

Colette Mason Book Coaching

HOW TO WRITE YOUR NONFICTION BOOK WITHOUT LOSING THE PLOT!

MY STRAIGHTFORWARD GUIDE TO BUSINESS BOOK PUBLISHING

I get it. [Writing a nonfiction book can feel like a mountain to climb](#), but it's a journey well worth the effort. You're on the cusp of sharing your hard-earned knowledge with the world, and that's something truly special. Your book is more than just mere words on pages. It's your expertise and your helpful nature blended into a stellar piece of work. What's more, it's a golden opportunity to carve a unique space for yourself in the world of marketing and credibility.

So, let's get cracking, shall we? It's going to be quite the adventure!

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Give this guide a read – or even a quick skim – before you dive into writing. It's chock-full of insights that'll make your book-writing journey a smoother ride.

This guide is your trusty sidekick on your indie business book adventure. I'll walk you through the ins and outs of planning, writing, editing, publishing, and promoting your book. And I'll do it all with a healthy dose of banter, encouragement, and tough love when needed.

From nailing down a top-notch outline to avoiding those pesky rookie writing mistakes, I've got your back. I'll shine a light on the importance of editing (brace yourself, it's not everyone's cup of tea) and how to sidestep those gut-wrenching one-star reviews. Plus, we'll dive deep into the nitty-gritty of indie publishing, ensuring your book stands shoulder to shoulder with the traditionally published bestsellers.

Ready to turn your know-how into a cracking nonfiction book? Let's get started!

STEP 1: HOW TO RESEARCH AND PLAN YOUR BOOK

Kicking off your business book is like embarking on a grand adventure. Just as you wouldn't set off on a long drive without programming your sat nav, you shouldn't jump into writing without some groundwork to make sure you're heading off the right direction. Here's your step-by-step guide to getting off on the right foot.



[Check out my planning checklist](#)

1.1 Decide on The Most Powerful Knowledge and Skills You Want to Share

The cornerstone of a successful business book is effectively sharing your expertise. This isn't just about imparting lots of information. It's about enriching your readers' lives, transforming them into not just learners, but doers and achievers. Understanding 'instructional design' is key – it's about crafting content that's not only efficient and effective but also enjoyable and engaging. Your goal is to transform readers from curious learners into empowered doers.

1.2 Research Your Book Idea

Don your detective hat and invest time in researching your topic. Delving into competitor books, reviews, and forums will not only help you understand your audience's desires but also their pain points and frustrations. This step is a goldmine for crafting a book that truly resonates with your readers. This step is crucial for carving out your unique angle and ensuring your book stands out in the crowded marketplace. It also means you dodge mistakes others have made, and build on their successes with your fresh and unique take on your subject.

TIP: Avoid trying to combine two ideas into one. Readers are very focused when they buy a book. Covering two major topics in depth might feel like offering something with extra value and even more amazing. However it's more likely that readers feel like one of the topics is padding or filler. It's a bit like serving a main course and a dessert on the same plate. It's not twice as good, however you look at it.

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1.3 Plan Your Book Outline

A robust outline is like a map for your writing journey – it keeps you on track, ensuring you cover all the crucial stops along the way without detouring into the unknown. It ensures you cover all essential topics in a logical sequence, avoiding redundancy and confusion. It also saves a lot of developmental editing pain later.

Use this phrase to define your book idea from your reader's perspective to check it has genuine reader appeal, and then complete one for each chapter.

- As a... [type of person you help]
- I need to... [be able to know or do]
- So that... [I get a big benefit.

For example:

- As a... business book author
- I need to... know how to organise my information
- So that... I am certain I am teaching my readers important details and I can write them quickly and easily.

TIP: Check out www.mind42.com for a nifty, free mind-mapping tool to help you plan your book's structure. that you can export as text. A low-tech solution is post it notes you can put into meaningful groups and orders.

TIP: Run through your competitor research findings and your outline with a friend to make sure everything you plan to explain will move the reader towards getting that big result your book promises.

1.4 Turn Your Book Into a Moneymaker

Writing a book is more than just 'teaching on paper'. It's an opportunity to open up new revenue streams. Don't be tempted to miss bits out and offer them for sale later. Think bigger. Imagine how working through the exercises in your book could lead to workshops, speaking gigs, online courses, and more. Offering to critique people's workings or offer your opinion on their specific circumstances as they follow your advice on a video call is a simple, but powerful upsell when you have built that trust with your reader.

