



CHRISTIAN  
**WRITERS**  
INSTITUTE

# ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE BOOK PROPOSAL

THE ESSENTIALS YOU NEED  
TO PREPARE, PITCH, AND  
PROMOTE A BOOK



WITH  
STEVE LAUBE

# MEET STEVE LAUBE



## STEVE LAUBE

Steve Laube, president and founder of The Steve Laube Agency, is a veteran of the bookselling industry with over 40 years of experience. At first, he was a bookstore manager and was awarded the National Store of the Year by the Christian Booksellers Association (CBA). He then spent over a decade with Bethany House Publishers and was named the Editor of the Year by AWSA. Twenty years ago, he became an agent where he and his agency have represented over 2,500 new books, and Steve has twice been named Agent of the Year by ACFW. He was also inducted into the Grand Canyon University Hall-of-Fame by their College of Theology. He is married with three grown children and two grandsons.





# WHAT WE PROMISE IN THIS COURSE

In this course, you'll dive into the core concepts surrounding book proposals, gaining a deep understanding of their critical role in the traditional publishing process. You'll recall the significance of this foundational document in securing publishing opportunities and understand why it's so essential. Next, we'll break down the essential components of a book proposal, helping you differentiate and identify their individual roles and contributions to the overall document. Finally, you'll put your newfound knowledge into action as you embark on developing your own functional book proposal, learning how to effectively outline and organize its key elements for pitching to publishers. By the end of this course, you'll be equipped with the skills and insights needed to navigate the book proposal process confidently and successfully.

# CONTENTS

1

## INTRODUCTION

Get ready to dive into the world of book proposal writing with an insightful overview that lays the foundation for understanding the process.

2

## PART 1: THE COVER LETTER

Craft compelling cover letters that capture the essence of your manuscript, mastering the art of succinct storytelling to hook publishers.

3

## PART 2: THE PROPOSAL

Explore the essential elements of a book proposal, learning how to craft a captivating hook, conduct market analysis, and outline a strategic marketing plan to showcase your book's potential.

4

## PART 3: THE SAMPLE CHAPTERS

Develop effective sample chapters that showcase your unique writing style and engage publishers, setting the stage for successful manuscript pitches.

5

## BONUS: PITCH PRACTICES

Hone your pitching skills through practical exercises, ensuring you can confidently present your book proposals to publishers with professionalism and persuasion.





||

**A book has no  
ministry if it is  
not read.**

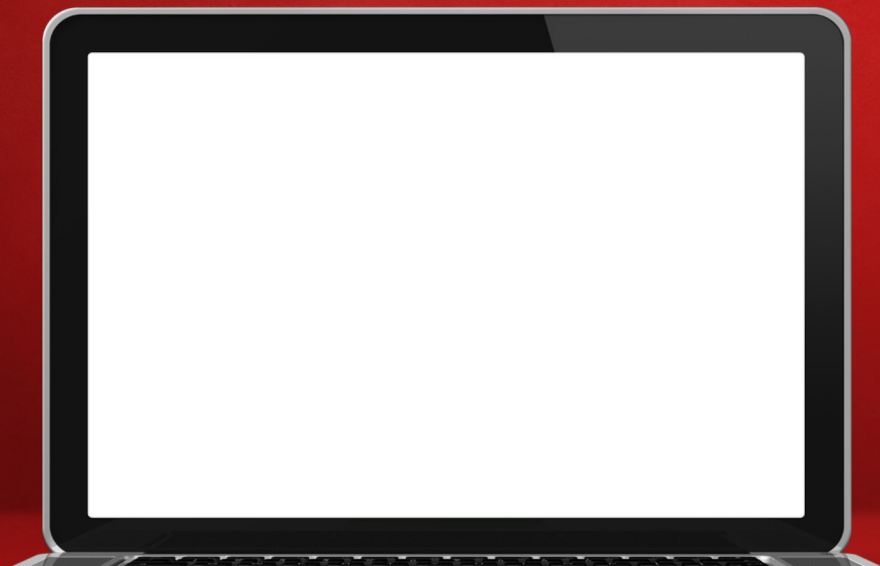
**Therefore, a  
book's ministry  
begins at the  
point of sale.**

**Steve Laube**

# HOW TO NAVIGATE THIS COURSE

As you embark on this journey, remember to pace yourself through each lesson, ensuring thorough comprehension while also progressing steadily. Utilize the resources and tools provided to enhance your learning experience, and consider the workbook as your faithful companion guide, offering additional insights and exercises to reinforce your understanding.

To make the most of this course, we recommend employing effective time management strategies, setting aside dedicated study periods, and staying consistent in your efforts. Remember, the finish line may seem distant at times, but with perseverance and dedication, you'll reach it successfully. Keep pushing forward, stay engaged, and celebrate each milestone along the way!





COMPLETE THE WEEK

# 7 DAY CHALLENGE

**01** INTRODUCTION  
COVER LETTER

**02** HOOK & THEOLOGY OF BOOK BUYING  
SUMMARY

**03** MANUSCRIPT DETAILS  
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**04** THE MARKET ANALYSIS  
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

**05** THE MARKETING PLAN

**06** TABLE OF CONTENTS OR SYNOPSIS  
THE MANUSCRIPT

**07** BONUS MATERIAL  
REST & REFLECT

Complete this course in just one week by watching the videos, diligently completing the learning activities, and utilizing the tools provided daily until you reach the finish line.



