

GUIDELINES

FOR SENDING A PROPOSAL TO THE STEVE LAUBE AGENCY

There are a number of ways to do a good book proposal. We've met many writers who get bogged down in the details. The bottom line is whether your idea has traction and if your writing delivers. Since your book proposal is like a job application, you want to present yourself in the most professional manner possible. Your proposal will be a simple vehicle to convey your idea to us, and ultimately to a publisher.

(International Authors: See the note on our contact page for specific instructions.)

Proposals for Steve Laube e-mail to krichards@stevelaube.com mail to: The Steve Laube Agency 24 W. Camelback Rd. A-635 Phoenix, AZ 85013	Proposals for Tamela Hancock Murray e-mail to ewilson@stevelaube.com <i>No postal mail submissions</i>
Proposals for Karen e-mail to pwhitson@stevelaube.com <i>No postal mail submissions</i>	Proposals for Dan Balow e-mail to dan@stevelaube.com <i>No postal mail submissions</i>

Please read this whole article since there are specific differences between non-fiction and fiction proposals. Some of the information is repetitive so that our guidelines are clear.

Do not send the same proposal to all of us at the same time. We tend to talk to each other so a writer who spams all of us would be considered unprofessional.

If we are interested in your project, we will be in contact within six to eight weeks or sooner. If we do not think your project is something we can represent, we may or may not be in contact, depending on current workload. If you sent an e-mail proposal and don't hear from us within 60 days, you can assume we are not going to pursue your project. If you send a hard copy proposal and include a self-addressed stamped envelope (SASE) we guarantee you will receive a response from us.

Hard copy: If you send a hard copy proposal please include an SASE or you will not get a reply. However, if you do send a hard copy proposal and an SASE you will receive a response.

E-mail: If you are sending an e-mail submission please include it as an attachment in a Word document or a PDF (do not paste the proposal into the body of your e-mail). If you sent an e-mail proposal and don't hear from us within 60 days, you can assume we are not going to pursue your project.

If you are wondering how to best address the cover letter, [read this article](#). There is no need to call our office to ask that question or to ask if we received your proposal.

International authors frequently ask how best to contact us because of the challenges of sending hard copy through the postal system from overseas. We have a number of Canadian clients and one in New Zealand, but all the rest are based in the United States. If you are from another country you can send a proposal via e-mail to any of our agents but let us know that you are living in another country. Do not include the text of the proposal in the body of the e-mail. If we are interested we will contact you within six to eight weeks. Otherwise you can assume that yours was not something we were looking for.

We are looking for quality Christian fiction in all genres.

We are looking for quality Christian non-fiction of all types, with the exception of:

No poetry, personal biographies, personal stories, end-times literature (either fiction or non-fiction), and children's picture books

Guidelines

There are many ways to create a book proposal, but remember, in a sense, this is your job application. Present yourself as a professional and let your idea and your writing speak for themselves. Directions below are to guide you so your submission will be engaging, complete, and follow industry standards. Instead of obsessing of minor details, follow the standard and let the focus be where it belongs: on your sample chapters! Please read everything below and note the difference between non-fiction and fiction proposals.

COVER LETTER

The cover letter should include your name, address, phone number, and e-mail address. It should sum up the plot or idea in a single paragraph, as well as giving the book's title and estimated word count of the entire manuscript (not page count). If the book is not completely finished, estimate when you might be finished. The cover letter should not be more than one page.

[Cover letter article](#).

(We HIGHLY recommend that you read this article!)

SAMPLE CHAPTERS

The sample should be the first three chapters or fifty double-spaced pages, printed single-sided and unbound. Please make sure the pages are numbered. (Please use Times Roman 12pt font or a similar very readable font.) Do not print out the pages so they look like actual book pages. Print double-spaced on one side of the page in black ink on 8" x 11" white paper, use 1" margins all around and don't justify the right margin.

