

How To Write An E-Book In Ten Days, Flat

Author

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About the Author

Lewis Philips - aka Philip Lewis started writing his first novel in 2008 and since then has continued to add new titles to his online Brand Name Business – Lewis Philips Signature Books. His vision of the future has delivered more than he expected.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Radhika for her contribution to this book. With her help on the editing and a final polish up, my dream of writing more books has become a reality.

It's with great satisfaction that I thank my wife and family for their help and support on this journey. At

times, they found my obsession to write hard to understand. Gradually, they started believing in my dream as new titles got added to Lewis Philips Signature brands – [www.lewisphilips.com]

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Thank you for purchasing my eBook. I trust that you will find within these words, the inspiration and motivation to achieve your personal goals of your life.

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Introduction: What It Takes to Be a Good Scribe

Many of us believe that we have a book in us, waiting to get out. I am no different.

One fine morning; I sat up in bed and declared to my wife, “I going to write a book.” Without turning, she quipped, “Go back to sleep. You are dreaming.”

Actually, I wasn’t. I tiptoed to the kitchen table, and started writing. Just like that! And believe me, half an hour later, I had penned down thirty sentences that became the blue print for this book that you now hold in your hands.

Elementary, isn’t it?

This book is about elementary skills – about writing an e-book in ten days, flat. I've been there, I've done it, and so can you. In simple, step-by-step manner, this book will show you how.

I believe anyone, whatever their level of reading and writing skills be at present of the English language (or any other language, for that matter), just needs some bit of research acumen; the ability to gather and manage information and present it in an attractive, logical manner to pen an e-book.

Above all, it calls for both constructing and deconstruction of existing information, in a manner that it begins to make sense in a particular context. I'll illustrate this point with examples, in a separate section.

Right now, it might suffice to say that a good e-book is about simplification of existing ideas. I don't know whether the incident that I am going to relate to you is fiction or true but it does explain my concept of simplification:

KISS Formula – Keeping it Super Simple

During the Second World War, President Franklin Roosevelt received the following draft for his approval:

“Such preparations shall be made as will completely obscure all Federal buildings and non-Federal buildings occupied by the Federal Government during an air raid for any period of time for visibility by reason of internal or external illumination. Such obscuration may be obtained either by blackout construction or by termination of the illumination.

This will, of course, require that in building areas in which production must continue during the blackout, construction must be provided that internal illumination may continue. Other areas, whether or not occupied by personnel, may be obscured by terminating the illumination.”

It is said, that upon reading it, Roosevelt wrote the following on the margins, “Tell them that in buildings where they have to keep work going, to put something across the window. In buildings where they can afford to let the work stop for a while, turn out the lights.”

Clear, concise, written communication is vitally important today, especially with a growing number of hi-tech and other white-collar jobs now being "off-shored" where the person at the end of an e-

mail could be next door or sitting halfway across the world from you!

“Many writers of e-mail or other written documents sit down at the keyboard and key whatever comes to mind. This approach leads to rambling thoughts that may make the finished product difficult for readers to understand. Writers should follow the logical steps of prewriting, brainstorming, writing, and organizing, revising for style, and proofreading to produce memos, letters, and reports,” writes Susan Jaderstrom and Susan Miller in *Writing with Purpose*.

Practice Makes Perfect

“Writing is something one can learn,” declared Ayn Rand in *The Art of Nonfiction*. “There is no mystery about it.”

In 1969, over 16 evenings, the novelist-philosopher demystified writing in a series of informal lectures given to small group of colleagues. Her lectures were taped, and, 19 years after her death in 1982, edited and published as *The Art of Nonfiction*.

It may come as a surprise to many that for all her cult status, Rand was not a born writer, at least not in English. She spoke the language only haltingly and did not write it when, at age 20, she fled Communist Russia to settle in the United States in 1926. It took her years to master writing in English, and throughout her career she worked hard to improve her craft.

And when she did finally manage the feat, the three most important elements of effective non-fiction writing that she swore by were “clarity, clarity, and

clarity.”

Do You Need An Outline?

One of my personal strength in writing is that I always begin with an outline. Over the years, I have mastered the art of testing the completeness of my outline. One test that I employ is called the essence test: your outline makes sense only when it captures the entire idea from start to finish. “If the abstract structure is not clear in your mind, you cannot hold in mind the overall view of your (project) or decide what belongs in it,” wrote Rand. I make sure that such problems do not arise in my writing.

Structure Your Thoughts

The second test that I use, probably borrowed from Aristonian philosophy is that of casualty. This concept dictates that my outline present your ideas

logically; bound in a cause-and-effect relationship before it leads to some definite conclusion.

Pay Attention to the Audience Profile

In addition, before I put my pen to paper, I pay careful attention to the audience profile. I do this, so that I may not meander into areas that may be of no direct interest to my audience, such as quoting from Bible in a book on youth brands.

Be Passionate in Your Writing

We often make the mistake of assuming that a wry, clinically detached style is most appropriate for business e-books. Not necessarily. In fact, keeping a tight leash on your emotions and not allowing your subconscious to spill over into your writing can be the greatest impediment to good writing. “While you are writing,” Rand wrote, “you must

adopt the premise: my subconscious, right or wrong." Writing from the gut is a sure recipe for a great piece of writing.

In an interview to the *Globe* magazine in Cambridge, Nobel laureate Mexican poet Octavio Paz, quoted French poet Baudelaire to describe his view of literary and political criticism: "If a writer's criticism is to be good, it must be passionate. Any criticism must be partial. Impartial criticism is for academics."

No doubt Paz was hailed by the Swedish Academy "for impassioned writing with wide horizons, characterized by sensuous intelligence and humanistic integrity."

Round One: With Time Management, You Can Be Half Done

If you, like me are time-poor and don't know where to start, I'd say banish that thought.

All first-time authors develop cold feet. The idea in reading this book is to overcome your fear and paralysis of writing.

We all lead, terribly busy lives. Therefore, it's a valid question to ask how do I find the time to write an e-book?

The answer is simple.

You won't *find* time to write an e-Book, you need to *make* it.

Set aside small chunks of time each day to pen your thoughts. Choose a place when you are free of distractions, when you can focus your mind on something and let the adrenaline flow. Don't let excuses come in your way. Soon you will develop a daily writing routine; a habit that will support your work. The key is to stick to the plan, once you have developed the habit and make no exceptions.

There may be times when you feel discouraged, bored, angry, or fed up. Don't let that bog you down. Instead take a short break, clear the cobwebs from your head and when you are sufficiently refreshed, pick up the pen again and soldier on.

Commit to a time-frame, I would suggest ten days because it really shouldn't take more than that to

write a 100-
page e-Book.

I've done it, so I
know. Before
you begin take
stock of the
following:

- How
many
hours

per day can you devote to writing?

- How many pages can you write per hour?

A No-fly Zone

A no-fly zone is territory over
which enemy aircraft is not
allowed to fly. Writers need to
establish no-fly zones as well,
so they can keep distractions at
bay. Don't let anything
encroach on your precious
writing time.

Once you have the basic mathematics worked out,
the rest would come easy. Remember that time is a
very limited resource. Knowing how much time you

have to devote to each task is extremely important to get quality work done.

You may not realize this but each one of us has peak performance periods when we are at our creative best. Smart authors know their peak performance period and they try to get the maximum work accomplished within this time frame. It's a great way to overcome writer's block and roll out finished projects for the market, besides having little or no downtime to procrastinate.

Gradually, as you get going, try to accomplish more in less time. If you are able to write 1,000 words in an hour, try to increase this count to 1500 words, then 2000. You'll be surprised to see how stretch goals can keep your creative juices flowing.

Carry a note pad with you, wherever you do. Start putting down all your random thoughts. You may be anywhere – on road, in the supermarket, on a flight, whenever there's time to write; do it. This way, you will build momentum and scale small heights rather than attempt to climb the mountain all at once.

Write With Conviction; Write With Passion

Know what you want and go after it with everything you've got. Flip out an exercise book with 100-odd pages and write down your goal – I Will Write my e-Book in 10 days. Read your goal every morning till it becomes a command that you cannot disobey. Imagery is a powerful motivator. Use it to motivate yourself. Visualize yourself as a celebrated author. You'll soon get there. Log in to my web sites -

www.lewisphilips.com

www.lewisphilipssignaturebooks.com for proof on how far I've progressed since I started my first writing project in 2008.

If I can do it, so can you.

Practice Makes Perfect

I like the analogy that writing is a bit like learning to swim. At best, the coach can show you a few basic techniques, but in order to be really good at swimming, you need to practice your strokes every day. It's the same with writing. As you practice, your mind and thinking pattern will become more agile and you will perfect master strokes in your writing.

Don't think about or what exactly you are going to write. Just let your mind kick into top gear and imagine someone else writing for you. Imagine drawing your strength from a deeper self, a powerhouse of untapped knowledge and I can give it to you in writing that you will succeed.

Make sure however that your writing style should reflect your true voice. It should be an extension of your personality and must bear your unique, signature. In the beginning, like a struggling artist, you may want to read and copy the style of more successful singers, but gradually, develop a voice of your own. Create and stamp your work with your own individual voice.

Exercise Time: A Plan of Action

Fill in this template to gain better control over your thinking and writing process.

A: What do you plan to do to realise your goal?

.....

.....

.....

B: What three things must you do in the next ten days to complete your objective, i.e., write your first e-book?

.....

.....

.....

C: Is there anything holding you back?

.....

.....

.....