# **INTRO Proposal Basics**

**with  
Steve Laube**



# INTRODUCTION

## BOOK PROPOSAL BASICS

### GETTING STARTED: LESSON ONE

In this lesson, Steve discusses the key elements of a successful book proposal, which must showcase an author's skill level and creativity while standing out from the "slush pile." **The three macro elements of a complete proposal are the cover letter, the proposal, and the three sample chapters.**



### TAKE AWAY:

**This could be the most important class you'll ever take in your writing career.**



Without a book proposal, nothing happens.



You could write the greatest book in the world, but no one will ever buy it because no one knows it exists.



Your book proposal is like a job application.

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

# WHAT YOU'LL KNOW

In this section, you'll find a breakdown of the key concepts and skills you'll gain by completing this lesson, helping you understand what to expect and what you'll take away from the session.

01

### **UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A PROPOSAL.**

In the traditional publishing process, the proposal is a foundational document in securing publishing opportunities.

02

### **ANALYZE ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF A BOOK PROPOSAL**

You will be able to identify the respective roles and contributions of the essential elements to the overall book proposal.

03

### **APPLY KNOWLEDGE OF THESE ROLES**

You will apply acquired knowledge to initiate the development of a functional book proposal, demonstrating the ability to outline and organize key elements necessary for pitching to publishers.

04

### **CRAFT A QUALITY PROPOSAL**

You will be able to develop the skill to craft and complete a compelling proposal that will aid in the pursuit of publishing.



# LET'S DO THE WORK

## FIRST IMPRESSIONS

How will you intentionally shape your book's "first impression?"

Look at your proposal like a job application.

## SHARP OR SLOPPY

What are three things you can do to make your proposal "sharper" or more professional?

TIP: Take your time and make sure your proposal is complete, concise, and compelling.

## OUT OF THE SLUSH

What can you do to make sure your proposal stays out of the "slush pile?"

Take in all of the information from this course and apply the knowledge to your proposal.

## OF FIRST IMPORTANCE

Why is the book proposal the most important piece of pitching a book for publish?

Without a proposal, absolutely nothing happens in the industry.

## OPTIONAL RESOURCES & LEARNING ACTIVITIES

# A DEEPER LOOK

Explore the optional resources and learning activities in this section to deepen your understanding and refine your skills, offering invaluable insights and enhancing your craft development in the publishing world.

### STEVE LAUBE'S BLOG

Visit [The Steve Laube Agency Blog](#) for some great insight into book proposals, the basics, and a closer look at the practice of crafting them.

### READ THE EBOOK

Download Steve Laube's "Book Proposal Tips and Tricks." The file is in the Bonus Material section in this course.

### GRAB THE CHECKLIST

In this section of today's lesson, there is a Book Proposal Checklist available for you which covers a quick overview of each segment and its function.

### AN EXERCISE

Read Psalm 145 and reflect on the following two questions.

**WHAT IS YOUR  
MOTIVATION FOR  
WRITING A CHRISTIAN  
BOOK?**

**WHAT DISTINCTIVE  
MESSAGE ARE YOU  
HOPING TO CONVEY  
TO TODAY'S  
CHRISTIAN READER?**

A top-down view of a white desk. In the upper center is a bright red coffee cup filled with black coffee, sitting on a matching red saucer. To the left, a portion of a silver laptop is visible. To the right, a red notebook is partially open. The background is a clean, white surface.

# **PART ONE**

## **Cover Letter**

**Lesson 2**  
The Cover Letter

**with**  
**Steve Laube**



# ELEMENT #1

## THE COVER LETTER

### GETTING STARTED: LESSON 2

In this lesson, Steve discusses the differences between the “query letter” and a “cover letter.” He emphasizes the need to tailor your cover letter for the intended audience. **The Cover Letter should greet the reader, grab their attention, and gain their interest.**



### TAKE AWAY:

**The goal of a cover letter is to say “hello” in a professional manner.**

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

# WHAT YOU'LL KNOW

In this section, you'll find a breakdown of the key concepts and skills you'll gain by completing this lesson, helping you understand what to expect and what you'll take away from the session.

01

### **ANALYZE THE KEY COMPONENTS**

You will be able to analyze the components of a cover letter in a book proposal, identifying key elements and their functions.

02

### **EVALUATE THE CONTENT & STRUCTURE**

You will be able to demonstrate the ability to evaluate the content and structure of a book proposal, distinguishing between the proposal's different major elements.

03

### **CRAFT A DRAFT PROPOSAL**

You will apply your knowledge by synthesizing the information learned to construct a draft of a cover letter for your own book proposal.

# REFLECTION

## SALUTATIONS

How will you intentionally greet a recipient of your proposal?

Try this:

- Personalizing a greeting
- Share why you sent the proposal to this person

## GRAB THE ATTENTION

What can you do to strengthen your content and grab the reader's attention?

TIP: Use developed, edited content that showcases a clear, compelling idea.

## DON'T OVERSELL

Think through how you will avoid superlatives and, instead, explore how to be authentic.

Be unique, but honest. Highlight your personality professionally without attaching other authors or misrepresenting yourself.

## COMPLETE YOUR CONTACT INFO

Avoid the rookie mistake of sending a proposal without all of the information.

Make sure to include all of your contact information. This way, you are reachable and able to respond.



## OPTIONAL RESOURCES & LEARNING ACTIVITIES

# A DEEPER LOOK

Explore the optional resources and learning activities in this section to deepen your understanding and refine your skills, offering invaluable insights and enhancing your craft development in the publishing world.

### STEVE LAUBE'S BLOG

Visit [The Steve Laube Agency's blog](#) to find "Hints for a Great Cover Letter." Here, you'll get a deeper look at how to craft a killer cover letter.

