you feel happy with (now this is all based on instinct and you doing a thorough rewrite), you're going to go through your script thoroughly four more times.

(1) The first time, only reviewing each slugline.

(2) The second time, reviewing only the stage direction (or action).

(3) The third time, only reading the actual dialogue and reading that dialogue out loud.

The reason that I have you read this out loud is because you want to listen for authenticity, consistency with character voices, and ensuring that each of your characters' voices sound distinct.

(4) And finally, read the entire script from beginning to end one more time, making sure it's the best it can be before you hand it off to others for feedback.

Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

Going through this process helps you to focus on one type of issue at a time, allowing you to find mistakes and easily correct them. Even though this isn't the final draft, you want to treat it as such before you hand it to others who are going to provide you with feedback. Plus, this is a lot easier on those that you plan on having read your script. It's expected that a rough draft will need work of some sort. However, people providing feedback should not have to work through careless typos.

Feedback

Types of feedback to prep for:

Typo Hunters. Sometimes feedback points out minor issues that you didn't even see in your script document itself (typos), story, plot, or characters. Great! This means the person providing feedback has more than likely discovered some inconsistencies that are easily correctable, and these individuals eliminate those ugly and careless typos for you.



Teddy Bears. Sometimes feedback makes you feel on top of the world because someone actually loved your script. They found little to no typos, and everything resonated with them. This is fun feedback to get. You feel like you can conquer the world.

Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

Kiss of Death Monsters. Then there's the feedback that makes you question your talent and life choices. Some people will rip your characters apart, your idea apart, or even your plot. These brutal feedbackers are the ones that will probably hurt your feelings. They may find that your characters are under-developed, your plot is predictable, or find inconsistencies in your story or the world you created that are so bad that the story just doesn't make sense.

This is usually the game-changing type of feedback! Trust me. You may not want to hear it, but it ends up being exactly what you need in order to take your script to the next level (usually).

Before you jump down their throat, ask yourself if there is some validity in what they're saying. Be honest with yourself and with your characters and story. This is what separates exceptional writers from good ones or mediocre ones. The ability to take constructive feedback and/or notes and when and how to apply them effectively into their scripts.

Clueless Fakers. And finally, you will receive feedback that doesn't resonate with you. Listen respectfully, genuinely consider the option if it has merit, and if it still doesn't ring true for you, don't add it to your script. Screenwriting and TV writing is subjective. You're good.

Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

Now, if you get hired onto a project, you will receive notes from producers and you will need to figure how to listen effectively, to communicate with the producer effectively, and to write the rewrite in such a way that not only works for you but rings true for the producers as well. Be prepared if you plan to pitch, sell, and/or produce your work to get notes and to know how to apply them. For now, manage your emotions.

So, how do we get this feedback?

Make a list of about 5-10 people who you would like to consider reading your script.

Potential qualifications in your readers:

- They have a basic understanding of what a TV pilot script/screenplay should look like.
- They are great writers themselves and you appreciate, respect, and love their work.
- They have experience editing and/or creative writing.
- They have a degree in English, Communications, or Creative Writing.
- They have a basic understanding of story with the concept of beginning, middle, and end.

Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

Administrative tasks:

- Convert your script into a PDF. This is the only way that most people will be able to open the document and it's harder to make changes to a PDF document.
- Register this draft of your script with the Writer's Guild of America, West. As of the creation of this writing, the cost for that is \$20.
- Once you have your list of feedbackers compiled, you've converted the script into a PDF, and registered it with the WGA, email or text each person to ask if they would be willing to read your script for honest and constructive feedback. No group emails or group texts. Personalize this. You need to get their permission in writing (via email or text) that they are willing to read it BEFORE you send it to them. Don't blindly send a script and assume anything.
- If they agree to read it and provide you with feedback, email them your script as a PDF, stating in the email what you may want feedback on specifically and just any general overview type of feedback, thank them for their time, and give them a date as to when you need their feedback returned to you. Deadlines make things happen.

Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

What to do while you are waiting for feedback?

- Leave your script alone. This is another opportunity to step away from your script. The distance will actually give you perspective.
- Please don't continue to revise your script while waiting on feedback. This is counterproductive.
- During this time, dream up new story ideas, read existing TV pilot scripts/screenplays, or watch series/movies that continue to inspire you.
- If you come up with a great idea that you would like to add to your TV pilot/screenplay, write it down, but AVOID opening up the script/document to add this great idea and to do further revisions.
- If you can receive quality feedback from at least 3-4 individuals within your timeline, and feel good about what they've provided you, you can move forward with your next draft.

