

Book Proposal Essentials

Your pitch or your query for your novel has caught an agent's attention. Now it's time for your proposal to go to work. Learn to avoid the ways that too many proposals fall short—through hasty preparation or not understanding what questions a proposal must answer.

Elements of a Fiction Proposal (see *HartlineLiterary.com*)

In a single *.doc* file, include these items.

- Cover letter
- Proposal contents page
- One-page “sell sheet”
- Biographical sketch
- Story synopsis

- Market analysis
- Competitive analysis
- Marketing strategies
- History of the manuscript (if any)
- First three chapters
- *bonus items*

Elements of a Nonfiction Proposal (see *HartlineLiterary.com*)

In a single *.doc* file, include these items.

- Cover letter
- Proposal contents page
- One-page “sell sheet”
- Biographical sketch
- Description of the book
- Chapter outline
- Market analysis
- Competitive analysis
- Marketing strategies
- History of the manuscript (if any)
- Three sample chapters
- *bonus items*

1. Proposal cover letter

2. Contents

3. One-page sell sheet

4. Biographical sketch

writing experience
education
achievements
prior publishing history
if you have a speaking ministry
experience appearing on TV and radio.

5. Story Synopsis (fiction)

Description of the book (nonfiction)

5.a Chapter outline (nonfiction)

6. Market analysis

7. Competitive analysis

8. Marketing strategies (Platform plus what you will do to help sell your book)

9. History of the manuscript

10. Sample chapters

Fiction: The first three chapters, or
prologue plus first two chapters.
(the first 30 to 50 double-spaced pages)

Nonfiction: First chapter* plus two others
most likely to impress editors.

Bonus elements

endorsements, follow-up books