### A MOCK COVER LETTER

Try crafting a mock cover letter for three different people: a friend, a mentor author, and an agent.

### GRAB THE GUIDE

In the Bonus Materials section of this course, there is a 5 Step Guide to Great Cover Letters. This tool can aid you in creating a quality letter.

### DO A PEER REVIEW

Identify specific people who could offer you valuable feedback on your cover letter. Consider friends, mentor authors, or colleagues.

### ASK FOR FEEDBACK.






- Is the tone of the cover letter appropriate for the intended recipient?
- Does the cover letter effectively introduce the manuscript and highlight its key selling points?
- Are there any areas where the language could be strengthened or clarified?
- Does the cover letter address any potential concerns or objections the recipient may have?
- Overall, does the cover letter make a compelling case for why the manuscript should be considered?

LET'S GET TO WORK:

# ACTION CHECKLIST

Stay on track with your progress by using the checklist to ensure completion of each task.

**This workflow is for the Introduction, Lesson One, and Lesson Two.**

-  **Watch the Introduction video, lesson one, and lesson two.**
-  Download the tools provided in the Introduction, Lesson One, and Lesson Two.
-  Review all of the 10 specific elements of a proposal here:
  1. **Cover Letter**
  2. **Hook**
  3. **Summary**
  4. **Manuscript Details**
  5. **Author Bio**
  6. **Market Analysis**
  7. **Competitive Analysis**
  8. **Marketing Plan**
  9. **Synopsis or TOC**
  10. **Three Sample Chapters**
-  Review the Five Steps Guide to a Great Cover Letter
-  TIP: After downloading the Sample Proposal in the Bonus Materials, try printing it and taking notes in each section.



# **PART TWO**

# **PROPOSAL**

## **LESSON 3**

The Hook

## **LESSON 4**

Theology of Book Buying

## **LESSON 5**

The Summary

with

**Steve Laube**



# ELEMENT #2

## THE HOOK

### GETTING STARTED LESSON 3

In this segment, Steve discusses the key role of the proposal in all aspects of the publishing process, from the pitch to print. **Everything begins and ends with the book proposal, from pitch copy to promotional content, the book proposal is a foundational document.**



### TAKE AWAY:

**The Hook should be clearly written, concise and sharp, and contain compelling content.**

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

# WHAT YOU'LL KNOW

In this section, you'll find a breakdown of the key concepts and skills you'll gain by completing this lesson, helping you understand what to expect and what you'll take away from the session.

01



### **UNDERSTAND THE FUNDAMENTAL IMPORTANCE OF CLEAR, COMPELLING, CONTENT**

You will be able to analyze the importance of the content summary or hook in a book proposal, understanding its role in capturing the essence of a book.

02



### **CREATE A KILLER HOOK**

You will be able to demonstrate the ability to distill the concept and motivation of their book into a concise content summary of two sentences.

03



### **APPLY KNOWLEDGE TO BUILD A CONTENT SUMMARY**

You will apply principles of clarity and compelling communication to create an effective content summary for a book proposal.

04

### **PROVIDE MANUSCRIPT DETAILS**

You will be able to develop the skill to craft and communicate accurate word counts and deliverables.

# REFLECTION

## THE SOUND BYTE

How would you distill your book idea into a single, attention-grabbing sentence?

What is your book's central idea or theme?

## THE 20 SECOND RULE

What are the things you look for in a book you'll buy?

TIP: Think of these things when you craft your own content.

## WHAT PIQUES YOUR INTEREST?

What part of your idea gets you excited to share about it?

Jot down your thoughts here.

## WHAT GETS PEOPLE'S ATTENTION?

Review successful hooks from the best-selling titles in your genre.

What elements do they have in common?



# THE THEOLOGY OF BOOK BUYING

## GETTING STARTED: LESSON 4

In this segment, Steve discusses the belief that books only have a ministry when they are read. Therefore, a book's ministry begins at the point of sale. In order for the book to be sold, it has to be published. And to be published, the proposal has to be compelling.



## TAKE AWAY:

**Books have to be bought to be read.**

# REFLECTION

## THE MINISTRY

What do you think is the ministry of a book, specifically your book?

Your book must be read in order for it to serve your audience. How does this motivate your desire to craft a quality proposal?

## WHY YOU?

Why is your reader looking for you? It matters.

Can you identify why your reader is specifically looking for you to lead them, teach them, or encourage them?

## DO YOU PROMISE?

What “promise” are you making when you write a book for a target segment?

Do you know what your reader wants from you? And, can you deliver it?

# ELEMENT #3

## THE SUMMARY

### GETTING STARTED: LESSON 5

The summary element of a book proposal provides a concise yet comprehensive overview of the entire manuscript. It encapsulates the essence of the book, including its main themes, key plot points, and unique selling points. **This section aims to hook the reader's interest and provide a clear understanding of what the book is about, enticing agents and publishers to delve deeper into the proposal.**



### TAKE AWAY:

**The summary, or back cover copy, encapsulates the essence of your book.**

# REFLECTION

## FIND THE CENTRAL THEME

Spend some time identifying the central theme of your book and build your core concept.

Jot down your thoughts.

## FOCUS ON THE PROBLEM

Your core concept should address a conflict or a problem.

What is the problem you are aiming to solve?

## WHAT RESONATES?

What aspects of your book resonate with your target audience?

Jot down some bullet points here.

## HIGHLIGHT DISTINCTIVES

Showcase your unique position, beliefs, or qualifications in the content.

What makes your book unique?