SELF-HELP MANUSCRIPT GUIDANCE

Branding for Those Writing Self-Help Manuscripts

Your brand is something that is unique to you, and if you have one, it's unique to your business as well. It may encompass your style, a symbol, words, design, or any combination of these. Eventually, the public associates your brand with a specific level of quality, credibility, and expectation. When a company is able to emotionally connect the consumer with a level of quality that they come to expect, this builds loyalty to the product and/or service, and in turn, to the company.

Of course, we are all familiar with Nike's swoosh symbol, Apple's image of the little bite out of an apple, and the red and white target symbol for the big-box general merchandizing giant, Target. More importantly than those actual images that immediately pop in our minds the second we hear the name brands, is what we associate with those brands.

When I think of Nike, I think of a high-quality athletic shoe and high-performing athletes. When I think of Apple, I visualize innovation, quality, and cutting-edge technology. When I think of Target stores, my mind immediately sees a clean store that happens to smell like popcorn when I walk through the entrance. It's very welcoming.

Your book will ultimately reveal to your ideal clients how you want them to see you, and how you want them to associate their needs with your company.

Part of your marketing efforts can be to use your book to leverage your business. Pass it along to your ideal clients. Have it available at the end of a speaking engagement. Offer it to existing clients. Your book is an extension of you. The more people get to know you on their own terms through reading a book, the more they develop a connection and trust with you.

Reasons Behind Your Manuscript: Objectives vs. Goals

When business owners write a business book, they have specific intentions for writing it. But first they need to: (1) consider what objectives should be accomplished for the reader and what lessons they should learn, (2) determine the target audience, (3) choose what the book is going to be about (topic), and (4) determine your intended goal [as the author] once the book is completed.

What goal do you want to accomplish with writing your book?

Is it simply to say that you've accomplished this as a bucket-list goal, or do you really want to do something with it?

Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

Many entrepreneurs and professionals alike choose to write a book because they want to establish themselves as an authority in their field of expertise. Given an honest, thorough, and personable real estate agent with \$200,000 in commissions a year, versus an honest, thorough, and personable real estate agent with \$200,000 in commissions a year with a published *How to Win Over Amazing Clients* book in Barnes & Noble and on Amazon, which real estate agent would you prefer to represent you or to learn from if you're an up-and-coming real estate agent?

Both can provide the same service, but one has the credibility and authority behind their words, which they were bold enough to place within the pages of a book.

If your goal is to create your book as a lead generator, it's a perfect marketing tool to do so. Knowing this before writing the first word in your manuscript is helpful. Your book has now become intentional. You can use the book to get scheduled on television or podcasts. Audiences will listen to your interview, in which you will undoubtedly and shamelessly, promote your book.

Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

You can use your book to be interviewed in blogs with huge followings. You can attend professional development seminars where the audience in the room matches your demographic, and provide free copies to 50-100 people with the permission of the venue and/or organization putting on the seminar/event. Giving out free copies may seem counter-productive, but the more people know about you, the more likely they are to trust you. And if they need your services and/or products that you provide, guess who they will think of first?

Booking a speaking engagement also becomes a lot easier if that is your goal. How much more effortless would it be to reach out to an event organizer and let them know about the value that you can bring to their audience by the content written in your book?

Books provide value to people. Successful entrepreneurs and professionals are constantly seeking information to grow and excel in their industry. Getting their hands on your book is the value that you're bringing to their lives. As you can see, your professional goals as the author should tie into the objectives and lessons that can be learned from your book by the reader.

Maybe you have more business than you know what to do with, and you simply want to create a legacy with your book that you can leave behind. That's amazing. Write about what you would like others to know about you, your industry, and advice that can aid the reader to progress in their lives—both personally and professionally. Leaving a legacy is a powerful and daring move to make your permanent mark in the world.

Professional Advice, Lessons, and Tips in Manuscripts

Regardless of your goals as the author, if they are indeed for a business book, you should provide professional advice, lessons, and tips within your area of expertise on what has actually worked for you. Do not write a book on a topic that you know nothing about. Do not write a book about a topic in which you haven't reached any valuable level of success to be able to impart wisdom to anyone within that area.

Write about what has actually worked for you within your field. Share your failures and successes, but don't pretend to be an authority on a subject and provide useless advice that you've never succeeded at implementing, or worse, that you've never even attempted.

Providing your failures that you've encountered along your journey to success is instrumental in connecting with your reader. No path to genuine success is easy; pretending it is to your readers disconnects them from you because you come across as an unreachable idea, instead of an inspiration.



Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

I remember when I was teaching college level Screenwriting, Effective Speaking, and English. I was working at two different colleges for a good part of my professorial years, and there was even a time when I worked at three different colleges simultaneously.

