

## **Partner with Your Publisher #1: Who Is Your Acquisitions Editor?**

By Stephanie Gunning  
"The Publishing Insider"

An acquisitions editor is the writer's champion inside the publishing company. Like the director of a major motion picture, this person ensures that the efforts of everyone involved in a project, including you, the author, is aligned and serves a unified vision.

How can you expect to interface with your acquisitions editor?

From the moment your literary agent submits your book proposal to the acquiring editor (or the editor approaches you about writing a book), the editor focuses on educating his or her colleagues on why your book will be marketable. Once the publisher or editorial director of the company is persuaded of the reasons the project is suitable for the publishing house's list, the acquisitions editor is given the go-ahead to strike the financial deal with you.

If you did not meet or communicate prior to selling your book, your first conversation with your editor is likely to happen right after the acquisition takes place. Ask as many questions as you can think of about the company's editorial, production, and marketing processes. One of your editor's many roles is to educate you about the publisher's expectations. Here are ten suggested questions:

1. When is my book scheduled for publication?
2. Can you supply me with a set of author guidelines?
3. Will you read immediately on delivery of the manuscript?
4. How long does your editorial process usually take?
5. What can I do to help educate in-house personnel?

6. Does your publicity department have an author information sheet that I can start filling out early?
7. Does your company copyedit electronically or on paper?
8. How soon do you require cover endorsements?
9. Would you supply me with bound galleys?
10. What marketing activities have you found most effective in promoting similar books?

Remember, your acquisitions editor has a responsibility to the publishing firm to make sure they get the book they contracted. Make no major changes in format or approach without discussing them with your editor. Your editor is the person who ultimately accepts or rejects your manuscript, so you must please him or her. Your editor is not a therapist and has numerous books to produce, so behave professionally and respect his or her busy schedule. Use non-urgent modes of communication whenever possible, and always be clear and concise about what you are asking or offering.

Although a publishing company simply cannot pursue every strategy you dream up, you should never stop being an innovative promoter. It's always a good idea to keep your editor "in the loop" about your activities. Trust that you'll be supported. If you are successful, the acquisitions editor is also considered a success.

Publishing consultant **Stephanie Gunning**, "The Publishing Insider," publishes a monthly ezine and hosts regular teleclasses about the book industry. If you're ready to put together your breakthrough nonfiction book proposal, make more money, and have fun with publishing, sign up for her ezine and get your FREE tips and resources now at her website.

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