## OPTIONAL RESOURCES & LEARNING ACTIVITIES

# A DEEPER LOOK

Explore the optional resources and learning activities in this section to deepen your understanding and refine your skills, offering invaluable insights and enhancing your craft development in the publishing world.

### STEVE LAUBE'S BLOG

[Visit the Steve Laube Agency blog and read the series of articles under the topic "Book Proposal Basics."](#)

### READ THE EBOOK

Download Steve Laube's "Book Proposal Tips and Tricks." The file is in the Bonus Material section in Teachable.

### GRAB THE CONTENT SUMMARY TEMPLATE

Scroll down below the video in this lesson to find the free Check Point Guide to help you build a core content summary.

### AN EXERCISE

Brainstorm for a moment. Identify key themes, evidence, and core beliefs that make up your book.

### ASK FOR FEEDBACK

What title best encapsulates your book?

Who do you hope to serve?

What is the central idea of your book?

What makes you, or your voice, unique?

How will readers benefit from your book?

What emotions do you hope to evoke in your reader?

What is your ultimate goal or call to action?

LET'S GET TO WORK:

# ACTION CHECKLIST

Stay on track with your progress by using the checklist to ensure completion of each task for



Watch the videos for Lessons 3, 4, and 5. Make sure to download the accompanying resources.



Review the resources and tools from these lessons. Consider these additional questions when working through your hook and the summary.



Download the accompanying worksheets and resources to complete the assigned activities.

**NOTES:**



# **PART TWO PROPOSAL**

## **LESSON 6**

Manuscript Details

## **LESSON 7**

About the Author

**with**

**Steve Laube**

# ELEMENT #4

## MANUSCRIPT DETAILS

### GETTING STARTED LESSON 6

The manuscript detail portion of a book proposal offers a detailed insight into the content and scope of the book manuscript. **It typically includes information such as the manuscript's title, genre, word count, and target audience.** This section also outlines any unique features or themes present in the manuscript.



### TAKE AWAY:

**The manuscript details provides agents and publishers with essential details to assess its marketability and potential appeal to readers.**



# REFLECTION

## BREAK IT DOWN

How will you calculate your word count? How much time have you budgeted to complete the work?



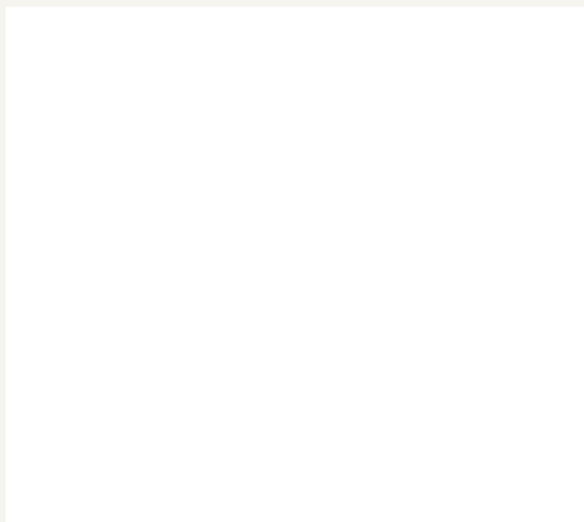
## THE GENRE

Do you know the typical word count for other books in your selected genre?



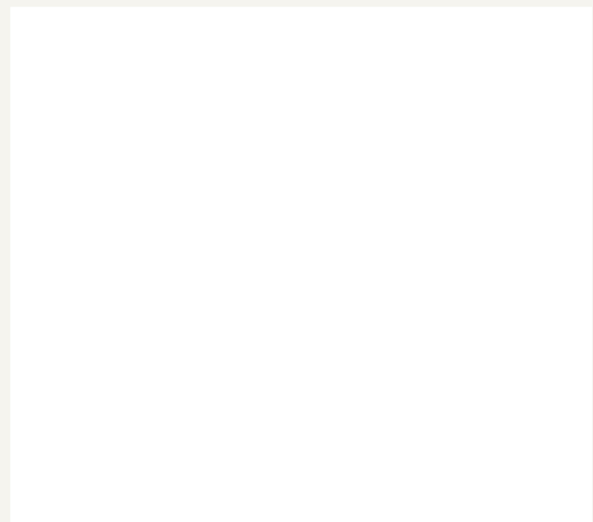
## PLAN FOR THE WORK

What can you do to make sure you can complete the manuscript on time?



## MILESTONE MARKERS

What are the key milestones for tracking progress?



## OPTIONAL RESOURCES & LEARNING ACTIVITIES

# A DEEPER LOOK

Explore the optional resources and learning activities in this section to deepen your understanding and refine your skills, offering invaluable insights and enhancing your craft development in the publishing world.

### STEVE LAUBE'S BLOG

[Visit the Steve Laube Agency blog and read "Five Reasons You May Never Get Published"](#)

### READ THE EBOOK

Download Steve Laube's "Book Proposal Tips and Tricks." The file is in the Bonus Material section of this course.

### GRAB THE MANUSCRIPT DETAILS WORKSHEET

Scroll down below the video in this lesson to find a Manuscript worksheet which allows you to create and craft a great hook.

### AN EXERCISE PEER REVIEW

Swap proposals with a fellow author or ask a friend to review the draft work of your proposal so far.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK:

How much time do I have to finish the manuscript?

What big events are scheduled this season that I need to account for?

Are there any upcoming personal or professional commitments that could impact my writing schedule?

What is the current status of my manuscript (outline, first draft, revisions)?

How many words have I written so far, and how many do I still need to write to reach my target word count?