I somehow balanced all the requirements of each institution, provided extensive feedback to my students, and even made time for one-on-ones. I loved teaching and helping students to develop their stories, their essay writing, and even their public speaking abilities.

During the “getting to know you” period at the beginning of each semester, I would always share my failures and successes with them. Why? Because I wanted them to know that I was living what I asked them to do. I was the real deal, and that if I could succeed as a writer, so could they—as a writer or any other artist. My failures were what they learned from. Ironically, I learned more from the times I’ve failed as well.



Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

In front of the classroom, it made me more human. The fact that I overcame obstacles, made me successful. Just something to think about when you're writing your book. Perfection is not a relatable quality. Advice, lessons, and tips based upon what has worked and what hasn't is far more valuable than trying to pretend to be perfect. The reader will learn more from you when you're simply human.

Your book should provide a specific value on a specific topic within your area of expertise to a specific audience. For the sake of clarity, do not confuse the objectives that you would like your reader to use as guideposts for what they should learn from reading your book with your professional goals that you would like to accomplish with your book as the author. The words "objectives" and "goals" can be used interchangeably. However, I chose to separate the two words so you can distinguish the two differences between you as the author and your readers.



Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

If you're writing a book on how to find a ghostwriter (a topic), an example of a specific objective (for the reader) within that book could be: "What experience and credentials should I look for when creating a list of writers to interview?" In this case, an example of your professional goal (as an author) is perhaps that you want to generate one hundred fifty viable leads for your writing agency each month as a result of publishing and marketing the book.

Do you see the difference?

Objectives versus goals.

Objectives should provide value to your readers.

Goals are what you would like to accomplish professionally.

As an author with experience and a track record within your area of expertise, the information you're providing SHOULD provide value to your reader. The reader should be able to take what you've shared and use it to their advantage. Although there are no guarantees on them getting the same results, they have a foundation to build upon and to find their own way with your written mentorship as an aid.

The line between objectives and goals can easily be blurred but distinguishing them from what you're providing to others and what you intend on accomplishing for yourself makes it clear.

Keep in Mind the Ideal Client when Writing a Self-Help Manuscript

Depending on your goals, the ideal client should be the target audience for the book.

Let's look at an example. Imagine you're a fitness trainer and own your own gym. Your gym is located in the higher end of town in Wherever, U.S.A., and your demographic is upper class stay-at-home moms. Consider what you know about this particular audience. The median income for upper income class was \$187, 872 in 2016. (Kockhhar)



It's safe to say that this group of women can afford the rates that you're charging, so costs tend to not play a big role as an objection to overcome. What else do you know about this group of women? Fitness training is part of self-care; these women have a lot of availability in their schedules because nannies can take care of their children when they visit your gym for a few hours a week. Lower income stay-at-home moms don't have this luxury.

Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

I remember when I was a new mom with my son. I was a stay-at-homer finishing my college degree and spending any spare time writing my next script idea. Writing was my “me-time.” My son’s father and I were far from being upper class at the time, but I know firsthand that an overexerted mother shares some of the same emotional turmoil with her financially sound counterparts.

Anyway, the point is that I want you to know your ideal client. Who are they? What do they want? Think about the people you currently serve.

Furthermore, if you’re writing this book to gain more leads for your business, it’s crucial that you write to their needs so they can get value from what you’re providing. If you’re not planning to use your book to generate leads you may want to first determine what you want to write about and to do some research. Is your book meant to be used as a credibility and authority source? Or for booking speaking engagements? Determine what your audience would be looking for before you get started on your book.

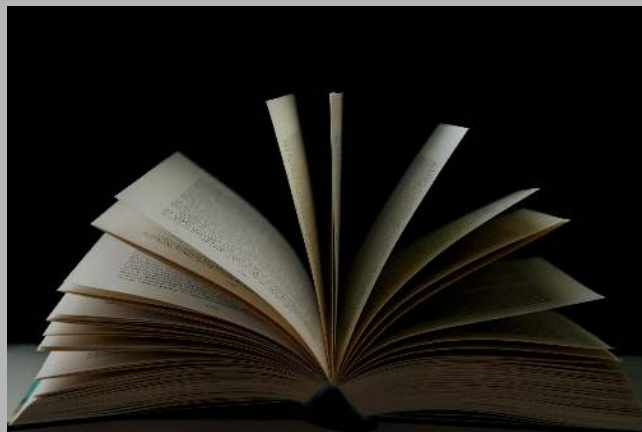
You don’t want to waste time or money writing a book that doesn’t have a home, or in this case, a demographic that can’t wait to turn each page of your sweat equity. Sometimes you have to work backwards to move forward. Knowing the topic of your book, its objectives, the demographic, and your goal are definitely points to consider first. They don’t have to be established in any particular order, but they are a foundation from which to build upon.

