

— FOR BUSINESS BOOK AUTHORS —

Book Editing Mind Map

a guide to polishing your business book manuscript

by **Jack Price**, Book Editor

pricewrite.com



WELCOME!

Few of us have the courage to boldly announce, “*I’m going to write a book!*”

Instead we close our door, open a password-guarded file, and secretly type the words Chapter One, taking a bold first step in a private journey of self-discovery.

But when the time approaches to reveal the book, we feel doubt. We second-guess. Resistance overwhelms us. (*Who am I to write a book?*)

Don’t worry, I feel resistance too, as does every writer. The key to overcoming resistance is to *refuse to be hypnotized by the complexity.*

Sure, your manuscript may have rough edges, but edges can be made smooth. Just be careful not to fall for the false message resistance whispers in your ear — that you are inadequate as an author.

The truth is that it takes time to learn the writing trade and its tricks. But your ideas need to be brought to the world now. After all, countless people have problems you can solve. And when they plunk down a few dollars to buy your book, the small expense will have the potential to pay back huge dividends.

So get help where you need it.

My editing process involves applying various “lenses” to reduce each detail to a problem we can solve together. The process will take time and thought for both of us, so do some soul-searching:

1. Estimate the value of your book to your business.
2. Decide what you need help with.
3. Work out a budget that aligns with the book’s value.

When you’re ready, go to pricewrite.com and schedule a phone call. Our talk will be completely confidential: it’s your book, your ideas, your business.

Your book needs to be written, so make it the best it can be. If you stop short, your unfinished manuscript will taunt you from under the bed, and you’ll always wonder how good it might have been.

Jack Price

Book Editor

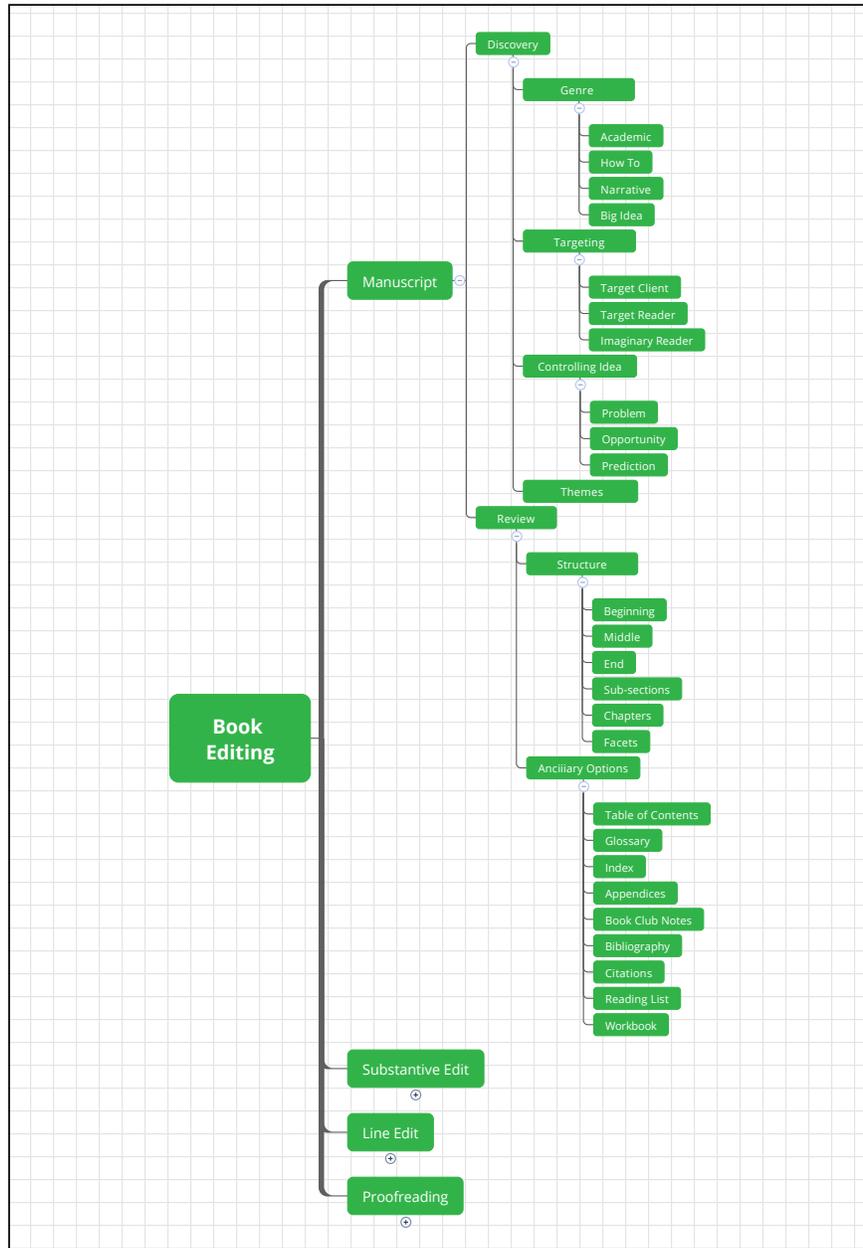
TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME!	2
BOOK EDITING MIND MAP	5
MIND MAP #1 MANUSCRIPT	5
MIND MAP #2 SUBSTANTIVE EDIT	6
MIND MAP #3 LINE EDIT	7
MIND MAP #4: PROOFREADING.....	8
BOOK EDITING MIND MAP KEYS	9
MIND MAP #1: MANUSCRIPT REVIEW	9
<i>Genre</i>	9
Academic	9
How To.....	9
Narrative	9
Big Idea	9
<i>Targeting</i>	9
Target Client	9
Target Reader	9
Imaginary Reader.....	10
<i>Controlling Idea</i>	10
Problem	10
Opportunity	10
Prediction.....	10
<i>Themes</i>	10
<i>Structure</i>	10
Beginning	10
Middle.....	10
End	10
Sections.....	11
Chapters.....	11
Facets.....	11
<i>Ancillary Options</i>	11
Table of Contents.....	11
Glossary	11
Index	11
Appendices	11
Book Club Notes	11
Bibliography.....	11
Citations.....	11
Reading List.....	11
Workbook	11