# ELEMENT #5

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

## GETTING STARTED LESSON 7

In this lesson, Steve discusses the next element, the author biography. An author bio is crucial in a book proposal as it establishes the author's credibility and expertise, demonstrating why they are the right person to write the book. **It provides publishers with a snapshot of the author's background, achievements, and unique qualifications, enhancing the proposal's appeal.**



### TAKE AWAY:

**This is your chance to share more about yourself, to showcase your unique experiences or qualifications to write on your topic of interest.**

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

# WHAT YOU'LL KNOW

In this segment, you will learn the importance of an author bio in a book proposal, including how it helps establish your credibility and captures a publisher's interest.

01

### **UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF AN AUTHOR BIO**

You'll grasp why a well-crafted author bio is essential in establishing your credibility and capturing a publisher's interest.

02

### **IDENTIFY KEY COMPONENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE BIO**

You'll be able to pinpoint the crucial elements that make your bio compelling and relevant to your book proposal.

03

### **CREATE A PROFESSIONAL AND ENGAGING AUTHOR BIO**

You'll apply your knowledge to write a bio that highlights your expertise, achievements, and unique qualifications, ensuring it aligns with your book's theme and target audience.

04

### **REFINE YOUR BIO THROUGH FEEDBACK**

You'll learn how to seek and incorporate constructive feedback to polish your bio, making it as impactful and persuasive as possible.



# REFLECTION

## WHAT MAKES ME UNIQUE?

What unique experiences or qualifications do I have that make me an authority on the subject of my book?

## WHAT'S MY PASSION?

How can I best convey my passion and commitment to the topic in a way that will engage potential publishers and readers?

## WHAT ARE MY CREDENTIALS?

Are there any personal anecdotes or achievements that can make my bio more compelling and relatable.

## WHAT EXPERIENCES DO I HAVE TO SHARE?

How does my background and expertise align with the themes and goals of my book, and how can I highlight this connection in my bio?

## OPTIONAL RESOURCES & LEARNING ACTIVITIES

# A DEEPER LOOK

Explore the optional resources and learning activities in this section to deepen your understanding and refine your skills, offering invaluable insights and enhancing your craft development in the publishing world.

### STEVE LAUBE'S BLOG

Visit the Steve Laube Agency blog and check out the Christian Publishing Show podcast called "[How to Find Your Courage as an Author.](#)"

### READ THE EBOOK

Download Steve Laube's "Book Proposal Tips and Tricks." The file is in the Bonus Material section in this course.

### GRAB THE AUTHOR BIO TEMPLATE

Scroll down below the video in this lesson to find a worksheet which allows you to create and craft a great author bio.

### AN EXERCISE WRITE A DRAFT

Write a draft of your author bio using the provided template, then refine it based on the checklist and examples.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK:

Does the bio effectively communicate the individual's professional background and achievements?

Are the key milestones and accomplishments presented clearly and concisely?

Does the bio provide insight into the individual's personal interests or values?

Are there any areas where additional information or clarification would enhance the bio?

LET'S GET TO WORK:

# ACTION CHECKLIST

Stay on track with your progress by using the checklist to ensure completion of each task for Lessons 6 & 7.



Watch the videos for Lessons 6 and 7. Make sure to download the accompanying resources.



Download the Manuscript Details and Author Bio Template worksheets and complete the activities.



Review the resources and tools from these lessons. Consider these additional questions when working through Author Bio and Manuscript details:

**What genre does your book fit into best?**

**What is your target word count?**

**What is the plan to complete the work?**

NOTES:



# **PART TWO PROPOSAL**

## **LESSON 8**

The Market

Analysis

**AND**

The Competitive

Analysis

**with**

**Steve Laube**



# ELEMENT #6

# A MARKET ANALYSIS

## GETTING STARTED LESSON 8

The market analysis section of a book proposal serves as a strategic examination of the target audience, competitive landscape, and potential market opportunities for the proposed book. **It provides publishers with valuable insights into the book's commercial viability, helping them gauge its potential success in the marketplace.**



### TAKE AWAY:

**This section answers these questions:**  
**Who is going to buy the book?**  
**Why will they buy it?**  
**Where will it be positioned?**

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

# WHAT YOU'LL KNOW

In this section, you will delve into the market analysis, a critical aspect of your book proposal. You'll learn to assess your target audience, evaluate competition, and develop a strategic plan to effectively position your book in the marketplace.

01

### IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

Identify and analyze the target audience for your book, including their demographics, preferences, and buying behavior, to tailor your marketing efforts effectively.

02

### EVALUATE COMPARABLE TITLES

Evaluate the competitive landscape within your book's genre or niche, identifying existing titles, their strengths, weaknesses, and market positioning to differentiate your book effectively.

03

### DEVELOP YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR AUDIENCE

Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy based on your market analysis findings, including promotional tactics, distribution channels, and engagement methods to maximize visibility and reach.

04

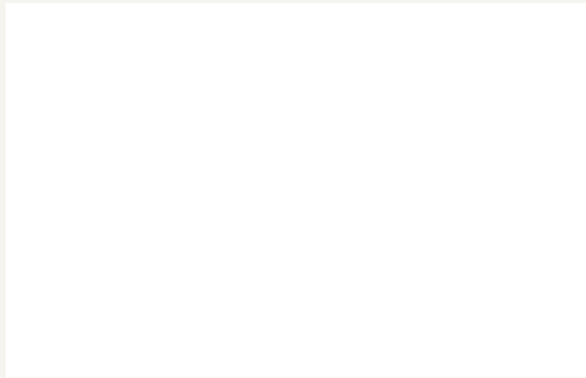
### CRAFT YOUR UNIQUE SELLING POSITION

Apply market research techniques and tools to gather data, analyze trends, and make informed decisions about your book's positioning, pricing, and potential for success in the marketplace.