Having laid the groundwork with research and planning your book idea and outline, it's time to dive into the next step – writing your first draft.

WARNING: Avoid setting a fixed publication date, especially if it's your first book. The process is often unpredictable, and setting rigid deadlines can lead to unnecessary

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stress and rushed decisions. Public, set-in-stone launch dates just make everything worse when you hit a rough patch, rather than help you be accountable. The answer is simple: never ever ever share a firm publish date until you are certain your book is ready for launch.

STEP 2: HOW TO WRITE YOUR BOOK QUICKLY AND EASILY

Now, it's time to dive into the heart of your book – the writing process. This is where your thoughts and expertise crystallise into the words that will inform, inspire, and influence your readers. Do your best to keep up the pace without rushing or dawdling.



[Check out my writing checklist](#)

The key here is consistency and momentum. Keep your writing sessions regular and focused, steering clear of the perfectionist trap in these early stages. The sooner you write your book, get the gist of your idea down on paper, the less likely you are to get jaded, bored, doubting your ability or learning new things you want to add in. In my experience, people who take months to write their book ended getting in a bit of a mess and giving up. Be bold and press on.

2.1 Use a Preformatted Template.

Add your headings to elaborate to a stylish book template. Using a preformatted template streamlines the writing process. This helps you visualise the final product and maintain a consistent structure throughout your book. Having easy-to-read headings and chapter heads makes it easy to navigate your book outline, which is handy if you want to pop back and add in cross-reference, for example.

TIP: Grab one of my free templates to help you with this. Just type over the top of the placeholder headings and you're all set to go.

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2.2 Dictating vs. Typing: Choose Your Weapon

Finding your most comfortable and efficient method of writing is crucial. Whether it's the informality and speed of dictation or the precision of typing, choose the method that best suits your style and subject matter.

TIP: Dictation accuracy can drop if you have a strong regional accent. You can pay for human transcription at places like rev.com but that will add a lot to the production cost as there is a per minute charge.

2.3 Draft The Gist of What You Need to Say

The initial goal is to get the essence of your ideas on paper. This draft is about gist, momentum and clarity, not perfection. The sooner you can get a complete draft, the closer you are to refining and perfecting your book. It takes a lot of fear and uncertainty away when you know all your points are explained.

2.4 Use Imagery to Help Explain

Incorporating visual elements in your book can significantly enhance the reader's understanding and engagement. High-quality images, charts, and diagrams can elucidate complex concepts and break the monotony of text. Decorative imagery like hints, tips and warnings icons help break up your text so your book doesn't feel a heavy read. Have a look at other books that are a feast for the eyes for some inspiration. The Dummies Guide to series are good visual books, as are student study guides, where the publishers are keen for readers to implement what they learn.

TIP: Avoid the common mistake of making your book match your website, or using branded Canva graphics and so on. Logically it makes sense, but, sadly, it's usually the death-knell for book marketing before it even gets off the ground. Your book cover needs to be in keeping with other books on your topic, not your website. When was the last time you went to check an author's website design before you bought their book? Or did you choose the book because it matched the design of another you enjoyed on that topic. Exactly.

Now, Write Like You Mean It!

Armed with your plan, it's time to let the words flow. Don't worry about perfection on the first go. The first draft is about getting your ideas down. Remember, you can't edit a blank page. So, keep writing, and let your passion for your subject shine through.

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Remember, the path of writing is filled with ups and downs. Don't be disheartened if it feels challenging at times. Embrace the process, and remember, each word you write brings you closer to your goal of sharing your expertise with the world. You've got this!

TIP: Keep a consistent writing schedule, and don't be afraid to take breaks. A clear mind leads to clear writing. And hey, if it gets too much, step away, have a cup of tea, and then get back to it. Your book won't write itself, but a well-rested author can work more wonders than an exhausted warrior.

Remember, writing is just the beginning. The real magic happens in the editing!

STEP 3: HOW TO REVIEW AND EDIT YOUR BOOK

The editing stage is where you refine and polish the gist of your book into a masterpiece. This is your opportunity to ensure clarity, coherence, and impact. It's time to polish your work, to turn that rough diamond into a shiny gem.



[Check out my editing checklist](#)

Editing is where your book truly starts to sparkle. It's not the most glamorous part of writing a book, but it's absolutely crucial. No slacking here. Even if you want to with every fibre in your body.

