

**Non-Fiction Books: Moving From Passion to Process**  
**Ava Pennington**

**Strategy**

Passion, 3Qs, Audience, Concept, Premise, Theme, Research, Structure

**Style, Content**

**Self-editing**

Weasel words, Christianese, Clichés, Writing tight

**Queries and Proposals**

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**Session 1: Strategy:**

“The only book that should ever be written is one that flows up from the heart,  
forced out by the inward pressure.” ~ A.W. Tozer

**Passion**

**Purpose** → why are you writing this book?

**Three Critical Questions**

1.

2.

3.

**Concept**

**Premise**

**Theme**

**Research**

**Structure**

**Front matter**

**Back Matter**

**Style, Content**

“Any good book is the result of inspiration, followed by hours of grueling work.”  
~ Dave Fessenden

**Style: Didactic vs. inductive**

**Didactic**

**Inductive**

“We approach the topic we’re writing about as fellow travelers,  
instead of judges ordering readers around.” ~ Joyce K. Ellis

**Content**

**Beginning**

**Middle**

**End**

**Principle, Illustration, Application**

**The Power of Story: Narrative Non-fiction**

## **Self-Editing**

“Write to communicate, not to impress. Justify every word and every sentence.”  
~ Cecil Murphey

**Revise**

**Polish**

**Cut Out Fat**

**Simplify multiple-word phrases**

**Eliminate unnecessary words**

**Eliminate weak words**

**Eliminate redundant modifiers**

**Reduce adverbs**

**Ferret Out Weasels**

## **Get Active!**

## **Kick Out Clichés**

What are they?

Why do we use them?

How to avoid?

## **Kick Out Christianese**

## **Show vs. Tell**

## Submissions: Query and Proposal

### Book projects

#### Approaching traditional publishers and agents

#### Query

Goal:

Format:

Components:

Hook

Synopsis

Qualifications

Word count & completion date

Close

“The proposal process helps you nail down the book, whether it’s fiction or nonfiction  
....When it comes time to sit down and write the book, your proposal is your blueprint.”  
~ Wendy Lawton

## **Book Proposal**

Cover letter

Title page

Sell sheet

Overview/Synopsis

Author bio

Comparative analysis

Marketing plan

Chapter outline

Sample chapters

**Recommended resources:**

**Books:**

*Christian Writers Market Guide*

*Christian Writer's Manual of Style*

*Writing the Christian No-fiction Book: From Concept to Contract*, Dave Fessenden

*Proofreading Secrets of Best-Selling Authors*, Kathy Ide

*Writer to Writer*, Cecil Murphey

*Unleash the Writer Within*, Cecil Murphey

**Websites:**

Books & Such Literary Management: <http://www.booksandsuch.com/blog/>

The Steve Laube Agency: <http://www.stevelaube.com/blog/>

The Write Conversation: <http://thewriteconversation.blogspot.com/>

Word Weavers International: <https://word-weavers.com/>