# REFLECTION

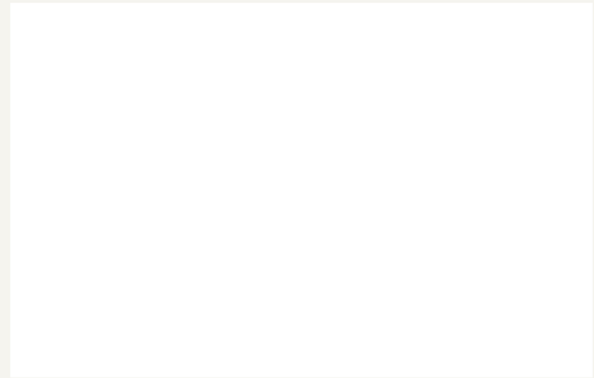
## DEMOGRAPHIC

What demographic factors influence the target audience for my book, and how can I tailor my marketing strategy to reach them effectively?



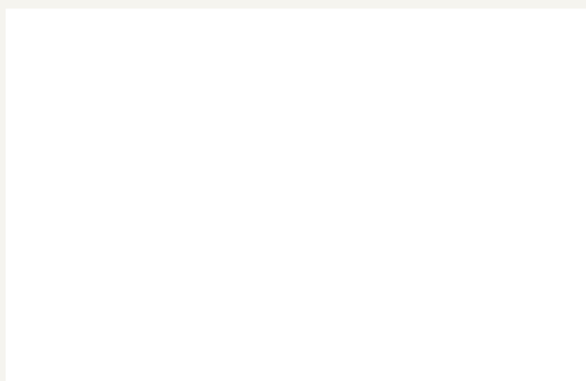
## WHAT MAKES YOU UNIQUE?

What unique selling points does my book offer compared to existing titles in the market, and how can I capitalize on them in my promotional efforts?



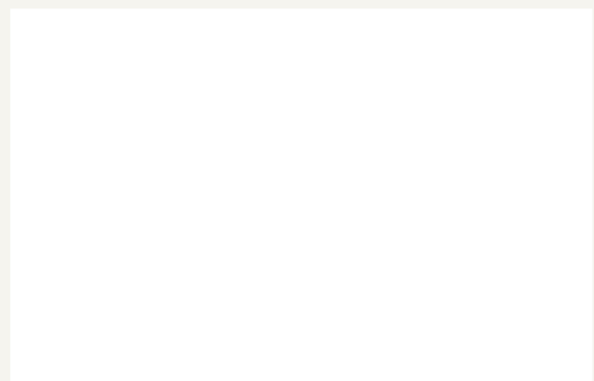
## FIND OPPORTUNITIES

What potential opportunities exist in the market that I can leverage to enhance the visibility and sales of my book?



## WEAKNESSES?

How can I address any weaknesses or threats identified in my market analysis to mitigate risks and maximize the success of my book launch?



## OPTIONAL RESOURCES & LEARNING ACTIVITIES

# A DEEPER LOOK

Explore the optional resources and learning activities in this section to deepen your understanding and refine your skills, offering invaluable insights and enhancing your craft development in the publishing world.

### STEVE LAUBE'S BLOG

Visit the Steve Laube Agency blog and read "[Finding an Audience.](#)"

### READ THE EBOOK

Download Steve Laube's "Book Proposal Tips and Tricks." The file is in the Bonus Material section of this course.

### GRAB THE QUESTIONNAIRE

In the Bonus Materials section, there is a Market Analysis Questionnaire available for you which covers a quick overview of a marketing analysis.

### AN EXERCISE DO THE RESEARCH

Conduct research on your target audience and competing books in your genre. Use online resources such as Amazon, Goodreads, and industry reports to gather relevant data.

### COMPARE YOUR BOOK TO SIMILAR TITLES IN TERMS OF CONTENT, STYLE, AND AUDIENCE APPEAL.

### ANALYZE THEIR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES TO IDENTIFY AREAS WHERE YOUR BOOK CAN STAND OUT.

# ELEMENT #7

# COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

## CONTINUING LESSON 8

The competitive analysis section of a book proposal serves as a crucial component in positioning your manuscript within the marketplace. **By examining similar works within your genre or niche, you gain valuable insights into existing market trends, reader preferences, and competitor strategies.**



### TAKE AWAY:

**This analysis not only helps you identify unique selling points for your book but also enables you to craft a compelling argument for why your manuscript stands out amidst existing offerings, ultimately increasing its appeal to agents, editors, and publishers.**



## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

# WHAT YOU'LL KNOW

In this section, you will dive into the critical aspect of competitive analysis within book proposals. You will gain valuable insights into how to research and evaluate competing titles in their genre or niche, enabling you to position their manuscript effectively within the market.

01

### IDENTIFY YOUR COMPETITION

You will be able to identify and analyze competing titles relevant to your manuscript's genre or niche, highlighting key similarities and differences.

02

### EVALUATE SUCCESSFUL COMPARABLE TITLES

You will be able to develop the skills to assess market trends and reader preferences by examining sales figures, reviews, and author profiles of competing works.

03

### LEVERAGE INSIGHTS

You will be able to demonstrate an understanding of how to leverage competitive analysis findings to identify unique selling points for your manuscript and refine your book proposal accordingly.

04

### CRAFT YOUR COMPARABLES SECTION

You will be able to apply your knowledge by crafting a comprehensive competitive analysis section for your own book proposal, integrating research findings and strategic insights effectively.