3.1 Tidy Up Your First Draft

Begin by making sure your draft is coherent and flows naturally. This is more about the big picture than the nitty-gritty of grammar and syntax. Make sure when a reader works through your advice and implements it, they will have an enjoyable, entertaining experience and great results.

3.2 Seek Beta-Reader Feedback

Beta readers are worth their weight in gold. They provide fresh eyes and honest feedback. Choose folks who represent your target audience and brace yourself for their honesty. It might be a bit tough to hear, but it's invaluable. Their feedback will pinpoint where your book resonates and where it needs more work. Remember to give them a

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formatted book to look at. It doesn't need to be perfect, but it needs to look like a proper book at this stage with main chapter headings, a few images, bulleted lists and so on.

TIP: Get them to give each chapter a score out of ten and explain why to make it easy to see how to correct any weaknesses. You could ask them to score your title and subtitle out of ten too.

3.3 Edit Your Final Draft to Add the Feedback

Use the feedback to enhance your book, focusing on clarity, engagement, and effectiveness. This is your chance to address any gaps and elevate the quality of your writing. If you followed your outline closely you can typically avoid the developmental edit stage. If you decided to wander off track and write using your gut or attempt to rehash existing material, you will need to do a full developmental edit. In my experience, neither of these strategies save time or speed up book production, so avoid the temptation.

3.4 Hire a Professional or Use AI Tools to Copyedit Your Book

Now, let's talk about professional editing. It's an investment, but one that can make a huge difference. A professional editor will spot things you and your beta readers missed. They'll help with grammar, consistency, flow, and overall readability. They're like a personal trainer for your book – pushing it to be its best self.

With my checklist, even if you've never edited before, you can get the lowdown on what needs to happen. There are some AI tools you can use to edit for you if you're on a tight budget, for example, Grammarly and ChatGPT, so you can self-review your text, spot mistakes and rewrite awkward bits as needed.

3.5 Proofread: The Last Line of Defense

Proofreading is the final step in the editing process. It's about catching those small mistakes that slipped through earlier edits. It's the final polish that prepares your book for the readers. Remember to consider how your text is formatted, for example all your subheadings are the same sized font, or that your bulleted lists don't vary from 1,2,3,4 to i, ii, iii, iv and so on.

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Editing might feel like a marathon, but it's a crucial part of turning a good book into a great one. So, take a deep breath, and let's make your book the best it can be! Remember, the effort you put into editing and reviewing your book is a direct investment in its success and your reputation as an author in the long term. Pain now, lots of gain later.

TIPS:

- Take breaks: Don't try to edit your entire manuscript in one go. Fresh eyes catch more errors.
- Read aloud: Hearing your words can help you catch awkward phrasing and repetition.
- Stay true to your voice: Ensure the edits don't strip away your unique style and personality.
- Be open to change. Sometimes, what you love most needs to be heavily edited or removed for the betterment of the book.

Editing and reviewing your book might seem like a marathon, but it's worth every step. Remember, every great book you've ever read has gone through this process. Yours is no different. It's about transforming your good book into a great one. So, take a deep breath, and let's make your book the best it can be!

STEP 4: HOW TO PUBLISH YOUR BOOK

Congratulations! You're now at the thrilling stage of publishing your book. This is where all your hard work comes to fruition, and your book becomes a tangible reality. Let's get your masterpiece out into the world!

TIP: It's wise to have your marketing and promotion strategy ready before you hit publish. This ensures you can hit the ground running once your book is live.



4.1 Format for Kindle and Print

Formatting is crucial for a pleasant reader experience. Tailor your book's format for both Kindle and print, paying attention to the unique requirements of each.

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- **Kindle Formatting:** For Kindle, readability on a wide range of devices is key. People can read a Kindle book on a Kindle device, a phone, tablet or computer. I think you'll agree they are very different beasts! Ensure your text flows and moves on these different screens. Make sure things like diagram text is readable. Your table of contents should be clickable. and take the reader to the chapter that interests them. Also remember, eBooks are more than just words; they're an experience. You can click on them and interact with them. Make sure you make good use of that functionality. Use Amazon's tools to ensure your content converts well into their format, or get help. (I have been relying on Amit Dey for years.)
- **Print Formatting:** There's still something magical about holding a physical book. Pay attention to the nitty-gritty like legible typesetting, whitespace and margins, and an easy to read font. A well-formatted print book is like a piece of minimalist art. The design doesn't get in the way of clear communication. Make sure similar content has a similar format.,for example your main teaching text, summaries, and stories. This helps readers get a sense of what a piece teaches them before reading it in detail.