E-MAIL SUBMISSIONS

If you choose to send an e-mail submission it should be sent as an e-mail attachment in a Word document or PDF. *Do Not* paste the contents of your proposal and sample chapters into the body of an e-mail. Formatting will be lost in most cases and it is the worst way to present yourself to an agent. It makes a terrible first impression.

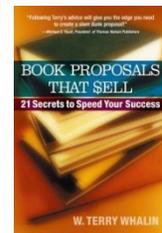
SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE (SASE) If you send a proposal to us via the mail we will not reply to you unless you include an appropriately sized SASE with sufficient postage. A letter-size SASE for a written response is preferred. There is no need to include a large envelope for the return of the entire proposal, unless you want the whole thing back. Do not expect us to track down your email address to send a rejection letter. However, if we are interested we may either call or contact you via e-mail for more information.

NON-FICTION Proposals

Your non-fiction book proposal could include the following:

- A one-sentence summary of your book:
- Create a 75 word summary of the book. Imagine that this is what will go on the back cover of the book.
- A half page to one page overview of your book including (a) an identification of its uniqueness (the distinguishing “hook” that will draw your reader in: What will motivate a person to pick up your book?) and (b) what you hope to accomplish in the way of transformation in the life of the reader:
- A brief profile of your reader with a clear explanation of the problem he or she faces and how your book provides a solution. Also, list any additional audiences you expect your book will attract:
- A listing of other books available that are similar to yours and a brief explanation of how yours is both different and/or better:
- A description of potential marketing channels to which you have access (e.g., contacts you have in key organizations, groups you speak to regularly, key people you know who might endorse your book, etc.):
- Your qualifications to write on this topic and a list of your writing experience and educational/career background. If you have published previously, what are the titles and approximate sales to date of your books?
- A chapter-by-chapter annotated outline that clearly summarizes the overall content and key ideas of each chapter:
- Projected word length of the manuscript:
- Expected completion date of the manuscript:
- Three sample chapters of your book:

We highly recommend that you read and study [*Book Proposals That Sell* by W. Terry Whalin](#). It is one of the better books on the subject. Included in the back of the book is an article by Michael Hyatt, former CEO of Thomas Nelson Publishers. That article is invaluable.



FICTION Proposals

Follow the basic information above in the non-fiction proposal section, but realize that the biggest difference between the fiction and non-fiction proposal is the synopsis. While the non-fiction proposal requires a chapter by chapter analysis, the fiction proposal should be a maximum of three single spaced pages that present the entire story. Don't worry, your synopsis will be the worst writing you've ever done. That is okay. Just tell the story in quick form so we can know what happens after your sample chapters.

Create a Promo Sentence and a Sales Handle (these are the bits you see on the front cover of a novel or as a headline across the back cover. In addition create back cover copy that tells the story without giving it away (back cover is usually around 75 words) Examples (from the cover of the novel *Oxygen* by Johns Olson and Randy Ingermanson):

Promo sentence:

A mission gone desperately wrong - and no way out short of blind faith...

Sales handles:

A tragic accident or a suicide mission?

Back cover copy:

Dreams turn suddenly to nightmares for NASA and the crew as an explosion cripples the spacecraft on the outward voyage. The crew's survival depends on complete trust in one another - but is one of the four a saboteur?

In the year 2012 Valkerie Jansen, a young microbial ecologist, is presented with an amazing opportunity to continue her research as a member of the NASA corps of astronauts. When a sudden resignation opens the door for her to be a part of a mission to mars, her life dream becomes a reality.

Since fiction can be entertaining and taps the emotional center of a reader here are some other helpful things to include in your proposal :

In a single sentence, state your purpose for writing this novel. Why did you write (are you writing) this story? What are you trying to prove about life with this story?

Describe your protagonist's quest. What does he want or need? What is his goal? For what does he yearn?

What is at stake in this story? If your protagonist doesn't attain his goal, so what? Why does it matter and why should the reader care? What are the consequences?

What is the "takeaway value" of the story. How will the reader be changed for having read it?