# REFLECTION

## WHAT INSIGHTS DID YOU GLEAN?

What were the most surprising insights or discoveries you encountered while conducting your competitive analysis?

## WHAT CHANGED?

How did your understanding of the competitive landscape within your genre or niche evolve throughout this process?

## NEW INFLUENCE?

In what ways did the competitive analysis influence your approach to positioning your manuscript within the market?

## A STRATEGY

What strategies or techniques did you find most effective in gathering and analyzing data for your competitive analysis?

## OPTIONAL RESOURCES & LEARNING ACTIVITIES

# A DEEPER LOOK

Explore the optional resources and learning activities in this section to deepen your understanding and refine your skills, offering invaluable insights and enhancing your craft development in the publishing world.

### STEVE LAUBE'S BLOG

Visit the Steve Laube Agency blog and read the articles about finding comparables for Fiction. [Start here.](#)

### READ THE EBOOK

Download Steve Laube's "Book Proposal Tips and Tricks." The file is in the Bonus Material section in of this course.

### GRAB THE WORKFLOW

Scroll down below the video in this lesson to find a workflow document to help you complete a comparable analysis.

### AN EXERCISE DO THE RESEARCH

Research comparable titles within your genre by utilizing online resources like Amazon, Goodreads, or websites like Christianbook.com to collect pertinent data.

# ELEMENT #8

# THE MARKETING PLAN

## GETTING STARTED LESSON 8

The market analysis section of a book proposal serves as a strategic examination of the target audience, competitive landscape, and potential market opportunities for the proposed book. **It provides publishers with valuable insights into the book's commercial viability, helping them gauge its potential success in the marketplace.**



### TAKE AWAY:

**This section answers this question:  
How are you going to make your audience  
want to buy your work?**

# ELEMENT #9

## TABLE OF CONTENTS OR A SYNOPSIS

### GETTING STARTED LESSON 9

The **Table of Contents (TOC) for nonfiction writers** and the **synopsis for fiction writers** serve as vital components of a book proposal. For nonfiction writers, the TOC provides a detailed outline of the book's structure, showcasing the organization and flow of the content.



### TAKE AWAY:

- This annotated TOC highlights key topics and the logical progression of ideas, giving publishers a clear roadmap of the book.
- For fiction writers, the synopsis delivers a concise summary of the plot, major characters, and key themes, presenting the story in a way that captures the essence and allure of the narrative.
- Both sections are crucial as they offer publishers an in-depth look at the book's content and structure, aiding in their decision-making process.



## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

# WHAT YOU'LL KNOW

The marketing plan section of a book proposal outlines your strategy for promoting and selling your book. It demonstrates to publishers that you have a clear, actionable plan to reach your target audience and drive sales.

01

### **IDENTIFY THE IMPORTANCE OF A TOC/ SYNOPSIS**

**You will learn** to create an annotated Table of Contents that clearly outlines the structure and flow of your nonfiction book, highlighting key topics and sections.

02

### **DETERMINE WHICH YOU WILL WRITE**

**You will learn** to differentiate between the requirements and purposes of a Table of Contents for nonfiction and a synopsis for fiction, ensuring you use the correct format for your proposal.

03

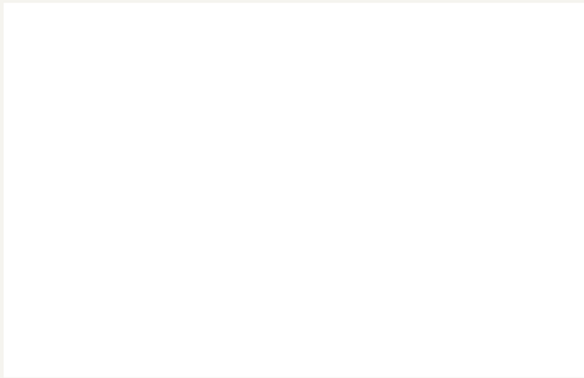
### **DEVELOP MARKETABILITY WITH THIS CONTENT**

**You will learn** to use the TOC or synopsis to demonstrate the marketability and appeal of your book to potential publishers.

# REFLECTION

## GET IT IN ORDER NON-FICTION

How does my annotated TOC clearly reflect the structure and logical progression of my nonfiction book



## IS THE PLOT CAPTURED? FICTION

In what ways does my synopsis succinctly capture the plot, major characters, and key themes of my fiction book?



## WHAT COULD I DO?

Have I highlighted the most compelling and marketable aspects of my book in my TOC or synopsis?



## COULD I IMPROVE?

How can I improve my TOC or synopsis to better engage and interest potential publishers?



## OPTIONAL RESOURCES & LEARNING ACTIVITIES

# A DEEPER LOOK

Explore the optional resources and learning activities in this section to deepen your understanding and refine your skills, offering invaluable insights and enhancing your craft development in the publishing world.

### STEVE LAUBE'S BLOG

Visit the Steve Laube Agency blog and read "[Book Proposals: The Nonfiction Annotated Outline](#)." For Fiction, read the article, "[Synopsis, Series, and Sample](#)."

### READ THE EBOOK

Download Steve Laube's "Book Proposal Tips and Tricks." The file is in the Bonus Material section in this course.

### GRAB THE TEMPLATE

Scroll below the video to find a template for building a nonfiction TOC or a synopsis. Check it out!

### AN EXERCISE WRITE IT DOWN

Create an annotated Table of Contents for your nonfiction book, detailing the main topics and subtopics of each chapter. Include brief annotations explaining the significance and content of each section.