D: How do you propose to overcome these barriers?

.....

.....

.....

E. Write down your goals beyond ten days

One year

goal

..... Five year

goal

.....

Ten year

goal

.....

.....

.....

Exercise #2

Here's what I suggest you do. Write down three key words - goal, passion, and time - at the top of a work page. That's the key for extracting ideas and thoughts to expand on and creating pages for your new book.

Concentrate on the three key words- Passion Goal
and Time

Write for 20 minutes - Punctuate and correct spelling later.

Objective and Goal Setting = Success

Write Fast DO IT NOW.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Work Sheet

List three things that may help you to succeed

Objective= Action

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Strategy =Time (make a commitment & time frame to complete)

1.
2.
3.

Action Delivery Objective (What three steps are required)

When will I get started?

- 1 When will I start:
- 2 How will I write:
- 3 How will I do it:

Keep these worksheets handy, within sight; say on the refrigerator or next to your computer. It will help on reinforce your positive mental image of a

writer that you will become over time with persistent focus.

Summary Points

- Set clear, realistic goals to achieve success. Identify the core of your book – what is your main book idea? This is the dream that you must nurture in your head for the next ten days. Keep reminding yourself "I am writing a book. I must remain focused."
- Break down your idea into chapters. Plan your content. Draw up a Table of Content (ToC). Keep jotting down ideas as they occur. Later you can sift and sort through those ideas in order to get the "big picture." Gradually, your dream will begin to take shape and become clearer and sharper in your mind's eye.

- Take your book idea and your chapter topics and put them in an order that makes sense to you. Can you visualize your book now? Is it becoming real to you?
- Get your appointment book out and start reserving time to write your first book. It helps to have a plan of action for everything you intend to do to write your book.
- Lastly, don't forget to tell five friends you are working on your book. That way, you will have witnesses and you will stay committed to the project.

Round Two: Research Far; Research Wide

By now, you would have decided what you are going to write about. You've set your goal, to start and finish in ten days. At this point, you'd need to begin conducting research to gain a deep understanding of your subject.

Let's assume your book is a personal memoir that traces the history of a family. Well, the first place to start your research is to dig into the memory space. Find a quiet place to relax and think back to where you want to start your story from. Write down one or two words that represent each thought then expand to a sentence. Continue to allow thoughts to pop up from the past that you want to write about. Be selective because no one has a perfect memory when it comes to recollection, and try and keep the bitterness out of your thoughts because after all your reader wants to be entertained, and take something from your story - maybe an inspiration or a thought-provoking idea. Before you know it, you'll have the structure of your book; a blueprint to follow.

Think and Apply Your Thoughts

Why waste precious time at your desk trying to decide what to write? Make that decision the night before or in the morning after, as you stand under the shower. Develop a clear-cut writing plan, toy with ideas, twist your lines and in short, get your creative juices flowing ahead of time, and meekly follow where ever they lead you.

Keep it Simple

During a first draft, simply write whatever pops in your head. Just take each question/problem in your outline and write whatever you think is relevant to the topic. At this stage, don't edit. Just keep tossing and turning a lot of ideas in your head.

If you get stuck, you may want to try one or more of the following strategies:

- If it's a 'how-to' book, develop step-by-step instructions for the reader to follow
- If it's a memoir, share personal stories or anecdotes from the past
- If it's a concept book, give a definition of the concept
- Provide check lists or bullet points
- Insert images and illustrations to demystify a difficult concept

The idea is to write whatever pops first in your head. If you get stuck at some point, just move on and come back to that problem section later on. The important thing is to keep going without a stop.

Back to Basics

While you are at it, jot down notes as they strike you and highlight key words that can be used as hooks to bind your story together paragraph by paragraph as the narrative turns at each page. These key words will also bind your last chapter and summary/conclusion. Don't overkill with this technique because you are after all writing a book and not putting together a Thesaurus. But do emphasize key thoughts. There is one thing that marketing gurus will tell you; repetition makes advertising work. So repeating key words will bind and carry your story forward. I'm repeating myself, has this sunk in yet?

Your style, your voice must reflect in your thoughts as they are translated to print. Words describe your thoughts, so be clear in your sentence structure as

you translate your ideas, thoughts and emotions to
WORDS.

Assuming you have completed the exercise sheet after coming up with Key Words, expand those to sentences that will become paragraphs, pages and finally chapters to complete your book.

Keep Writing, No Matter What

At this stage, expand your sentences to string together paragraphs and pages. Armed with your favourite pen make sure you are ready to go. Try and keep your train of thought on track. Also link key words to emotions that relate to the time you are describing; words like love, joy, hate, fear, sorrow, happiness. Bring in an emotional connect that your readers can identify with to add depth to

your story at both the levels - emotional and descriptive.

By the end of this exercise you should ideally come up with seven or eight key words to hang your story on, making it easy for your readers to follow. If your thoughts are structured, clear and you've followed the blue print that you created, the simplest of sentence will grow your story into an engaging narrative.

Focus on Your Audience

Imagine you are in the theatre watching a five act play, visually allowing all your senses to soak up the atmosphere. It's the same with a book, in fact the feeling is more powerful, as you must have experienced after watching a movie based on a book that you've read.

Your audience, the reader, wants to benefit or gain some insight on how you think and is interested in the subject you are writing about. So keep him/her in mind all the time as that will bring a clear perspective to your writing and you would be able to hammer the nail right on the head.

Follow No Rules

This may sound strange but it's an important strategy to create a sense of novelty. Think of what you are going to write from what is around you, from what you know and care about. It doesn't matter what kind of book you decide to write. There are no rules other than the single most important rule – your story must be gripping and engaging. Period. Beyond that it can be a satire, a drama, romantic fiction – whatever genre it may fall

under – it must, first and foremost be a gripping tale that readers want to bite and buy into.

Take inspiration from your favorite book. Read it a few times to understand the author's style, quality and based on your assessment, draw up action sheets on what would be your strategy. Pin it over your writing desk.

Check Your Sources

We all know the benefits of the internet delivering a huge amount of knowledge at a click. But beware, not all information sources are reliable or credible. Therefore double-check the source of the information. It may well be coming from a very opinionated author who has twisted facts to serve his narrow purpose. You don't want to unwittingly buy his/her perspective. Better if you double-check

your references. Check with other sites for relevant information. Finally, don't forget that libraries (both online and offline) are still a great source of knowledge for the printed word.

Exercise Time

Exercise # 1

The following exercise will build a structure and provide a hook to bring your story together.

Example: Two words.

Jay... Accident;

Sentence; Jays car accident almost killed him but the doctor saved his life

Notice, no punctuation at this stage. Just get your thoughts out and write those down.

Continue this exercise jotting down ten, twenty or thirty sentences at each go. You can take a break, but try to complete the task in the shortest possible time. Use the following templates for this exercise.

Blueprint exercise sheet:

1.;;
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2.;;
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3.;;
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4.;;

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5.;;

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6.;;

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7.;;

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8.;;

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9.;;

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Exercise # 2

Write down your purpose and your audience on a sheet of paper and pin it over your writing desk

My purpose:

My audience:

Exercise # 3

This Exercise will help you to broaden your vision and open up your creativity for the coming chapters.

Describe a food, using all your senses. Observe it visually, of course, but also include texture, smell and taste. Describe it again, but in a way that makes it disgusting: how a big juicy steak, for example, must appear to a vegetarian.

Exercise # 4

This exercise will polish speed writing. It will help you think fast and improve your writing skills. Use the following prompts to trigger your thoughts. Write a sentence or two against each word prompt

List_____

Phone_____

Lips_____

Women_____

Scarf_____

Street_____

Brown_____

Sunshine_____

Dog_____

Kicking_____

Lady_____

White_____

Don't worry about creating a story right now: just focus on following the parameters and write for at least one hour each day. Then gradually increase your time input. Write down whatever comes into your head without worrying about whether it reads good or not. You'll be surprised by the final outcome.

Summary Points

- Think about your story at every chance that you get. Flesh it out in your mind.
- Set aside a fixed time slot when you can sit down quietly and come up with the bare bones (the skeleton) of your story.
- Now leave it aside. Forget about it and get on with other things. You're done.
- Your subconscious mind is already at work on your story.
- Time to put meat on the skeleton as we proceed further.

Round Three: Content is the Key

Let me clarify that research is not content. Content is the subject you are writing about. Research is making sure your plotline, argument, historical structure is as accurate as possible.

It Takes a Lot of Planning

Plotline is a good place to start building your content from. Without a plotline, your story won't have a spine. Where will you put the flesh and blood to make your story feel real and personal?

Think Small not Big

Contrary to expectations, I would NEVER advise you to think big. As e-books go, big is not always beautiful. Instead keep your story idea small and focused.

Peep into your creative soul and search for a little story idea that instinctively appeals to you both as an author and as a reader. If it appeals to you, chances are that it will also appeal to your audience. Trust and follow that gut feeling.

Often imitation can also create something striking and original. There is no harm in imitating various styles, until you find something that matches your personality. Whatever you may or may not do - write from your own gut experience. It's unique, so it will be special.

John Braine, author of *Room at the Top* once said, "If you're to be heard out of all those thousands of voices, if your name is going to mean something out of all those thousands of names, it will only be

because you've presented your own experience truthfully."

Therefore don't store your memories in the dark recesses of your mind. Bring them out of the closet and spring clean them. You may stumble upon something very valuable. Also don't bottle up your emotions. Bring them out and smell their fragrance. Again, you may discover something priceless you're your book.

