

COVER LETTER

- 1-page (not longer than 2)
- Addressed to a proper name, not “editor”
- Holds reader’s attention
- Is concise
- Identifies book’s single unique premise clearly
- Identifies reader’s felt need
- Makes a personal connection with recipient
- Communicates competence
- Communicates passion

TITLE PAGE

- Title communicates book’s premise, what it’s about (rule of thumb, can be broken)
- Subtitle communicates the book’s promise, what the reader will gain (rule of thumb, can be broken)
- Author’s contact info
- Agent’s contact info (if agented)
- Optional: footer, throughout, with author’s name, name of book project, date

PROPOSAL

- Written in third person, as if agent is bragging on the book and the author
- Text is Times New Roman, 12-point font, double-spaced

THE PROJECT

- Hooks reader’s interest immediately
- Identifies book’s single unique premise clearly
- Allows reader (agent/publisher) see clearly how author’s thesis will be developed
- Audience is clearly defined
- Audience is not too broad (“everyone”)
- Audience is not too narrow (“fly fishermen who like to wear tutus”)
- Meets reader’s felt need and benefits the reader
- The reader’s felt need is clearly articulated
- This book offers a pay-off for the reader that other books do not
- Shows how reader will think differently after reading this book
- Shows how reader will feel differently after reading this book
- Shows how reader will behave differently after reading this book
- Specifies anticipated word count of manuscript
- Suggests time frame in which author will complete the manuscript after contract signed
- Details a robust list of endorsers
- Endorsers are folks that the book’s potential readers already know and trust
- Endorsers are folks to whom author has access
- Includes several alternate titles and subtitles

THE MARKET

- Specifies affinity groups to which reader belongs
- Lists 4-6 competing titles on the market that are relatively current
- Competing titles aren’t flops
- Competing titles have been relatively successful
- Competing titles aren’t record-breaking best-sellers (suggests naivety)

- Articulates how book is *like* each of the competing titles
- Articulates how book is *different* from each of the competing titles

THE PERSON

- Communicates author's experience that's most relevant to this book: education? Experience? Other?
- Convinces reader that author is the best author for this book
- Lists any of author's previous book titles, years, publishers & sales figures
- Lists author's freelance articles that are particularly relevant to this book
- Communicates that author is the right person with whom to partner on a book
- Communicates what author is already doing to build platform and promote this book
 - Speaking engagements over last 12 months, size of audiences
 - Speaking engagements lined up for the next 12 months, anticipated audience sizes
 - Organizations or conferences to whom author speaks regularly
 - Facebook followers/fans
 - Twitter followers
 - Size of personal newsletter electronic mailing list
 - Any other mailing lists—such as an organization author leads—to which author has access
 - Number of blog followers
 - Number of hits on author's blog per month
 - How long author has been blogging
 - Website traffic, # hits per month
 - Memberships, associations that already connect author to this market
- Communicates what author will do to promote this project (not all are requisite)
 - Speaking gigs author will secure to promote the book
 - Articles author will write when book is released (specify publications)
 - "Guest blogger" posts on someone else's site (specify which ones)
 - Blog tour author will organize (specify participation)
 - TV or radio opps author will secure (be specific)
 - Other creative promotional opportunities that are unique to author
- Lists author's affiliations that will benefit this book
 - Member of an extensive writer's network
 - Staff member of a national ministry
 - Serve on a college's or organization's Board of Directors
 - Connected to an organization—a ministry, business or nonprofit—that would buy copies in bulk and help promote the book
 - Other significant affiliations that could impact book sales
- Lists honors and awards
- Lists titles and brief descriptions of future books author might choose to write
- Communicates to reader why author is so passionate about this material

CHAPTER SUMMARIES

- Chapter titles are creative and engaging
- Each chapter listed includes 2-3 sentences indicating what will be included in chapters
- Chapter progression reveals a logical flow/arc/progression of the book
- The book's unique premise is evident throughout the summary

SAMPLE CHAPTERS (Include 2-3)

- Sample chapters include: introduction (if book has one), chapter 1, another chapter from the book
- Chapters included represent author's strongest writing
- Chapters included are free of all spelling and grammatical errors