MIND MAP #2: SUBSTANTIVE EDIT	12
<i>Missing</i>	12
<i>Addition by Subtraction</i>	12
<i>Order</i>	12
<i>Accuracy</i>	12
<i>Truth</i>	12
MIND MAP #3: LINE EDIT	13
<i>Sentence Structure</i>	13
<i>Paragraph Structure</i>	13
<i>Transitions</i>	13
<i>Beginnings</i>	13
<i>Endings</i>	13
<i>Boldness</i>	13
<i>Positivity</i>	13
<i>Quotable</i>	13
<i>Sweater Knit</i>	13
<i>Music</i>	13
MIND MAP #4: PROOFREADING	14
<i>Grammar</i>	14
<i>Usage</i>	14
<i>Syntax</i>	14
<i>Diction</i>	14
<i>Spelling</i>	14
<i>Extraneous</i>	14
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)	15
ABOUT JACK PRICE	16
GETTING HELP	16
NEXT STEPS	16
ACKNOWLEDGMENT	16
COPYRIGHT NOTICE	16

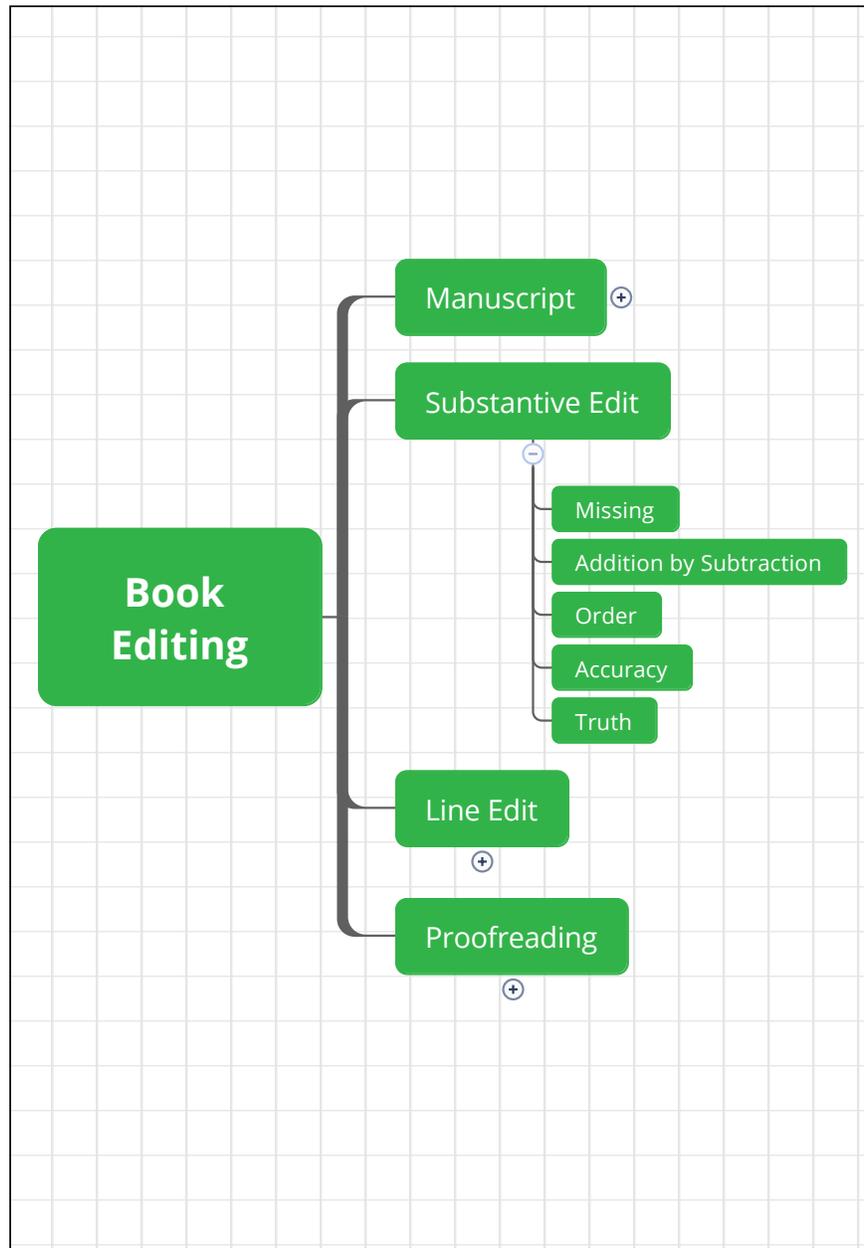
BOOK EDITING MIND MAP

MIND MAP #1 MANUSCRIPT



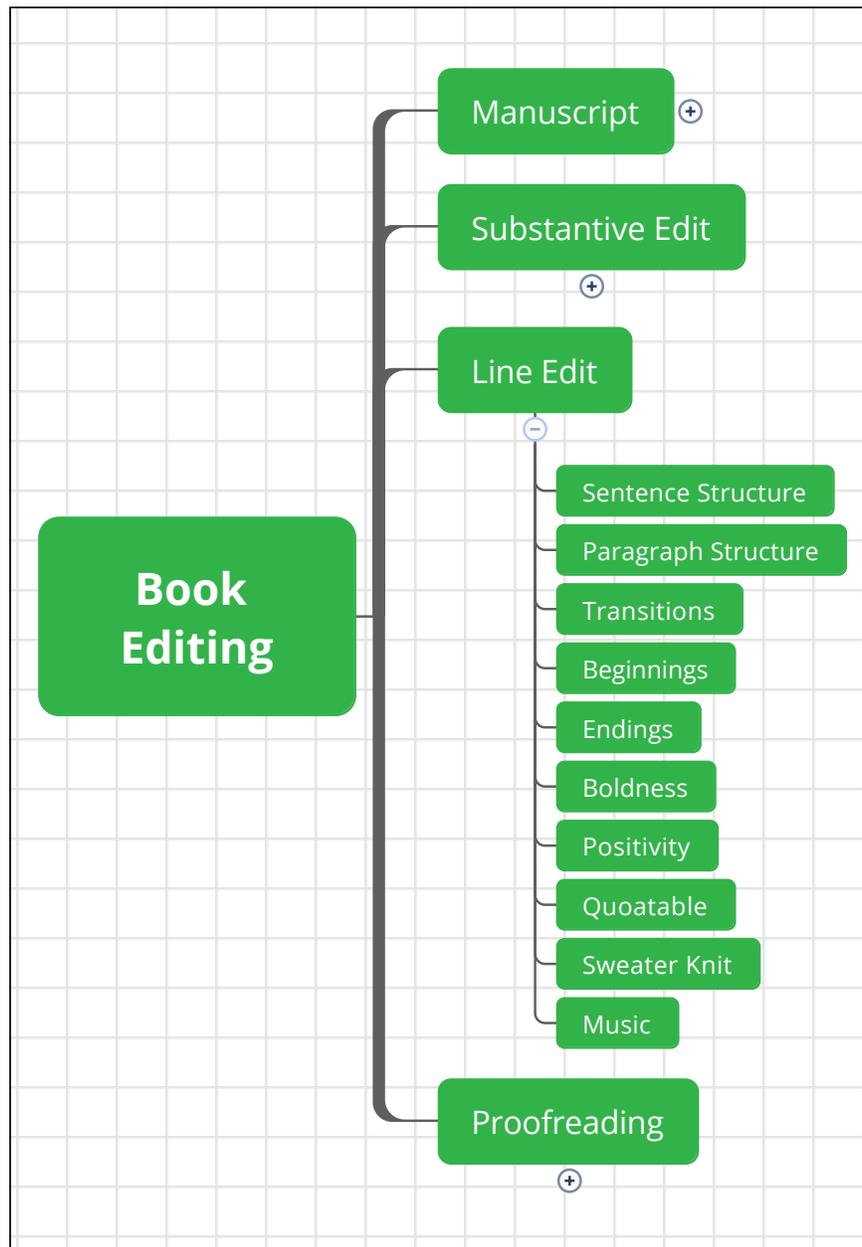
See MIND MAP #1 KEY on page 10

MIND MAP #2 SUBSTANTIVE EDIT



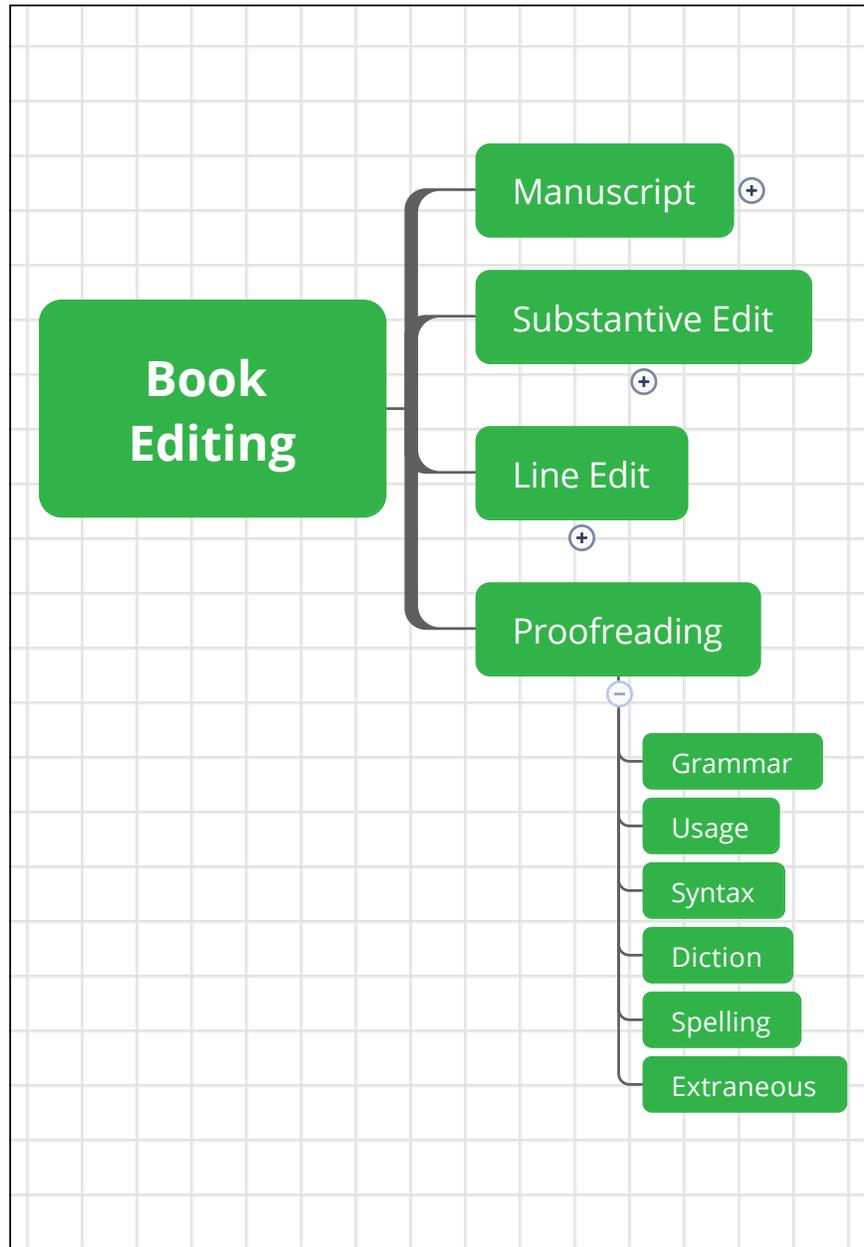
See MIND MAP #2 KEY on page 13

MIND MAP #3 LINE EDIT



See MIND MAP #3 KEY on page 14

MIND MAP #4: PROOFREADING



See MIND MAP #4 KEY on page 15

BOOK EDITING MIND MAP KEYS

MIND MAP #1: MANUSCRIPT REVIEW

“Ponder the path of thy feet.” —Proverbs 4:26

Genre

Longtime book editor Shawn Coyne identified four popular nonfiction genres:

Academic

The focus is on presenting your main thesis with rigorous standards of proof.
(Side Note: that does NOT mean the writing has to be boring)

How To