Write, Even When You Are Not Writing

Collect ideas long before you have actually started work on your e-book. It may be a lot easier to get started on your book if you are writing about people, places, and things that you are already familiar with. Draw on your personal experience; hunt down ideas from your memory store.

Keep writing. Eventually, you would be able to keep the fluff out of your writing. In time, you will become more natural with your thought churnings. As Francois René de Chateaubriand once said, “The original writer is not one who imitates nobody, but one whom nobody can imitate.”

Consistent practice will help you develop your writing "muscle." Just as you need daily exercise to keep your physical health in top gear, you need to jog your grey cells to prevent them from decay. With persistence will come confidence and with confidence, competence. Just ensure that as you progress towards your writing goal, you have made:

- A firm commitment to yourself
- Have a working schedule
- A strong pitch – or a story idea to bank on

- A cast of characters
- A detailed plot of the story

Funnel Your Ideas and Observations

Don't fool yourself into writing an encyclopedia. Narrow down your topic by listing out everything you can think of about a particular subject. Make bullet points of all the key ideas that you want to share with your readers.

Pick an e-book that's flying off the shelves and doing good business for the author to figure out the winning strategy for your book. Find out what that author did to create an extra buzz around his book. Keenly study the chapter heading, how the author makes a point with a sub-head and try to ape that style. The idea is to eventually make it a compelling read for your readers.

Where Are You Going?

The best e-books are written in a conversational tone, much as you would be talking to a friend or a colleague, not as if you are writing a boring college essay. Use the language you usually use with your friends, use everyday analogies and parallels that your readers would find easy to relate to, pad it up with a lot of background information and you are likely to cut ice with your readers.

Finally, remember that great e-book idea needs to be:

Specific. Don't meander on and on, while beating about the bush without coming straight to the heart of the matter. That's a great put off. Remain focused and straight with your readers so they get the point you are trying to make with interest and

without assistance. Nobody would like to read an e-book with a dictionary in hand.

Useful. Produce something of value for your readers. Something they gain from – a tip, an inspiring thought, an idea, even a memory that would linger on, long away they have finished reading and put your book aside. That's the kind of quality you must aspire to bring to your writing.

EXERCISE TIME

Exercise 1

Here's an exercise that will help you generate your own story starters.

1. Think of a strong emotion, e.g. rage or fear
2. Quickly write a list of ten situations which might invoke that emotion in you, e.g.

someone attempting to harm your family member

3. Choose a few of those situations and make them more specific. Come up with different scenarios for each. For instance, if you are using the situation of someone trying to harm your family one version could be a mugging scene with the lead character's mother or husband. A second version could be the main character getting fired from her job.
4. Now, take some of these scenarios, and make them even more specific. Add details (e.g. place of mugging, motive etc.) to each of these scenarios.
5. Keep going, slowly and surely until you find a story you want to write.

Exercise # 2

Start maintaining a journal, where you jot down people, places, and events of the day. Describe in details how things look, sound, smell, and feel around you. Try to capture the details you couldn't have imagined if you hadn't observed and experienced them yourself. If you use them in your fiction later, they will give it a texture of reality. Whenever you feel stuck, mine your journal for material.

Exercise # 3

This exercise will help you add different flavors to your writing styles

Record five minutes of a radio talk show or, if you can keep yourself from peeking at the screen, the audio from a television talk show. Replay the recording and write down the dialogue. Add

narrative descriptions as if you were writing a story. Try to use and retain as much of the speaker's grammar and "speaking style" as possible in your narrative. For instance, a dialogue might read like, "When ya gonna do this, hmm?" In other words, give it flavor by really showing each character is, so that their personality gets clearly etched out in your writing. That will thicken the plot for the reader.

Exercise # 4

Sometimes new words can take you on an entirely new journey in your writing. Let chance lead you to words -- and to different themes and stories -- that you may not have stumbled upon on your own.

Time Required: At least 30 minutes

Here's How to Go About Doing It:

1. Flip out a page of the dictionary. Now keeping your eyes shut, pick any page at random.
2. Open your eyes and write that word down at the top of a piece of paper.
3. Repeat the above steps two more times, so that you have three words leaping out at you on the sheet of paper.
4. Using a timer, begin to write for at least 15 minutes at a stretch, while ensuring that you incorporate all three words into your piece. Try not to judge or edit your writing: just keep the pen moving.
5. When the timer goes off, stop writing. Evaluate what you have written. Note if the words have generated a theme or idea that you may not have thought about earlier.

6. Revise the piece or a portion of it into a story; to turn it into a prose or a poem. If nothing strikes you, feel free to discard your notes and start all over again. Your first crude attempt may just be just a warm-up exercise.

Summary Points

- Keep your main subject line simple
- Narrow down your titles down to about ten or less.
- Create subtitles within the main titles – no more than three to four, at the most.
- Tell your story to yourself as if you were talking to your best friend. Hear what you say, then write it down.

- Do not attempt to edit your e-book until you are done with your first draft.

Round FOUR: Mind Your Style

What is style?

Every writer has a style that's different from the other. Merely by flipping through the covers of a novel, you can tell whose novel it could be, if you have read a few books by that author. Your style is your voice; it must bear your signature. Just as playback singers train to develop a unique, single style of their own, a writer must practice to develop and deliver a unique writing style. Think Charles Dickens, Dan Brown, Wilber Smith ... each had a 'voice' different from the other and they managed to develop this into their Unique Selling Proposition

(USP). After all, sameness doesn't sell; different story angles do. Differentiation does.

Read to Develop Your Signature Style

The million-dollar question is how do you develop a unique style? I would suggest you first read up on your favourite authors. Make heaps of notes on how they structured their stories and how effectively they used their word play. Be an avid reader. Read up on the classics -- great literature can be a wonderful way of brushing up your style and don't shy away from contemporary fiction, either. "Young or beginning writers must be urged to read widely, ceaselessly, both classics and contemporaries," writes Joyce Carol Oates in *The Faith of a Writer*, "for without an immersion in the history of the craft, one is doomed to remain an amateur . . ."

Getting into the Process of Writing

Write about anything and everything. Attempt different genres, including non-fiction and poetry-writing. Use interesting turn of phrases, example, "The grey-haired woman sat by the window tatting a doily," which is far more vivid than a plain vanilla, "The old woman sat in the corner working on something."

When you are reading up on your favourite authors, follow their blueprint but by all means use your own voice to deliver your thoughts. You would have heard the adage, a picture is better than a thousand words but if you can use words to draw vivid pictures in the minds of your readers, that's so much better. Another point to bear in mind is avoiding telling the reader what's happening. That will not paint a picture of the scene you might want

to describe. Instead use powerful words that on their own create a powerful image in your reader's mind; clear thoughts translated to words that instantly bridge and connect the author with the reader.

Be Clear and Precise in Your Expression

Your goal is to communicate. Make sure that you are not beating about the bush. Don't meander in all directions. Where possible, come straight to the point and hit the nail on the head. There can't be a greater put-off for a reader than having to struggle through awkward prose that you worked so hard to create.

Now Get Started

Use Google search bar to type in the subject of your book, and see what results get thrown up. Use

these results to draw up a detailed outline for your book. Write as quickly as the thoughts strike you without any editing; at least not at this stage. You can go back to the section later and make changes. But don't edit while you are still writing because it will only slow you down. You'll be surprised how quickly that e-book begins to come together with this simple technique. String together words to sentences of twenty five to thirty words. Don't be daunted. Keep posing questions to yourself to pry out your thoughts and expand on the key ideas. The sentences will flow of their own volition once you get started. You'd be surprised by the endless possibilities that open up once you give yourself the opportunity to be what you want to be, i.e. a writer, through clear-set goals. Filling out a blank page

should be like painting a white canvas or creating your own dream.

Of the 100-odd pages you have decided on to write, chop those down to 10 pages per chapters. The one-line headlines should keep you on track and follow in the rhythm of your thoughts and ideas. Write at least 20% more content than you plan to keep, as when you start trimming, you'd be left with just the right size book in the final version. Sometimes the opposite happens; you write less and expand more when you prune, trimming away flab. Try to keep the meat intact. Don't cut to the bone, when you're editing to double-check your material to make sure that no errors remain in the copy.

Be Mindful of Your Word Choice

The English language has at least 250,000 words, more than "most comparable world languages," according to the Oxford Dictionary. Keep the thesaurus at an arm's length to find synonyms and make the most of English language's rich linguistic lineage. Use figures of speech -metaphors, simile, and irony to add depth of meaning to your writing. Using all the linguistic tools at your disposal will help you develop a distinctive writing style. As a competent author make sure that your punctuation, spelling, use of verbs, adverbs, adjectives, nouns, pronouns and conjunctions is all correct.

Here are a short-list of conjunction words that you can effectively use to connect between ideas and brain waves:

And	Yet	However
But	In Addition	Equally
So	Firstly	It follows
Secondly	Afterwards	Essentially
In contrast	Then	Never the less
Likewise	While	Besides
Otherwise	It	Indeed
Basically	In other words	Later

Used appropriately and meaningfully, these conjunction words are great for giving clarity and meaning to your writing.

In addition, be aware of the wrong use of words. There are ten to speak of;

Anxious/Eager

Anxious - nervous.

Eager - look forward to

Between/Among

Among - for three or more,

Between - for things or two persons

Since/Because

Because - states the reason for something.

Since - relates to time.