### OR

Write a one-page synopsis for your fiction book. Focus on summarizing the plot, major characters, and key themes in a way that is both concise and compelling.

LET'S GET TO WORK:

# ACTION CHECKLIST

Stay on track with your progress by using the checklist to ensure completion of each lesson.



Watch the video for the Annotated Outline or the synopsis.



Review the guides provided in the course material and complete the activities.  
\*optional

**NOTES:**

LET'S CHECK IN.

# ASSESSMENT

		YES	NO
1	I understand the importance of a book proposal in the traditional publishing process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	I can identify the key elements that should be included in a cover letter.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	I can effectively communicate the concept of my book in a clear and compelling manner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	I can accurately calculate and provide the word count for my manuscript.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	I can write a professional and engaging author bio that highlights my qualifications and experience.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	I can identify and analyze comparable books in the market to position my book effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	I can critically evaluate how my book compares to others in the market, highlighting its unique strengths.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	I can identify potential endorsers, media opportunities, and promotion strategies to support my book launch.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>





# RESOURCE LIBRARY



## CHRISTIAN WRITERS MARKET GUIDE

The 2024 Christian Writers Market Guide is the most comprehensive and recommended resource on the market for finding an agent, an editor, a publisher, a writing coach, a podcast, or a writing course.

[MORE INFO](#)



## WRITE YOUR FIRST NOVEL

This book will revolutionize the way you write and create stories! With step-by-step instructions from two publishing veterans, you'll learn the essential elements of plot, character development, dialogue, and setting.

[MORE INFO](#)

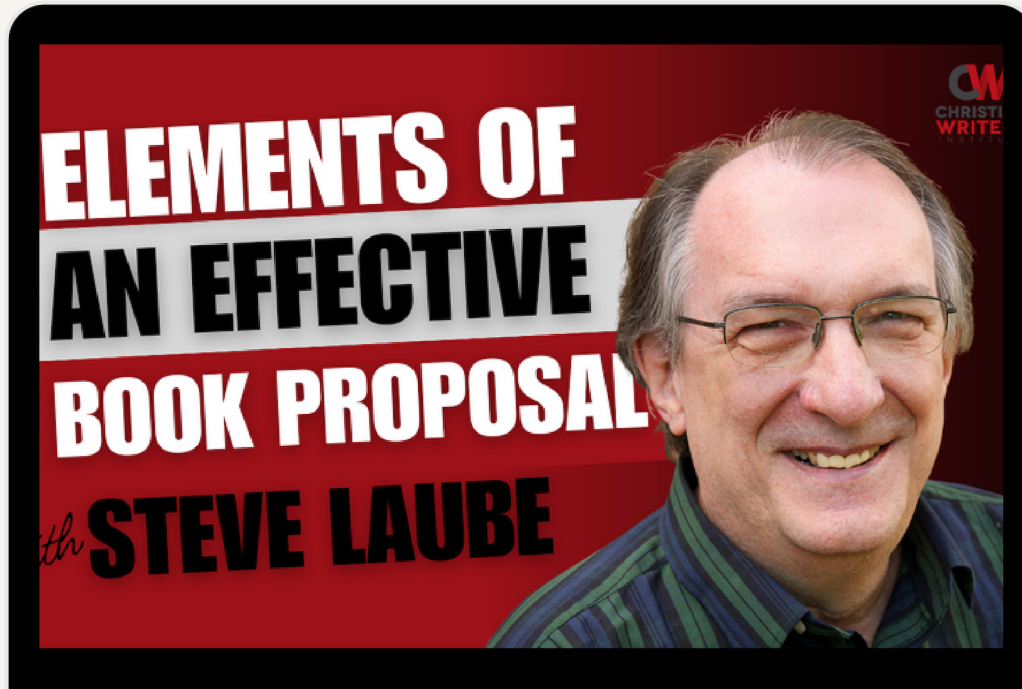


## CHRISTIAN WRITERS INSTITUTE

The Christian Writers Institute was created to help Christians become proficient in the skills, craft, and business of writing. To build the Kingdom of God word-by-word.

[MORE INFO](#)

ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE  
BOOK PROPOSAL  
WITH STEVE LAUBE



## WE TEACH WRITERS

The Christian Writers Institute was created to help Christians become proficient in the skills, craft, and business of writing. To build the Kingdom of God word-by-word. It does so by providing a wide variety of courses taught by some of the industry's best teachers. In addition, the Institute publishes a number of books on writing for writers, including The Christian Writers Market Guide. Originally founded in 1945, it is estimated that over 30,000 students have been trained by the Christian Writers Institute.

[VISIT US](#)

WE HAVE A TON OF RESOURCES

# 7 SECRETS OF AMAZING AUTHOR WEBSITES

Thomas Umstattd, the CEO of [AuthorMedia](#), built his first website at the age of 13 and has been helping people use the web ever since. Thomas is an [award-winning speaker](#) on the subject of marketing and technology. Author Media is the company behind popular WordPress plugins like [MyBookTable](#) and [MyBookProgress](#).

[PREVIEW HERE](#)



# YOU DID IT! CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations on completing the Elements of an Effective Book Proposal course! Your dedication and hard work have equipped you with the essential skills and knowledge to craft a compelling book proposal. The CWI Team is thrilled to have been a part of your journey and cannot wait to see your success in the publishing world.

Thank you for your commitment to learning and for being an active participant in our course. We hope the insights and strategies you've gained will greatly benefit you as you pursue your publishing goals.

Wishing you all the best in your writing and publishing endeavors!

*Sincerely,*

The CWI Team