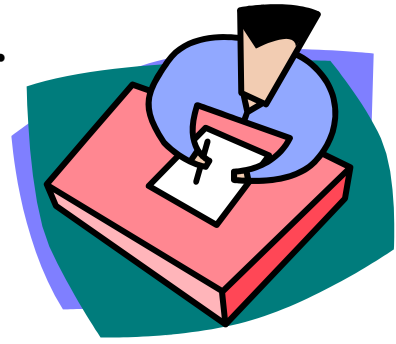


Instructions for Writing a Query Letter



Things You Will Need:

- Postage Stamps
- SASE Envelopes
- Office Supplies

Step One

Find out the name, phone number and address of a publisher who markets the type of book you wrote. Call the publisher and ask for the name of a submissions editor, then ask for their submission guidelines.

Step Two

Organize your thoughts. Make notes about your book's unique subject, writing style, theme, plot, or message.

Step Three

Begin your letter with a paragraph or two about your book's highlights. Use a standard business letter format.

Step Four

Explain who would want to read your book and why, in the following paragraph. Also, mention books that have been published on a similar subject, and explain why your book is different and/or better.

Step Five

In the next paragraph, describe your experience as a writer and/or your expertise on your book's subject.

Step Six

Close your letter with a cheerful, "I hope to hear from you soon."

Step Seven

Enclose a SASE (self-addressed stamped envelope) for the editor's convenience.

Tips & Warnings:

- Be concise. Write a one-page letter only. Use the active tense and make your language lively, straightforward and interesting. You can do this if you think of what the agent/publisher wants to know and what will encourage him to want to know more. Concentrate on what the top three things the agent/publisher needs to know in order to believe your book will sell. Avoid thinking exclusively about what you think is important and what you want to say.
- Print your letter on white printer paper. This isn't the time for eye-catching stationery.
- Research the agent/publisher before you send your query letter. If your book is non-fiction, you may be required to include two or three sample chapters or the entire manuscript with your letter. The publisher may ask for other items, too, like a detailed outline or a résumé.
- Some fiction publishers don't accept unsolicited manuscripts or sample chapters with a query letter—check first. As a general rule, describe your fiction book's basic plot in your letter. Typically, the fiction editor will review your letter and only request to see your book or sample chapters if he is interested.
- Proofread your letter for errors. Editors like perfection.
- Be sure to include a SASE ("self-addressed stamped envelope") with your letter.
- Never ask about money or discuss fees in your letter.
- All publishers have different guidelines and instructions for writers. Be sure to do your homework before you send your letter.