May/Can

Can – It states ability

May – It gives permission

Slander/Libel

Slander - A false statement meant to ruin someone's reputation

Libel - A false statement made in print.

Verbal/Oral

Verbal - spoken or written words

Oral – spoken

Merchandising/Marketing

Marketing – selling, advertising planning sales, campaigns, opening new outlets, hiring staff, sales management, and advertising programmes.

Merchandising – Using a product as part of an advertising programme.

Latter/Last

Last – the final item in the order

Latter - use for referring to things or people that come second in a list

Persuade/Convince

Convince - when you argue a point of view to get the other person to agree with you.

Persuade – Prevail upon a person or a group to do something to your bidding

Since/Because

Because - describes the reason for something

Since - relates to time

Exercise Time

Exercise#1

Write down the ten most commonly-used conjunctions.

Conjunction

Write a sentence using

this word

1.

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2.

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Exercise#2

Watch a TV sitcom with subtitles, and then write down words that you figure are conjunctions and have been used to string sentences together.

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20.

Although a person embarking on a writing career must always strive to expand his/her vocabulary, stick to words you use commonly in real life. If you're using words only for effect, the writing might appear extremely awkward.

Exercise#3

Everyday plan to note and write down five words you want to learn and spell. Either keep a dictionary or a Thesaurus handy to understand the meaning of similar-meaning (or sounding) words.

Exercise Sheet

Photo copy and keep this sheet in your reference
file:

New Word

Associated word (same Meaning)

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Exercise#4

Write a paragraph using three key words from the list below. Write fast and let your thoughts flow. Don't correct punctuation, spelling or grammar, just write fast.

Calendar

Believe

Library

Licence

Maintenance

Referred

Millennium

Occasion

Separate

Vacuum

Receive

Remember that you cannot be a successful author if you don't read. That isn't opinion; that's fact. All writers read, and all good writers read a lot.

Summary Points

- Focus on your story. What's the main plot? What's the theme? Who are the main characters? What's the tone of your work? Does this go with the profile of your target readers?
- Develop a very strong grasp of the English language, the boundaries of syntax and grammar that you must respect and abide by.
- If you don't care about the things you're writing about, you will never discover your true voice. Pay a lot of attention on word choice and writing,

- Read up as much as you can on the books of your favourite authors. After a while, you will be able to infuse that style into your writing.
- Make your writing style so unique that you can be recognized a mile away.
- Fire hi-decibel, emotion-packed words that can pierce through your audience like butter.
- Don't forget the visual impact. Use metaphors and invite your audience to embark on the journey with you as you suck them deep into your world of imagination!

Round Five: Adding Fire to Non-Fiction

What do you understand by the term non-fiction? Autobiographies, memoirs, short stories, information books, How-to manuals, self-help books, cook books, fitness books etc. – anything with a bit of realism in it.

We often think of non-fiction as dealing in nothing but FACTS, but a close investigation of the genre would reveal that even within this broad category there can be sub-genres, such as concept books, photo essays, and lifecycle books to name just a few. Concept books, as the name implies delve into one, core subject to provide massive information about it

in an in-depth, interesting manner. The other name for this genre of writing could be historical fiction.

Writing non-fiction cannot be an off-road journey. It needs a road map and signposts so you remain on course and not meander from the straight and narrow. Unlike works of fiction, there are certain ground “rules,” or call it “theory,” that apply to non-fictional writing, among which the strictest rule is that you can’t play with facts. Facts are sacrosanct. You have to respect those facts and not color them or run away with your imagination.

Find the Passion

It may appear odd, but non-fiction writing also involves a lot of passionate writing. Pick up a volume of National Geographic. That’s non-fiction, but there is a lot of legwork, passion and

commitment that goes into that kind of a tome. If you are writing non-fiction, find out something that you are really, really passionate about and let this feeling reflect in your work. Only then can you be good in your writing style and will be able to produce rich content that can be of value to your readers.

Do "Octopus Research"

Like an octopus scurrying just about everywhere in search of food, have fun researching your topic – threadbare. Look up every nook and crevice. Try to dig up really cool facts. Read books and magazines. Check out all the relevant websites. Interview experts on the phone. Undertake field trips. Join an organization. Check with your librarian. Be an expert. Be a sponge and soak up information before you roll up your sleeves and begin to write.

Grab Them; Right in the Beginning

Create a hook, right in the beginning by which you can grab your readers by the jugular and not let them go. Here are some ways to grab your reader's interest:

Begin with a question

Begin with dialogue

Begin with an interesting fact.

Begin with an unusual image or picture

Begin with action

Begin in first person

“The tiger looked angry...”

Now, that’s a great hook for a jungle account, even if it may not be fiction.

“Last night, I dreamt, I was at Menderley, again...”

That’s another great beginning.

Throw In All the Tedious Details

If its non-fiction, try to write in a straight, non-fashion, honest manner. Rattle your readers with numbers. Number crunching a great hook for non-fiction *“Several million tigers dead...not one left...the animal is on the verge of extinction...one species gone from the face of earth..”*

Imagine the soul-stirring impact such a beginning will have on the readers...

Or, take this example from Martin Luther King's famous oratory:

“I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal,” he said.

Those were courageous words. But more than that, the brilliance of King's words lay in their simplicity.

They are both timely and timeless in their appeal. They carry the moral authority to transform the fate of a nation and millions living in it.

Giving Final Shape to Your e-Book

- To get a hang of the idea, write the sales page first. This will give you clarity about the mission, purpose of your book and who you are writing for, what message should go out etc.
- List down all the benefits of the e-book. Who will gain what from the book? Also think of ways and means of surprising your audience. Everyone loves a good surprise.
- State the facts – clearly and succinctly. Don't play with truth- that's fire. Don't give a personal slant to what should be a simple narration of facts, as in a history book.

Exercise Time

Exercise#1

Read the selection, and then answer the questions that follow.

- As young boys, Wilbur (1867–1912) and Orville (1871–1948) Wright sold homemade mechanical toys. In their twenties, the boys made bikes. And in their thirties, they built their own flying machines.
- The Wrights' flying began with gliders. They tested wind-gliders near Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, where breezes were most favourable. But the gliders didn't have quite enough lifting power, so the boys went back to the drawing board. They built a 6-foot (1.8 m)

wind tunnel where they tested new wing designs. After building and flying almost 1,000 gliders, they found the right design, and then moved on to create a motor-driven aircraft.

- In 1903, Wilbur and Orville spent less than \$1,000 to build Flyer 1, a gasoline powered plane. Its wings were 40 feet (12 m) across, and with a pilot aboard, weighed about 750 pounds (340 kg). On December 17, Orville flew Flyer 1 120 feet (37 m) for 12 seconds. Later that day, Wilbur flew it 852 feet (260 m) and was airborne for 59 seconds. The age of flight had arrived.

1. You can tell this is nonfiction because...
 - a. It has imaginary characters

b. It has facts about real people and events

c. It has dialogue for actors to speak

d. It has rhythm and some words rhyme

2. You would most likely find this kind of writing in a

a. Fairytale

b. Newspaper

c. History textbook

d. Science fiction story

3. My brother Orville and I grew up in Dayton, Ohio. We were always interested in mechanical things, long before we built the first motor-driven

plane. If an author wrote this, you would most likely find it

- a. In a biography
- b. In an autobiography
- c. In a play
- d. In an encyclopaedia

Summary Points

- Investigate your niche market, either by associating with clubs or doing some online research.
- Understand why you're writing a book. This will help you determine your criteria for success and also guide decisions around topics and publishing options.

- Gather your materials and structure the book. Come up with chapter titles for each section.
- First, create an outline of your base book. Your outline is little more than a list of the information most wanted or desired by your niche market.
- Add LOTS of descriptive details. No one wants to read a boring book! Good books are enriched with detailed criteria.

Round Six: Let Your Imagination Soar - With Fiction Writing

Fiction writing is the product of active imagination. Everything in it is an outcome of your fertile thoughts – the ideas may or may not exist as such in reality.

Following are a few, recognized genres of fiction-writing:

- **Historical Fiction:** based on or around a person or event of importance from history.
- **Science Fiction:** dealing with aliens, future, or advanced technology.

- **Fantasy:** features monsters, magic, or other supernatural elements.
- **Realistic Fiction:** a story that could have happened, but didn't.

Where to Start When You Are Writing Fiction?

For starters, buy books or download them free from an online book shops on the genre you want to write in. Is it romance, action, adventure, horror or detective stories? Do you feel passionately about this genre?

Then you have the right ingredients to get started. Good fiction comprises of several interlinked elements - plot, characters, setting, scenes, and dialogue, and of course theme, which is the most critical element of good storytelling.

There's no clear and easy way to define theme. You may call it an author's worldview, philosophy,

message, moral, and lesson within a story. In short, it is the central idea that holds the various other story elements together. Themes that cut across in their appeal to various sections of the society are often very universal in nature. Some such themes include redemption, sacrifice, betrayal, loyalty, greed, justice, oppression, revenge, and love. Philosophical themes pose big questions about life or pit two or more ideas against each other:

The best theme that works with all age group of readers is of good triumphing over evil. You could also have more than one theme in a story. For instance a love story can also be about friendship, sacrifice, and redemption. A good example of this is The Gift of Magi that's a short story by O. Henry, the pen name for William Sydney Porter. Often one theme might stretch across an entire story or

dissolve and merge into another as the narrative progresses.

