

TIPS FOR WRITING A GOOD SYNOPSIS

You have written your story and now you want to publish. If you decide to go down the traditional publishing route or approach an agent then you will more than likely need to submit your work by sending it with a written Synopsis.

The Synopsis is where you sell a vision of your book to an agent or publisher. These people are picky and are looking for a unique twist, a new voice, a different perspective – but, as there is little that is genuinely new in this world, they really need to know why your book will captivate a reader. They also want to know that it will sell lots of copies and make them money. They are in business after all.

What you write in your Synopsis will need to be relevant in showing what your story is all about. However, it must not be full of the emotional feelings an author develops for their story as they write it. We know that as authors write their book it soon becomes their ‘baby.’ A thing they have created, nurtured, fed and built into something delightful and unique. Well at least to the author it is.

That is why your Synopsis must be to the point, expressing exactly what the story is all about.

Here are some ‘do’s’ and ‘don’ts’ that will help you:

DO: Describe what the benefits and takeaways are for the reader (this is particularly relevant to non-fiction).

DO: Outline (without deep detail) the plot to the very end but without leaving any cliff-hangers. If you want your work to be looked at and published, then they need to know how it ends.

DO: Explain the characters journey and how they grow or change (relevant to fiction).

DO: Always write in the third person.

DONT: Explain why you wrote the book. They are not interested in your life history.

DON’T: Fill it with hyperbole unless you can back it up. You may describe it as amazing, but you must be able to explain why it is amazing? And your reason had better be a damn good one if you do.

DON’T: Say your book is for ‘everyone!’ There has never been a book that is of interest to everybody!

Make sure you do the following:

- Sum up your book in one catchy sentence. Think long and hard. Try a few various lines before choosing the best one.

- Describe who the core type of reader is for your book. Relevant is age, type of person, gender etc
- If it is relevant describe what problem this book will solve? Relates to books that solve modern day problems.
- Explain why it is unique / different? This could prove to be difficult as they will probably have read just about every type of story style going.
- AND ONLY, and I mean only, if it is important, explain why you wrote it?

Ideally your synopsis should be written before you actually start writing your book. In other words, once you have plotted and/or mapped out the storyline. Remember you can always tweak it later. Doing it this way can actually help you with writing the story.

And before you send it in please, please make sure you edit it carefully. You want your submission to be concise, punchy and compelling for publishers to take it on, not turn it down.

We wish you good luck with your submission!

In the meantime:

Remember, you want your submission to look professional so make sure you read their submission guidelines properly before posting.

Copyright © 2022 Ann Brady, Mentoring Writers. All rights reserved.