Whether the step is to find an audience that is interested in what you have to share (what your book is about) or whether the next move is for you to create material for a market that already exists, just be sure to know what you want and to plan. Plans can change based on unexpected circumstances that arise, but it's important to have something to aim for before trying to make adjustments.

Outlining for a Self-Help Manuscript

Taking into consideration your subject matter, topic, objectives, goals, and your ideal client as well as any of the aforementioned information, you're going to use these items to build your foundation.

What is it that you want to talk about? Be specific. You don't need to cover multiple complex topics when you can actually just write multiple books on these different topics at different periods of time. Right now, focus on ONE topic. ONE book.



Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

Potential ways to determine what type of self-help book to write:

- Consider the feedback you've already gotten from your clients. Is there anything consistent that you hear them asking for or is there something that they're asking more of that you're providing? That may lead you to a topic for your book.
- Consider asking existing or former clients what their needs are and what they are looking for. That could lead you to a topic as well.
- Additionally, you may have a topic that you feel will be a great benefit to your existing and potential clients and you're passionate about wanting to write about it. Make sure the topic is clear (and that you don't include more than one). Zero in on the ONE topic that you would like to write about, the topic you feel very passionate about.

Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

Information gathering:

- Do some research, using credible sources within your industry to support your experiences, perspective, and position, as well as those that oppose your position. You need all of the information in order to write something of true value. Find out the questions people are asking about that topic? What is the interest with the topic you would like to write about? Google will be your best friend for this. This can help you with how you go about writing your book.
- If it's easier to “talk” your notes by using a recording device, do that. If writing comes easy to you, then do that. Do what works for you but be sure to take and gather notes from the research you conduct on your topic. And credible sources help to support your position.

Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

Prepping for your outline:

- Write out: (1) the objectives of the book, (2) the demographic of the book, (3) what the book is about, (4) compile credible resources and feedback received from clients, and (5) write your professional goals as the writer that you would like to achieve in relation to the book.
- Write a half to one-page summary of what you're envisioning your manuscript to be about. It's okay to not know everything. But this helps you to make your ideas concrete, focused, and to flesh it out a little more.
- Write your mini biography (the one that will be on the back or inside cover of the book).

Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

Your outline:

- You want to decide on 10, 12, or 16 chapters for your book. It can be more, or it can be less, contingent on just how much you have to share. However, each chapter should reflect a subtopic under the umbrella of the topic of your book. For example, let's say we have a book on the topic "*The New Fruit Diet.*" A chapter may consist of: "*Apples VS. Oranges: Which is Healthier?*"
- Once you decide on the potential chapters, you can write on a focused subtopic for each chapter. You may find that you have way more to share, and if so, increase the number of chapters. You may find that you have way less to share, then decrease the number of chapters. Be sure that you have a strong and solid subtopic for each chapter before moving forward.
- Once your subtopics/chapter headings/titles are clear and concrete, you can now write 1-2 paragraphs of a summary for each chapter, which will serve as the solid outline and guidance for your manuscript as you write each chapter later on.
- After you complete the chapter summaries/outline, re-read them, and make sure the direction of your book feels good, that it's flowing well, and makes sense.

- You can also ask a few trusted people via text or email if they would be willing to read your chapter summaries. Feedback at this stage of the process can be invaluable and save you during the rewriting process and even save you money once you hire your editor. If and when they agree to give you feedback, send a copy of your chapter summaries/outline, explain to them that it's the outline of your book, and ask for feedback in the areas that you're looking for feedback in, and that you're open to listening to any other feedback as well. Send the document as a PDF, thank them in advance for their time, and give them a deadline of when you will need that feedback returned.

Rough Draft/Rewrite/Editing of a Manuscript

Using your chapter summaries/outline, you're going to begin writing either your very first chapter or the chapter that you are the most excited to start with. It's up to you.

The rough draft should range from 25,000 - 55,000 words in a Microsoft Word document. Self-help and business books tend to fall within this range. This word count yields about one hundred to two hundred actual published book pages.

What you'll need:

- A laptop or desktop computer. In some instances, a tablet may work if you have a Microsoft Word app that you plan to use with it.
- Use Microsoft Word to write your manuscript.

Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

Keep the following tips in mind:

- Make the proper formatting settings within your document so that this doesn't become an issue as you write your manuscript. This includes numbering your pages, how you decide to handle citations, chapter titles, chapter headings, and which writing style you'll be using (MLA, APA, or Chicago style).
- Be sure to include a title page, copyright page, and table of contents page at the beginning of your manuscript (in that order) and to include a list of your sources at the end of your book. Be sure to get permission(s) to use the content that requires you to do so.
- You DON'T have to, but you CAN include a preface, foreword, dedication page, and epilogue.
- Begin writing your manuscript in a way that resonates with you, keeping your chapter summaries/outline close by for reference (and any other items you feel you need at the ready). Write from instinct, but if you ever get off track, you have your outline that will get you back on track to ground you.

The rewrite/editing:

You now have a rough draft of your manuscript completed. Congratulations! Now, you're going to set your manuscript aside for 14-30 full days. This helps you to separate yourself and your mind from your story.

Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

The separation gives you perspective. During this time, you should not even open up the document to make changes. Even if you get a flash of inspiration, avoid the temptation to continue writing. If you get a great idea for your book during this time, write it down in an actual notepad or a virtual one on your phone.

This 14 to 30-day vacay from your manuscript will allow you to think about things other than your book. And if your mind goes to your book, let it. As long as you still keep your distance from the actual document itself—on your electronic device or a hard copy.

Writing Shortcuts for Busy Non-Writers

After your hiatus, do the following:

- Revise your manuscript based on a conceptual edit, line edit, and copy edit of the material. A conceptual edit uses the whole picture perspective, looking at the story, expertise, citations, and tone/voice that all work cohesively. The line edit looks at sentence structure and how content is arranged. Finally, a copy edit looks at typos, misspelled words, and punctuation issues.
- Read it from beginning to end, mentally noting what you like and don't like. Don't get caught up in making changes within this first read-through unless they are minor typos that you happen to catch.
- Read through once again, making notes of the changes you would like to make, or you can dive right in and begin making those changes immediately.
- Once you have a solid draft of your manuscript that you feel happy with (now this is all based on instinct and you doing a thorough rewrite on your own), you're going to go through your manuscript thoroughly two more times. (1) the first time, only reviewing each chapter title and the subtitles within each chapter (making sure the formatting is correct and the subtitles support the topic of each chapter) and (2) read through the entire manuscript from beginning to end one last time, correcting any other issues that you may catch.

- Finally, when you have gone through your revisions thoroughly, and feel genuinely good about what you've created, it's time to vet and interview qualified professional editors to edit your book. And then... to hire the one that's the best fit. **DON'T EVER EDIT YOUR BOOK YOURSELF AS THE FINAL EDIT PRIOR TO GOING TO PRINT. YOU NEED ANOTHER SET OF EYES ON YOUR WORK—REGARDLESS OF USING SPELLCHECK OR READING THROUGH YOUR OWN WORK MULTIPLE TIMES.**

Conclusion

Regardless of whether you choose to write a TV script, movie script, or manuscript, your story is your story. Consider what you want to accomplish with what you're writing. Is this writing simply therapeutic for you? Do you have the intention of writing on the side consistently? Do you want to create a book that helps you to generate leads for your business? Do you want to turn your life story into a TV series, sell it, and potentially impact the world with it?

What is your story?

And what do you want to do with it?

Ultimately, you are the only one who can answer that question.

About the Author

Nitara Osbourne is an award-winning and produced screenwriter and editor of two Amazon bestselling self-help books. She's written nearly 40 screenplays, TV pilots, short scripts, and treatments to date.

Her feature film, *Running on Empty Dreams*, ran its course on Netflix, and can now be purchased on Amazon and seen on Tubi. She wrote, produced, and directed the film, which had gone on to win three prestigious Telly Awards. She also served as a college adjunct professor, teaching screenwriting at Arizona State University and Scottsdale Community College.

Most recently, some of Nitara's TV pilots have placed in competitions, including her script *Chosen?* (Sundance Episodic Program-2021; Stage 32/HBO Black Boy Writes Black Girl Writes mentorship initiative-2022; ScreenCraft Fellowship-2022), *The Runaway Writer* (Stage 32 TV Drama contest-2022; Creative Screenwriting TV Pilot competition-2022), and *Diplomatically Black* (Stage 32/HBO Black Boy Writes Black Girl Writes mentorship initiative-2023).

Nitara has received two “recommend/considers” from executives via Stage 32—one for her feature *Sleeping on Couches* and the other for her TV pilot *The Runaway Writer*, welcomed accomplishments for screenwriters.

Nitara runs her own business where she mentors and/or is hired by producers and clients to write screenplays, TV scripts, and to ghostwrite/edit self-help books.



Sources

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