The Key Components of Fiction Writing

Other than theme, following are the brick and mortar of fiction writing:

The Makings of a Plot

The plot is the soul. It can begin with a sequence, an exposition, i.e., background; can lead into a conflict between two forces, protagonist or antagonist to finally culminate into a climax of the story, where there is poetic justice and a happy resolution of the conflict. This makes for an old-fashioned, linear plot. Beyond this an author is free to experiment with various sub-themes to thicken the plot and make his story more off-beat but a discussion of all that would be beyond the scope of this e-book.

Here's an example of how a plot and its dominant mood (of suspense) reveals itself through the first paragraph of a fictional piece:

The month was October and the place Spitfire National Forest. Out on a camp, Mike, Pam and their son Tyler Smith decided to venture into the woods that evening. Despite the bright skies that lit their path, they soon found themselves off the beaten trail. Next, they were standing in front of a musty log cabin that seemed to have sprung up from nowhere in the thick jungle.

As Mike prepared to knock on the weathered door, he heard a noise. It appeared to be coming from the side of the cabin. Standing absolute still in the eerie darkness, he heard a rhythmic chk-chk-chk sound, which he made out to be the splintering of dry wood. Someone was fast at work in the cabin's backyard.

The Smiths cautiously worked their way to the identified spot and stumbled upon an aged Native American woman wielding an axe, with which she was chopping wood by the dim glow of a single, flickering candle.

Without being told the reader knows that this is the plot of a suspense/mystery novel.

Setting the Plot

This is where all the action unfolds. It therefore has to be extremely powerful.

The setting also has to be inter-linked to the main theme and characters – if it's a period drama, the setting would be regal. If it involves romantic fiction, the drama could unfold in the scenic beauty of an English countryside; if a war movie, a rugged landscape, so on and so forth. After choosing your subject and deciding on the storyline, you have to

be extremely careful in picking your setting, as without that you cannot come across as realistic and believable to your readers. Subsequently, the setting can be changed depending upon the sequence of events in the plot.

Here's an example of a setting that paints vivid pictures of child labourers employed in a glass factory:

The movement is fast and fluid. Oblivious of the intense heat of the coal furnace (1,400-1,600 Celsius) --- Dante's "Inferno" as someone called it --- the 18-year-old displays the agility of a trapeze artist as he dips his rod into shimmering molten lava (glass) pulls it out and aims it straight into the glass moulder or blower.

There are other workers sprawled on the floor in front of pot furnaces, melting and fastening a

rainbow hue of glass bangles or beads. Centuries of working in glass factories have made them immune to their uncomfortable surroundings as they deftly jump over shards of broken glass, dart dangling electric cross-wires or take in the scorching heat of the coal furnaces as they quickly navigate glass poles from one end of the factory to the other, before they cool and becomes difficult to mould....

The words, the setting is so apt, you can actually visualize the scene at this glass shed.

Character Building

Characters are the people in your plot. They can be represented directly as in a theatrical production, or indirectly, where the character's words, actions and feelings are portrayed with imagery and creativity. If you've read Dephne du Maurier's

Rebecca, you would know that Rebecca is dead. Yet her presence in the house is so ominous that Dephne thought it more appropriate to name her novel after a dead person than after the living protagonist, who is timid, overwhelmed and haunted by larger-than-life memories of the more beautiful Rebecca. Even the house in which they live has a name, Manderley, but not the female protagonist, as the novel is written in the first person.

In another of her less-famous books, *My Cousin Rachel*, the same British author, names the protagonist (Rachel) but not the house, although the house again plays a very significant role in the plot and the setting.

These are different literary techniques that authors use to make their work more memorable. Indeed

there are no set rules for a narrative fiction. It can have round, flat, dynamic and static characters. Sometimes, they can be polar opposites of each other, in another plot they could be so similar (as in Agatha Christie's mystery novels) in their mystique and motive that you can hardly guess who could be the real murderer or murderess. In one of her books, if I remember correctly, the final murderer was the narrator and the confession is made right at the climax of the book!

Imagery, Symbolism and Structure

One image can open with X number of ideas. So colour red can symbolise both passion and war. While can use used to create a mood of both purity and loneliness. Alice's Adventures in Wonderland by English author Charles Lutwidge Dodgson is full of such magical elements, whereas J K Rowling's

Harry Potter series also draws heavily on the reader's power to imagine a magical, surreal world. Here's an example of the clever use of imagery in a children's fable:

"Lush greenery surrounded Grandma Pansy's little house that even though unkempt, appeared to have sprung straight out of a picture book. As far as their eyes could take them, Jesse and Jessica could see nothing but the gently rolling pastures, dotted with black and white cows, framed by a low-hung cobalt-blue sky that had fluffy white clouds..."

Point of View

Every story must ideally present the author's point of view that can of course be interpreted in various manners. Does the story give you enough insight about the author? Is it revealed in the characters,

he/she introduces in the story? This personal point of view can be presented in different ways:

First-person narrative: As in plot that start with I, me, we – you end up feeling the author is telling you the tale or is present in the setting.

Second-person narrative: The use of the pronoun “you” which includes the reader. This form is rarely used.

Third-person narrative: As with the use of pronouns ‘he, she, it etc.” Very often, a complex plot can have multiple-person narrative, in which case, it because a little tedious (but not boring) to identify the author’s subjective point of view.

Making Use of Linguistic Tools

Storytelling in every culture varies in ways that are difficult to guess. Often this has a lot to do with the use of language. In certain societies, classical literature features the use of very ornamental language, in other it can be grounded in the local, rustic dialect.

In the play *Mountain Language*, English playwright Harold Pinter opens the plot with the description of a file of women standing against a prison wall.

....An elderly woman cradles her hand while a young woman stands with her arm around her. A sergeant and an officer enter. The sergeant points to the young woman and asks her, her name. The young woman replies that they have given their names. The two repeat this dialogue until the officer tells the sergeant to “stop this s——.”

In this sequence, the author manages to convey a tension from the long silences between his characters' speeches as much as through the curt, vividly local dialect that he makes them speak.

Keeping Your Audience in the Loop

Even though a reader is a passive participant, really a bystander observing the sequence unfold in his mind's eye, he/she is important to the plot, because it has been conceived with the reader in mind. By this logic, a reader does wield a strong influence on the narrative.

Strong Narrative Voice

Vague narrators, uncertain tense, and an unclear voice are all signs of a weak plot. Tricks that you can use to develop a strong narrative voice can include the following:

- Try re-writing a piece of your own work from a different viewpoint, and seek other peoples' feedback on the impact they create.
- Try to imagine a profile of your narrator. Try to understand his/her motivations, background, and involvement in the plot to be able to tell a strong, moving tale.

Doing It With Dialogue

“Vaidya, Oh, Vaidya. It’s time to wake up dear”. The little boy looked up and blinked, caught somewhere between the misty land of dreams and the hard grey morning. It took him a moment more to realize that his near-victorious game of catch and run was just a dream. And just when he was going to grab his opponent!..

This paragraph opens with a dialogue and it instantly builds curiosity in the minds of the reader.

Dialogues add a measure of realism to the story. You begin to ‘get’ the personality and hidden motives of the characters through their direct speech and also through their pregnant pauses that come loaded with meaning of a different kind.

Exercise Time

Exercise#1- Theme Exploration

If you and I both happen to watch the same film, say *Titanic*, we might identify different themes in the film. I might identify class struggle as a theme, and you might argue that the dominant theme is that of personal freedom. The truth, as we both know could lie somewhere in the middle.

For the fiction writing exercises below, choose one of your favorite stories and try and identify its dominant themes.

1. Choose a favorite book, movie, or television show (for a TV show, you should just choose one episode). Make a list of all the themes you can identify in the story. Try to find 5-10 themes. Go over your list a few times to make sure you're identifying themes (big, sweeping concepts) rather than complex conflicts or plot twists.
2. Next, determine one key theme that is woven through the entire story. You might find there are two or three major themes. List them all but choose just one to explore it in-depth as described in the next step.

3. Now, explain how the storyteller presented this theme through plot, character, and scenes. Make a list of events and situations from the story that embodies the theme.

Repeat this exercise a few times to get a handle on the real theme, and compare it with other people's opinion. You'll be surprised by what you discover.

Exercise#2

Choose one of your favourite piece of fiction, could be a short story or a novel and try giving it a new ending. In other words, re-write the last couple of pages in what you consider "your own" prose style. How is the new ending different from the original? Are there any similarities that still remain?

Exercise#3

Occupy a quiet corner in a crowded restaurant and try and jot down snatches of conversation that you overhear. Keep your ears to the ground and listen to the people around you — how they talk; the words they use. Now sit down and begin to refine your notes. Clean out the fluff. Let a story or an idea of a setting leap out to you. If nothing strikes you, repeat the session the next day or the day after. One day, your book will come to you as a bolt from the blue.

Summary Points

- All books start from a small idea, dream or inspiration that gets gradually transformed into a larger and more detailed version of that idea.

- Let your idea feed itself. Let it become bigger and sharper in focus. Take notes on all the elements that you want to weave into your story. Be a regular visitor to libraries and lap up all interesting books, ideas and topics.
- Figure out the basic plot. No matter how imposing a character list or a grand setting you may have, it won't be successful if your plot isn't sound and tight.
- Once you have your plot, characters, and setting in place, it's time to decide how you are going to tell your story: first person or in third person?
- When you strive to "show and not tell," dialogues will spring up.

- Style comes naturally, with years of reading and diligent practicing. If you stick to the basics, everything else would follow.

Round Seven: EDITING

Why is editing important?