4.2 Upload to Your Publishing Platform(s)

- **Amazon KDP:** It's your golden ticket to readers far and wide. Take your time uploading your book. Amazon's KDP is user-friendly, but it's still worth double-checking every detail. In your KDP publishing dashboard, there are emulators so you can flick through a digital proof of your book and you can also pay for a pre-release proof print so you can doublecheck everything is as expected. (More on this later). Amazon will also give you a free ISBN (you can use on Amazon only, not other print on demand services.) It saves the expense of buying an ISBN, which often follow the UKs model and get sold in packs of 10 or more which is a significant expense when you only need one.
- **Other Platforms:** Consider other platforms like Draft2Digital who will publish your book on other websites. Each platform has its own strengths, and using multiple platforms can maximise your book's exposure. Go in with your eyes open though, it does add to the work, and you can always publish on other platforms later.

WARNING: Remember the exclusivity requirements if you opt for Amazon's Kindle Select Program. You cannot share digital copies of you book anywhere by

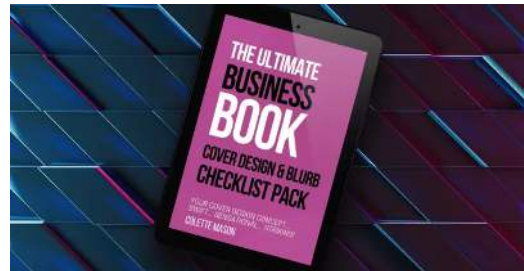
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Amazon including giveaway PDFs. Get advice on this if you're unsure or visit Amazon's community support pages.

STEP 4.3: NAIL YOUR BOOK COVER AND BLURB

Your book cover is the first thing people will judge, so make it pop. It needs to be eye-catching and relevant to your content. Think of it as the book's outfit – it needs to be spot-on for the occasion. You wouldn't go to a formal black tie dinner event in beach shorts and flip-flops, nor a pal's pool party in evening wear. [Check out my cover checklist](#)



You need to make sure your book is kitted out the right way before you release it. I have used a great company for my covers, GetCovers. I send them a design brief with my market research, and a rough concept and they make it sparkle. (See my covers and blurbs PDF checklist for more advice and a template brief you can send to them.)

TIP: If you make a mistake with your book cover, you can change it and republish your book with the same ISBN number. Just swap your graphics in your Amazon KDP dashboard.

As well as designing your cover, you need a top notch blurb to grab people's attention and make them think your book is like a genie in a bottle that will appear and solve their problems in a flash. That's all done with the cover design, the subtitle, and the blurb.

4.4 Complete Your Final Quality Checks

TIP: Take the time to go through your book thoroughly, checking every detail. This is your last opportunity to make any necessary corrections.

- **Proof Copies:** For print versions, always order a proof copy. Hold your book, feel it, and go through it page by page. This is your last chance to catch any errors before your book goes live.
- **Previewing on Kindle:** Use Amazon's emulator to see how your book looks on different devices. This step is crucial to ensure your eBook provides a seamless reading experience across all platforms and devices.

4.5 Decide on Your Pricing and Royalties

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Strategically price your book to balance attractiveness to readers with profitability. Your pricing strategy can significantly impact your book's success. Consider your book's value, your target market, and how Amazon's royalty structures work. Kindle and print books also have a price-ceilings and floors set by Amazon that set limits that you have to work within. It's about finding that sweet spot where your book is both attractive to buyers and profitable for you to promote.

TIP: Consider a launch price promotion to drive early sales. Set your print and Kindle versions to the lowest possible price for launch and tell your audience how long they have to buy your book before the price goes up. A week or a month are sensible timeframes. This helps get your book noticed by Amazon and get those all important initial reviews.

4.6 Publish!

With everything in place, it's time to publish your book. Enjoy this milestone; you've earned it!

Publishing your book is a momentous occasion. Pat yourself on the back! It marks the transition from writer to author. Enjoy this achievement, but also prepare for the next phase – marketing your book. That said, remember, the journey of a successful author doesn't end with publishing; it's just the beginning of connecting with your readers and growing your influence.

TIP: You must promote your book hard! If you are feeling exhausted and jaded just before publishing, take a break and then publish, so you're ready to give your launch your all.