In this popular genre, the content is prescriptive. Adult learners want steps they can take today to reach a desirable outcome.

Narrative

The nonfiction author uses the structures and techniques of fiction writers to tell a business or leadership story.

Big Idea

This engaging genre incorporates elements of all three of the other genres to view a single idea from several perspectives.

Identify a handful of books in your chosen genre and study them to discover the conventions and obligatory sections that make them work.

Targeting

A book written for everyone will appeal to no one. The more you niche down (while still casting a wide enough net) the more your book will appeal.

Target Client

Most business books are written to attract new business from new customers. Define the characteristics of customers you want.

Target Reader

Your ideal customer is not necessarily your ideal reader. Your strategy should be to write to ideal readers while ideal customers watch.

Imaginary Reader

Reduce your broad target to a specific person who loves your work and your ideas. Then write to that person.

Controlling Idea

Your business book will no doubt be packed with ideas, so many that the reader may have a tough time assimilating everything. One “best practice” is to identify a single Controlling Idea and relate every sub-idea to the controlling idea.

Consider these three main types:

Problem

Your Controlling Idea may be a problem that is plaguing your target reader. Your book will reveal your solution — your special way of dealing with the problem

Opportunity

Or maybe your Controlling Idea is a new and exciting opportunity that you are the first to spot — an opportunity that is highly desirable to your target readers.

Prediction

You may see a significant change coming, one with life-changing implications for your target reader. Your Controlling Idea is both the prediction and your insights on how to deal with the coming change.

Themes

Identify themes that complement your Controlling Idea.

Structure

The internal structure of your book will vary based on genre. But at a bare minimum, your book needs each of these three major sections.

Beginning

The beginning sets the stage and gives the reader a compelling reason to read the entire book.

Middle

Think of this large section as the place where the reader’s transformation happens.

End

A powerful ending gives dedicated readers an opportunity to witness the dramatic results made possible by your ideas.

Sections

You may or may not need to group your chapters into larger units. The earlier in this process you group your ideas, the more cohesive your book will be.

Chapters

Each chapter needs to stand alone as a complete message, while also contributing a specific piece to the whole.

Facets

In some genres, such as Big Idea, it makes sense to view one central idea from various facets, like turning a gem to catch the rays of light and reveal its color.

Ancillary Options

To make your book more useful, relevant, and recommendable, consider adding these sections before and after the body of the book.

Table of Contents

Give the reader a birds-eye view of the big picture.

Glossary

Provide the meaning of technical and scientific terms.

Index

Give readers an easy way to re-use the book for reference.

Appendices

Include extra material that adds value to your book.

Book Club Notes

Spread your ideas (and book sales) through groups of avid readers.

Bibliography

Add credibility by demonstrating depth of research.

Citations

Avoid plagiarism by giving due credit.

Reading List

Encourage readers to dive deeper into your topic.

Workbook

Include a downloadable resource to drive readers to your website.

MIND MAP #2: SUBSTANTIVE EDIT

“Easy reading is damn hard writing.” — Nathaniel Hawthorne

When the first draft is done, that’s when the real work begins. The Substantive Edit appears to be the smallest section of the mind map, and yet it is the most difficult.

Missing

What critical points did you overlook in the first draft? What needs more or better explanation?

Addition by Subtraction

Conversely, what does your first draft over-explain? Does the first draft include superfluous information that should be cut?