The answer is by no means simple,
and in order to answer you honestly,

I need to tell you a bit about myself and my experience of writing my first book. My editor was Alex Mitchell. She helped me immensely with subtle encouragement and tactfully pointing out how to write better, advising me on plotline, grammar and sentence structure, and gradually, my writing improved.

Alex helped in the editing process after I'd done all I could in using my own limited knowledge of the process. Alex specialises in writing articles and developing aspiring new writers. She excels in

spotting talent. I contacted him online and she has proved invaluable as the first contact. In the end, with her support we managed to publish my first e-book on his online web site [lewisphilips.com] and have it published in America. Along the way, Alex suggested titles of books that I could read and I ended up saving a lot of money and time with the advice that she helpfully gave me. Another person who guided me through was my second editor, Rob Parnell.

What I learnt from these two Wordsmiths is invaluable. I now understand how important it is for a second pair of eyes to go through your work because even though you may think your work is a masterpiece. There could be blind spots that the other person – an experienced editor – along can spot.

Writing fast can deliver your thoughts and ideas but those thoughts are often raw and sketchy and need refinement and that needs some right-brain thinking. You would have read that while the left hemisphere of our brain does creative and fluid thinking/writing, the right portions edits and expands that writing through rational thought; analyses, corrects and gives structure to our voice.

How you can go about editing your MS Word document yourself without ending up shelling out big bucks is what this chapter is about. I'll share the ropes of the trade with you but before that, I'd advise that after you've finished writing, wait until the next day to start editing.

Let your right-brain absorb what you have written. Make notes on possible changes that strike and then begin to slowly review your work. Now is the

time to convert hand writing to typing, building up a .doc file of your book, if you haven't already done so? If you are working with audio material, you would have to hand write and transcribe before you can edit your notes.

Head to your work station, where you keep your notes, computer, draft copy of your manuscript etc. Typing out your notes should not take more than 24 hours at the most. When I wrote a sequel to my first book, I followed my editor's advice to the letter. I wrote a blue print first and then started editing and expanding each chapter.

When you are editing, give yourself time to reflect and ponder. There is a software program I downloaded from an internet company in America. I've found it most useful in editing my books. I also use it in my current employment in the calendar

printing industry. The editing software that I am talking about is White Smoke. Log on to www.whitesmoke.com for more information and see if it's the right editing tool for you. You can also use it for editing emails before hitting the 'send' button and dispatch error-free business e-mails to your contacts. It's not a free download resource but I guarantee that after you register, you'll discover that the product cost is easily recoverable. It will pay its price in no time, and you will see the outcome in your writing.

White Smoke is like an editor looking over your shoulder, giving you timely prompts on punctuation, spelling and conjunction. Consider each change carefully. Some program rules can be ignored, while others need to be followed diligently. For instance, the software may advise you not to start a sentence

with ‘And” but this rule can be ignored, where it’s a feature of your writing style. Readers want to hear your voice in your words, so a personal style is important for conveying a writer’s thoughts and ideas to the audience.

The spoken word is delivered with body language; facial expression, emotion; it conveys happiness, love, anger and sorrow. Its tone is delivered in a loud or soft voice. Similarly when you write you need to be clear and expressive of yourself and somehow manage to the same imagery and emotion in your writing. Therefore, even if you are using White Smoke to edit your work, I would advise that you remain in control and not let the software make every editing decision for you. Clearly weigh the prompt before hitting the ‘delete’ button.

Scan your document for thought overlaps. Have you said something over and over in different words? That's where you need to sift and delete. Remember it's always good to be brief, but don't leave out necessary information, ideas or concepts for the sake of brevity. Say what you have to say and get to the point! That's a good rule to follow. And if and when you use professional editor's eyes to go over your writing. You can be sure that you are on your way to delivering a polished manuscript. Between using White Smoke & grammar check on your PC will save yourself several dollars; simply, because you would have your primary level of editing on hand.

Remember however that with White Smoke the grammar is set for USA users, so some words and phrases may not suit British or Australian writers.

Another bit of advice: transcribe your written word directly into White Smoke. You'll need to be connected to the internet for White Smoke to work. Then type, edit and expand your ideas and thoughts as you go. Back up and save every three or four chapters. Cut and paste to your current document file and save, while building upon your story. It will save you a lot of heartache later, should you lose some of your material. I say this from experience as I've lost several hours of work merely because I forgot to save my file.

So back up! Back up! Back up! As often as you like and you'll be a far happier writer when you come to the end of the editing stage.

What Does Editing Involve?

That's a good question. Editing involves several things and the process is accomplished in graded steps. Here is a brief description of each step:

Critiquing – Be hyper critical of your work. Try to identify all the strengths and weaknesses. Is your character development complete? Is your background setting realistic? Is your plot resolution convincing? If not correct that immediately.

Language Editing: Fix all the grammar problems at this stage. Often, unknowingly, we use too many times adjectives or adverbs. To fix this problem may call for a restructuring of sentences and word replacement.

Proofreading: To check for typos, minor grammar, spelling and punctuation mistakes that slip in, inadvertently.

Formatting Your eBook

We will discuss this part in detail in our last chapter on e-book formatting.

The bottom line is: edit rigorously. Often, you may stumble upon portions that need more work – this is okay. Better you found them before your reader did. Always aim for the highest standard possible. If there is a simpler word to express the same thought, don't go for the weightier one. The basic idea is to inform not impress.

Here is a check list of all that you need to address during the editing process:

- Check grammar
- Correct spelling
- Correct punctuation
- Correct use of homonyms (like "to," "two," and "too")

- Correct sentence structure
- Correct tense· Correct syntax
- Appropriate use of vocabulary
- Repetition, ambiguity, and redundancy
- The flow of your ideas· Consistency of style
- Typographical errors
- Run-on sentences
- Sentence fragments
- Omissions and inconsistencies
- Structural organization and logical progression
- Subject-verb agreement
- Capitalization

Questions You Need to Ask Yourself

Here are a few questions you must pose to yourself while you are editing your work:

- Does it give value to my readers? In other words does my e-book inform, educate, inspire or entertain them? This question would be extremely relevant for a motivation-type of book.
- Does it solve a problem or make their lives simpler? This is an ideal question for a how to manual.
- Is it engaging or dry?
- Will readers know who I am and what makes me tick after reading my work?
- Can my work be called good?
- Did I do a thorough edit?
- Will this delight my readers and prompt them to recommend it to their friends? Or will it leave them disappointed in the end?

- Is my e-book attractively designed? Are the headings and sub-headings attention-grabbing?
- Have I given sufficient examples, definitions and illustrations of the methods that I've described in my book (If it happens to be a user manual kind)?
- Finally, would I buy this eBook? Would I recommend it to a friend?

When You Are All Done

Now that you have saved several pages or chapters just print it out and staple the pages together and then read it out aloud, if it flows off the tongue smoothly then you most likely got it right the first time. And make notes on expanding or deleting as you read. Once you have done that, go back to your document file, make your changes and then run it

through White Smoke. Another bit of advice mentioned previously is wait another day, then edit again. Also at some stage email a friend for an opinion on what you have written and ask for feedback. This will be most valuable. That advice hopefully, is their honest opinion and will give you guidance as you continue to write and learn how to write better. The more we write the better we get so just keep writing.

Exercise Time

Exercise#1

How many mistakes can you find in the following passage?

On sunday, Andrew went to Neils house to play baseball. They played a gam of one-on-one. Andrew made six baskets, bute neil made eight

Neil was the winner. After the game, both boys went in side to have some snack's and watch television.

Exercise#2

How many mistakes can you find in this passage?

Phil Matthew, and Andrew played miniature golf. On the firsthole, Phil got a hole-in-one! At another hole, Matthew's Ball went into the water The best golfur of the day was Andrew who finished with a score of 28. Everyone had a grate time.

Summary Points

- Editing your manuscript is one of the most important stages of publishing process. This is especially true when you are self-publishing your own material or e-books.

- Even a good writer needs a second pair of eyes, a professional editor to be able to produce a fabulous product.
- Editors will not just spot copy and factual errors, but they can also provide insight into the book's overall organization and message.

Round Eight: Practice Till You Get It Right

When I say practice, I actually mean read.

Read extensively and lap up every written word before you set out to write. It will expand your world view, give depth and meaning to your writing, give you more vocabulary to play with and improve your speed. Develop a mind set to succeed and be relentless in your pursuit of success.

Good writing will serve all your interests. It will improve your job prospects, your business writing and development skills, even your speaking skills.

Libraries are a great source for gaining almost free access to knowledge. Begin to visit your local library and issue out books on the subject you want

to write about. Or subscribe to online journals and libraries and read up everything on the subject you want to write about.

Also visit your local Dump Market. Some city garbage collection depots recycle books and magazines. I've never paid more than ten cents for a book there and over the years, I've managed to build a treasure trove of some very rare, priceless book collection.

Keep an eye out for book auctions that come for a throw-away price. Once I came across a print advert 'fill a bag for \$5,' and I came out of the sale with three bags full of forty books. I figured I'd closed well on that deal!

Of course traditional book store are a great place to browse and buy titles that appeal to you; while

online book stores offer easy access to millions of titles. I'll give myself some self promotion here by promoting my online bookstore that specialises in information-based eBooks. You can check us out at www.lewisphilipssignaturebooks.com

While you are surfing, visit all the self-publishing sites. Consider and compare their service line-up and offers. Don't get lured by false promises or tall orders. In the end, the service may not turn out to be entirely free-of-cost. Before you sign up for any deal, check if they offer a money-back guarantee. So beware, consider carefully, and if they don't offer a guarantee of success, then steer clear of these offers. If they're genuine, they should make a 100% money back offer, if their sales pitch doesn't deliver the content offered.