Stay tuned for the final step where we'll delve into launching and promoting your book – the stage where your hard work pays off as you share your masterpiece with the world!

STEP 5: HOW TO LAUNCH AND PROMOTE YOUR BOOK

Launching and promoting your book is critical to its success. This phase is all about getting your book into the hands of eager readers and building your presence as an author.

[Check out my promotion checklist](#)



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5.1 Create Your Press Pack

Your press pack is a vital tool for promotion. It should be comprehensive, yet concise, highlighting the unique aspects of your book and your journey as an author. Include:

- Author Bio: Showcase your expertise and personality.
- Book Summary: A compelling, concise overview of your book.
- Press Release: Announce your book's launch with a bang. Highlight its unique aspects, the problems it solves, and why it's a must-read.
- High-Quality Images: Include professional images of your book cover and author headshots.

TIP: I have a fill in the blanks template for this if you want to speed up making these.

5.2 Develop Your Promotion and Launch Strategy

Effective promotion requires careful planning. Identify your target platforms and tailor your approach to each.

- Identify Targets: List out potential platforms, media outlets, and influencers.
- Approach Your Targets: Personalise your approach to them, whether it's email, social media, direct mail, face-to-face or a phone call.
- Track Your Efforts: Use a spreadsheet to monitor responses and follow-ups. Do more of what works with your socials and speaking engagements.
- Set up a Street Team: Get other people to spread the word to reach a wider audience. Get them to follow up for reviews and social proof.

5.3 Time Your Promotion

While working on promoting during writing and editing has its advantages, it can be overwhelming. Balance is key. Start building your platform early, but intensify promotional efforts post-completion. A well-timed promotion can significantly impact your book's visibility. Start early, but be prepared to adapt and intensify your efforts post-launch.

WARNING: I see this problem with every launch. Listen up. Avoid the temptation to chase bestseller status on Amazon by getting anyone and everyone to buy your book in a short time frame. Try and spread out purchases over a 30 day period, with your target audience buying your book. This teaches Amazon and its algorithm that your book is

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not a fluke, a flash in the pan that was promoted heavily at launch then loathed by the wider readership.

By spacing out your promotion and only getting people who match your target audience to read it, you demonstrate you have created a good quality evergreen book that has strong appeal for a certain type of person. It makes long term promotion by you (and by Amazon on its website and in its promotional emails much easier.)

5.4 Build and Grow Your Author Platform

Your author platform is your connection to your readers. Develop and expand it consistently to enhance your reach and establish your credibility. It makes sense to add a new section to your website. You can always create a dedicated website later if you want to. Keep things simple. As you can see, you've got quite a lot on as it is...

- **Website:** Create a professional site (or section on your current site) showcasing your book and your expertise.
- **Social Media Engagement:** Be active on platforms where your audience hangs out. Share valuable content, engage in conversations, and promote your book. Remember you could get a street team member to cover platforms you don't use much to save starting from scratch and learning how to harness its power.
- **Content Marketing:** Repurpose your book. Create and publish blog posts, guest articles, podcasts, and webinars can amplify your reach.
- **Showcase Achievements:** Share any media coverage, reviews, or endorsements you receive to boost your book's credibility and yours. Add them to your website and mention them on social media. You can also add them to your press pack to build trust and get into a positive spiral so more people want to feature you and your book.

5.5 Leverage Your Book for Long-Term Success

Your book is a key asset in your author career. Keep promoting it to maintain its visibility and relevance in the market. Keep reminding people they can work with you to get the same results from the book as a way of generating more revenue from your author endeavours. This can fund a long-term advertising campaign to your mailing list, or directly to your book on Amazon.

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Conclusion

You're now armed with the essentials to research, plan, write, edit, publish, and promote your business book. Each step is crucial in your journey as an author. Celebrate every milestone, learn from each phase, and don't be shy to seek support when needed.

If you're after more guidance or looking to fine-tune your efforts, my additional resources like checklists or personalised coaching sessions will help. They'll give you a succinct structured approach to ensure you don't miss a beat – without adding to the overwhelm.

As an author, you are more than just a writer; you are an innovator, a storyteller, and an inspiration. Embrace these roles as you embark on this exciting journey. The world awaits your unique insights and expertise.

Itching to make a start?

Dive into my [comprehensive checklists and bespoke guidance](#) to make your book's journey truly remarkable. Let's transform your expertise into a powerful tool that resonates with readers and elevates your professional status. [Grab Your Checklists and Get Started](#).

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