Order

if ideas don’t flow in a logical order, readers can get discouraged, stop reading, and miss out on all the benefits you deliver.

Accuracy

Information can be accurate but irrelevant. Yes, accuracy is critical to your credibility, but make sure your information is also important to your audience.

Truth

In the context of a business book, the value of truth is usefulness. Useful truth is your gift to readers.

MIND MAP #3: LINE EDIT

The goal of line editing is to make reading your book a joy not a chore.

Sentence Structure

The rules of sentence structure aren't arbitrary; their purpose is to guide the writer to clarity of expression.

Paragraph Structure

A paragraph is one idea, not a stack. Vary paragraph length to avoid monotony.

Transitions

In the first draft, the writing comes out in chunks. In the substantive edit, organize the chunks. In line editing, tie the chunks together with transitions.

Beginnings

Every new section, chapter, or subsection is a chance to recapture the reader's attention or lose it. Don't waste the opportunity.

Endings

In every section, chapter, or subsection, don't just quit when you run out of words. Finish your idea.

Boldness

Don't use modifiers to pull your punches, expressions like "a bit" or "kind of" or "almost." Expunge weasel words!

Positivity

There's plenty in life that beats us down. Be the voice that lifts readers up.

Quotable

Winston Churchill had to earn his living writing books. In that profession, he learned to reduce his thoughts to memorable sound bites.

Sweater Knit

Stitch paragraphs together as if knitting a sweater with every thought linked to what precedes and follows. (Hat tip to writer Carol Tice)

Music

Read your text out loud to find expressions and rhythms that sound awkward. Let your ear guide your style.

MIND MAP #4: PROOFREADING

Don't try to proofread your own writing. Your eye will skim over mistakes that leap to the eye of a proofreader.

Grammar

You can break any grammatical rule, as long as you understand the rule and break it with the intention of clarifying.

Usage

Choose words and expressions that are commonly understood and used by real people in everyday speech and writing.

Syntax

Control how you string words together: "Whose woods these are I think I know" (Robert Frost) versus "I think I know who owns these woods." (example by Merriam-Webster)

Diction

Choose words for effect: "For Whom The Bell Tolls" (John Donne) versus For Whom The Bell Rings. (example by Merriam-Webster)

Spelling

When in doubt, grab your copy of Merriam-Webster or other great dictionary.

Extraneous

Repeated words are invisible to the the person who types them.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

How can an editor help?

As a book editor, my approach is to help you determine what you need and what you don't. Then you can make your own decisions about getting help or not. If you have the money, and your book is worth it, you'll be glad to have a professional on your side.

Do readers really care about the fine points of grammar?

Most do not, but everyone has an unconscious ear for the language they speak. The purpose of the grammatical edit is to remove awkward constructions that cause readers to stumble. Standard grammar helps the writing flow.

Won't the publisher or printing company take care of proofreading?

Traditional publishers usually get involved in all aspects of editing, including proofreading. Alternative publishers, including companies that help you self-publish, print whatever you give them — mistakes and all.

Should I do the work myself or hire professionals?

It's not an either/or question; you can do some of both. It all depends on your level of skill in each step of the process, the amount of time you can devote to the project, and how important the book is to you.

After editing is finished, how much help do I need in the publishing world?

You can get as much help or as little as you please. The problem is that most first-time authors don't know what they don't know. They underestimate the complexity, and they underestimate the drain on their time and attention.

How much do you charge?

That depends on what you need. I'll be glad to discuss my services, time lines, and costs. To schedule a no-cost, no-obligation discovery call, visit my website at pricewrite.com

ABOUT JACK PRICE

I'm a fulltime professional writer with over a decade of experience and a strong track record in ghostwriting, editing, and writing marketing copy for busy executives, experts, and authors who want influence, opportunities, and growth.

I live in central Virginia and serve clients worldwide.

GETTING HELP

There's an entire cottage industry of professionals who can help you with various aspects of your business book project.

But as in every industry, there are also sharpies who make big promises, take your money, and produce little. So do your homework.

NEXT STEPS

I'd love to find out more about your book. When you're ready, visit pricewrite.com and schedule a time to talk about your book

Jack Price

Book Editor

Acknowledgment

When I was a ninth grader at Cleveland Junior High School in Spartanburg SC, a wonderful English teacher got me interested in the nuts and bolts of writing. Miss Harris, it's too late to thank you personally, but I think of you every day.

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