By all means visit a site called Elance. Here you can set-up a blue print of your book for bidding for someone to edit and wrap it up for you in the print-ready format. Just state whatever stage you are at and a price you are prepared to pay and you would be able to finalise your book project sooner than you had imagined. This is an option worth exploring, if you are pressed for time.

I'll recommend one online self-publishing site where you can upload your finished book and it converts it to Epub for download on eReaders, tablets and PCs. This service is entirely free-of-cost. To print your book there would of course cost, so I would advise that only, if you want to go down that track.

I would however advise you to avoid what is called Vanity Press.

Another publishing site that covers all aspects of editing, traditional and self publishing is Boolarong Press. It's a one-stop publisher that will see you through from start to finish. I found them most helpful in printing small print runs of my books in Australia at a bare minimum outlay. They have only recently started advertising their eBook service on www.boolorongpress.com

If you decide to take a correspondence course in writing, the one that I would recommend is a direct mail service offered by www.thegreatcourses.com. At the onset, their service may appear a tad expensive but you can always wait to get a bargain.

Summary Points

- Read up everything you can on the subject that you wish to write about. That will make you perfect, when you are ready to write.
- Try to tap all information sources – offline as well as online, you never know where you might stumble upon a gem.
- Compare price and carefully study offers at various self-publishing online websites before you make a decision. Some of their services come free-of-charge. Find out which ones and negotiate on the price of others.

Round Nine: Developing Your PC SKILLS

Electronic distribution of content is fast becoming one of the most profitable ways to add another line of revenue stream to your online business.

E-books are a profitable way of monetizing your online business because of the low entry cost. The ability to create a product once, and sell multiple times implies that once its rolled out in the market, it begins to discount itself – on its own, without any effort on your part.

Once you have finished writing and formatting your e-book, the next logical step is to make it available for download on your webpage and subsequently market it to thousand of potential customers online

(We will discuss this aspect in greater detail in our next chapter).

In this chapter, we will discuss the basic book formatting tools that you can use to make your work appear professional and reader-friendly. To view PDF files you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader. This is a free software program that can be downloaded on your computer.

E-book Formatting Tools

Before you can submit your eBook to any publishing sites such as Amazon, Google, or others, you have to properly format it, which means you need to convert it into ePub, although lulu.com will allow you to upload and convert to ePub free of charge. This will allow your eBook to be read on major eReaders like iPad, Nook, and Kindle. Here is

the lowdown on a few tools that will help you get started on that:

1. Mobi Pocket – This tool comes free-of-cost and is useful in creating an eBook from HTML, Word or image files.
2. Scrivener - Scrivener is a content-generation tool with which you can format e-books and other long documents.
3. Calibre – Calibre is another FREE eBook formatting tool. On the downside, this tool does not support Microsoft Word files.
4. iBook - Use iBook from Apple to convert your eBook into an e-Pub so it can be read on the iPad. Extremely simple to use, you can convert your e-books into ePub files in minutes with this application.

5. BookGlutton: This is another e-book conversion tool available for free that converts HTML books into ePub files for accessing on various e-book readers.

Now that your e-book is formatted, it's time to publish it!

Word Processing Programs

The most popular ones are Microsoft Word, Pages for Mac, Open Office for nearly any system (and it's free) and Google Docs online.

Designing Your E-Book

I would recommend Adobe Photoshop or Illustrator. The entire Adobe creative suite is gold standard for design. You can use any of these tools to create a very attractive design for your e-book. I prefer

using Photoshop for the initial design, and then throw in some added features with Illustrator.

Laying It Out

Following are a few tools that you can use for basic lay-out work:

InDesign: Another great tool from the Adobe stable, InDesign can lay-out the entire book in a jiffy with a lot of artistic grace and technical precision. It comes loaded with features that make the process easier, including the ability to assign templates to pages and create interactivity, if you want to.

Microsoft Publisher: Microsoft's desktop publishing tools are generally used for business cards, booklets, brochures, and bulletins. I've discovered that these are also be used for creating decent e-books.

If you want to be a real pro and learn all about making the maximum use of your Personal Computer, you can visit my online eBook store www.lewisphilipssignaturebooks.com and download books on the subject.

Beware however that the internet can be a minefield of domains wanting to sell you dreams. Be wary of websites that promise the moon and deliver peanuts. Don't sign up for any offer in a rush. Go by a trusted name like www.lulu.com. In doing so, you will also be offered print-on-demand services that you may or may not opt for.

Exercise Time

Exercise #1

Jumbled words. We have solved the first one for you.

cermoput : Computer_____

hdra dveir : _____

kydoareb : _____

meous : _____

tadphuoc : _____

snerce : _____

tchou snreec : _____

flie : _____

pragmor : _____

sftweroa : _____

intneert : _____

cebla : _____

etren : _____

deetle : _____

ptrin : _____

pintreer : _____

screann : _____

momed : _____

loppat : _____

nadepot : _____

DC :

Exercise #2

The following quiz is for computer newbies and carries questions that every computer user should be familiar with.

What is Random access memory (RAM)?

What is an Operating System?

What is the easiest way to open a program that is installed on your computer?

Where should I go to remove a program from my computer?

What is the best way to shut down a computer?

Summary points

- Technology and new computing tools have come a long way in providing programs and software to format and publish your e-book with absolute ease and from the convenience of your home. Make the best use of all the help that's available.

- A newbie can literally write an E-book with only basic computer skills such as knowing how to use a text editor, a feature that comes with every computer, and knowing a little bit about implementing programs and computer software.
- All trades come with a basic set of tools. For a writer, the word processor is the equivalent of a carpenter's hammer. A PDF creator, meanwhile, is the equivalent of a traditional publisher's printing press. You'll need all these tools if you intend to publish your e-books online.
- It is advisable for e-book authors to familiarize themselves with the key tools of their trade. The task is not as daunting as it might appear in the beginning.

Round Ten: Pitching It

You made a commitment to start and finish your eBook in 10 days. You have accomplished it and it's a great achievement. Now is the time to be rewarded for your efforts. This is your creation, so why not profit from your e-book? Tap all possible avenues to sell your story.

The first place to start, if it's an information eBook is to forward me the first couple of chapters. My email address is lewisphilips0123@gmail.com. I will give an honest assessment of your work and tell you whether or not it can be published and sold on my online eBook store. Remuneration can be negotiated if your book is accepted. My advice to

the authors is simple and straightforward; write about what you know with passion, and follow the format that I've described in this book and you can have a finished eBook in 10 days.

Self publishing is the simplest solution for the following reasons:

- You get to pocket all/most of the profits
- You can control, and keep track of, everything from writing, editing to the final marketing of your work
- You're responsible for your own success

If for some reason you decide not to use my story, here are other services you can check out:

- [Lulu.com](https://www.lulu.com)
- [BooksOnBoard.com](https://www.books onboard.com)

- Createspace.com
- Ebookscorporation.com
- DigitalPoint.com

Next comes marketing your e-book.

Free Promotion Sites

There are many excellent websites out there where you can seek free assistance in creating a buzz around your e-book:

- The [WebGuide](#) toolbox comes with several helpful tools and tricks on how to build and promote your e-book site
- Corey Rudl's [free Marketing weekly e-mail Newsletter](#) also comes with tips, tricks, and techniques on how to promote your online business.

- The FREEZonE has a Power Promotion section featuring a huge suit of online tools.
- VirtualPromote deals specifically with online marketing and offers a host of online tools that are free for download.

Making Money On Your E-book

That's what we all want, don't we?

Therefore, begin to look at your options. Do you have a way of accepting payments on your site? If you have a merchant account and a shopping cart system, you could tie-up your eBook to this system. If you don't, you need to look at other methods of accepting payments.

One practical option is Paypal that's very popular with private retailers and allows them to trade online with confidence. Once you are registered

with PayPal, you can accept payments immediately at very nominal charges. All you have to do is provide your buyers with a 'secret URL' to download your eBook.

Elementary, isn't it?

Alternatively, you could tie-up with an established publisher, such as me, who would be happy to sell your book and give you a handsome cut on the profits.

Creating Word of Mouth Publicity

Spread the word around. Build a buzz. Begin to promote your book through emails, external websites, social networks and blogs.

Geting Your Book Reviewed

This is another great way to get noticed. Circulate copies of your book and get it reviewed by professionals and then post those reviews on your website. Get feedback and create awareness through discussion forums.

Here wishing best of luck with all your endeavours to write and promote your eBook!

Lewis Philips

W: www.lewisphilipssignaturebooks.com

W: www.lewisphilips.com

E: lewisphilips0123@gmail.com

Summary Points

- You're all set up and ready to sell. Now is the time to announce your new project to your readers. Announce it on your blog, through your email list, on your Facebook account, on your Twitter status, in forums and wherever else you can.
- Self publish - You can compile the pages, buy an ISBN number, and selling your eBook through your own web site.
- Choose a publisher who will do everything for you. Who will take care of your baby from start to finish. They will compile your e-book, set up a price, sell it from their sites and market it with a flourish. What's more, you get to keep all the copyrights!

- Sell your e-book through as many online stores as possible. There are a multitude of sites that deal specifically in selling e-books. Wherever eBooks are sold, pitch your book to your target audience.

Bonus Chapter: Book Binding

This **bonus chapter** will show you how to bind and produce your own book that looks as good as any book you'll find on book shelves anywhere in the world.

Print It Right

Now that you have your MS word document edited and ready to print, let's get on with the printing process; the final leg of this exciting journey. The

printer that I swear by for producing A5 double-sided printing is a Canon XP860, but as with all technology, it won't be long before this too gets superseded. So you may find something better to do exactly the same thing, at a much cheaper price, therefore check online pricing, your local office suppliers, eBay, second-hand dealers, you just might find yourself a bargain. Or just Google (cannon.com.au) and you'll be able to buy the latest printer from their website.

Now connect your printer cable to your printer. I know this is basic knowledge, but I've lost count how many times I forget this step. Open your document file to print, click on printer model, which properties look down to the left hand side and click the box, duplex printing. Move your

mouse across and click on A5 printing, then press OK and then another Ok.

As simple as that!

Your downloaded file is now being printed both sides on A5 pages. Of course you have already placed A5 sheets in the paper tray and adjusted the slides to hold them in place. Printing will take a few minutes so take a break and have some time to plan your next move.

You have finished printing out your manuscript; your half way there to publishing your own book (at home). Next is something I haven't mentioned before, that is, you'll need a guillotine for cutting A4 sheets in half and trimming paper, or just buy a 500 sheet pack of, A5 white printer paper, at your local stationery outlet, its more expensive doing

that, but it's your choice. Budget to buy a guillotine; to complete your project, even if you only plan to print and bind one book. Spending around \$30 on a reasonable size guillotine should suffice. Again you can check out at your local stationery outlets. It'll be quicker and cheaper when you consider freight, if buying online. You will also need it for trimming your book's back cover, so it's a must-have item on your shopping list.

Printing your cover page will require quality gloss photo paper. I used Premium Photo Paper, gloss, instant dry. You can buy this product at any well-stocked stationary outlet or online, if you prefer. Overall, I also consider this a low-cost way to print A4 photos of your favourite snaps at home. Some retail outlets offer discount cards with a small fee, for a card to be issued for printing photos. This

can save big time on the cost of printing your favourite snaps in larger sizes, other than 6x4 prints.

To further pull the cost down go generic. Although, manufacturers insist that you should only use their ink cartridge brands, I've found generic brands cost far less and are equally effective and encountered no issues in sourcing ink cartridges to suit Canon printers at heavily discounted prices up to 80% off on recommended retail. I've found the ones I use at present, have caused no problem with my printer. I recommend a website that sells generic cartridges at very low prices in Australia. Log on to www.inkstation.com.au. This will bring down your overall printing cost substantially. Next bind all the pages together, give it a face and an attractive title.

Cover It Up, Nicely

I've often used my own pictures to create a book cover using Photoshop and Picasa programs, while for another cover, I paid a professional. For a more professional look download a picture that goes with your title from photo libraries. Just Google and you'll have plenty of options to choose from. Elance.com is not a bad option to have your cover designed, just put it up for bidding. State what you need done and contractors will bid on your project. Outsourcing will overcome any hurdles you anticipate or encounter.

Book Binding

After writing ten chapters in ten days you're about take another leap forward and do something you never thought possible, bind you own book.

I've already explained how to print out your book. Now bind it and everyone you know will be impressed. This is another step closer to having your book, sit on your bookshelf or bookshop counters; achieving your goal, beyond expectation; beyond measure.

I can say that from experience after binding over fifty-odd books at home. One clear advantage in binding your book is the ability to ask for feedback. Ask your friends and relatives to read your draft copy and seek their 'expert' opinion on how to make it a better read and what they think about your cover design. All this advice would be immensely valuable. Alternatively, (but this will negate the objective of writing your e-book in ten days) print out two or three chapters and bind them for initial feedback, or simply email chapters to friends for

comment. This approach is like having an editor giving free advice and guidance. Whatever constructive criticism you receive, don't react immediately. Let it sink in about 24 hours. Then decide what to edit.

OK are you ready, let's start. But first you'll need to visit your local hardware store to buy a few things to build your book binder. As with baking a cake, follow the instructions below and you can't go wrong.

Ingredients:

1 x MBF Standard board (chipboard) size 900mmx 450mm/ 12mm thick.

1 x Standard pine timber length, 1.2metres/ thickness, 30mm. Square.

6 x Bolts and wing nuts - size $\frac{1}{4}$ inch x 75mm
mushroom head/slotted/Phillips drive.

1 x Tube/ tin, contact adhesive (Neoprene cement)

Tools:

1 x Cordless/ power drill

1 x 4mm drill bit

1 x Phillips head screwdriver

1 x Hand saw

1 x Pencil

1 x Sandpaper block

1 x Square

1 x Tape measure / Ruler

2 x Clamps

Instructions:

1: Check that the chipboard corners are square.

2: Mark out measurements from the left-hand corner 260mm x165mm. Use your square to mark in pencil the lines you're going to saw along, then cut.

3: Measure and mark out two lengths of pine timber, 260mm. each, then saw. Measure 30mm in from each end and mark a line using your square, then mark diagonal centre for drill holes. Before

drilling holes, use clamps to grasp timber together and drill through timber and chipboard at the same time; top and bottom.

4: Mark and cut another length of pine @ 105mm. Mark & drill as previous hole positions. Make sure the timber is positioned correctly using your square. Slight adjustments can be made when tightening wing nuts later.

5: Place bolts in all holes and tighten wing nuts, bottom and vertical timber pieces first. Using your square positioned on the inside make sure as you tighten the bolts, maintain a right angle for your book to sit in squarely.

6: The top piece of timber becomes your vice, adjusting to the thickness of your book. Simply

tighten and you're ready to bind your book. Next is to bind your cover to the internal pages.

First Step: Print out your cover using Premium Photographic A4 210mm x 297mm / 215 microns.

Second Step: Trim the cover white border off back side, if you printed out borderless, trim off 5mm. This is variable depending on spine thickness, so trial and error may be necessary.

Third Step: Print out your MS using duplex printing.

Note: 7mm spine = 75 A5 sheets / 150 pages.

10mm spine = 110 sheets / 220 pages

Fourth Step: Trim/ Guillotine off 3.5mm off left and right of all pages. For more pages trim your A5

sheets to allow for expanded thickness of the spine. There is a point where it's not feasible to bind thicker books. Experiment to find what's possible.

Fifth Step: Before placing cover and pages in your binder make sure they are positioned so, as you crease down the front cover it's in sync with the first page and not back to front or upside down. Speaking from experience this can happen if you don't double check what you're doing. So get it right the first time and you're on a roll and nearly there to hold your book in your hand.

Sixth Step: As you tighten wing nuts, make sure all pages are square to the left side of the binder.

Seventh Step: Either use a tube of contact cement or apply from the tin using a paddle pop stick or something similar, like a spatula. Using a tube is

easer as you can just squeeze a line of glue along the spine. Apply only enough contact to cover all spine pages, without excess.

Eighth Step: Crease and fold over cover page, bringing into contact the glue and bend back up. If more contact is required to cover all spine pages then now's the time to add a small amount. Bend the cover over again and raise it up allowing a couple minutes for the glue to air; this creates better binding. Now, crease again, pushing down firmly until the cover stays in contact with the spine pages. Carefully lay flat your binder, loosen wing nuts and slowly slide your cover out from the binder making sure no pages move.

Ninth Step: After placing your soon to be printed and bound book on a flat surface, place a ruler

across the inside first page close to the spine, holding in position with your left hand. Using your right hand index finger, run along the outside spine pushing in. At the same time push down firmly with your thumb, creasing your cover flat.

Tenth Step: Place a heavy object on your book, say two large books. I used two Encyclopaedia Britannicas and that worked perfectly. It's ironic using them, when you consider they were the most revered and respected books, a must-have, in any home that can afford them. Those books were reduced in stature to the point where they were supplied on disc, free in corn flake cereal packets. An industry belittled by technology, makes way for words, to deliver knowledge at your finger tips. Wait 48hrs and your book binding project will be complete.

Do not trim your excess back cover, cut later after the contact cement has dried. Use your guillotine or have your local stationery outlet guillotine it for you for a small charge. This will fix up any pages that may not have aligned correctly. And trim both top and bottom for a professional looking book.

Alternatively, not all book binding at home is limited to books only. Think of all the exciting possibilities - with essay writing, school projects, and your résumé



Wouldn't it be impressive, when a prospective employer asks, "Who bound your resume?"

Congratulations, you are done!

Tips – On Choosing the Best Professional Editing and Publishing Service

1. Don't pick your editor or your publisher in a hurry. He or she is the doctor who will do the final surgery on your e-book. Make sure, he/she is qualified and a professional of the first order, who knows his job better than anyone else.
2. Don't always go for the cheapest service. If you pay peanuts, you will only get monkeys.
3. Instead of negotiating on the standard price of a service, you could ask for an extra service thrown in for good measure.

4. Take kindly to constructive criticism. It will make the final product look and read better. In other words, go by the professional's advice, and don't feel hurt if some remarks sound harsh. The professional has a job to do, i.e., make your book sell, let them do it to the best of their abilities.
5. Be an active collaborator in the process. After all, the book will bear your name and credentials. Claim that ownership and be as involved in the creative writing, editing and publishing process as you can be. Don't expect to outsource every conceivable thing. Take responsibility for the final product that's going out into the market in your

name. With your stamp of approval, at
your own personal cost and time,
delivers your manuscript.