



Publishing Nonfiction Books on Spirituality
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MODULE 3
TRADITIONAL PUBLISHING

Template for Query Letter to Send Traditional Publishers

By now you should have completed the video “The Submissions Process” for Module 3. I talked a bit about my experiences with the submissions process and the query letter that landed me my first book deal. Now let’s talk about your query letter. On the subsequent pages, you will find an explanatory template that outlines the structure of a standard query letter, one sent by U.S. post and the other by electronic mail.

Keep your query letters short, easy to read, and in line with the style and tone that you take in your book.

When submitting query letters, you must check each publisher’s specific guidelines for submissions. Although there are general similarities, you want to meet each publisher’s specific guidelines to the tee. This is the time to conform so that you get the chance to stand out later. The query letter is not the place to be unconventional or avant garde, or at least that has been my experience. Of course, there are exceptions to that rule and I happily welcome you to take a risk and try for the exception.

Some publishers allow electronic submissions. If and when submitting queries by electronic mail, the general rule is do not attach any files to the email. Copy and paste all text you want to send to the publisher in the inline of the e-mail.

Other publishers do not accept electronic submissions and prefer that you mail your query by U.S. post.

The best and pretty much only good advice I can possibly give about query letters is (1) follow the publisher’s submission guidelines to the tee and (2) keep it short and concise.

Also: **SEND INDIVIDUALLY-TAILORED QUERY LETTERS ONE BY ONE TO EACH DIFFERENT PUBLISHING HOUSE. DO NOT EVER MASS-MAIL YOUR QUERY.**



USE IF SENT BY U.S. POST

Your Name
Address Line 1
Address Line 2
Telephone Number
Email Address

Date of Letter

Attn: Editor Name (Be Specific)
Department or Editor Title
Publisher Company Name
Address Line 1
Address Line 2

Re: Query for a Nonfiction Book on _____

Dear Mr./Ms. Editor Name:

(How did you come across this publisher and why specifically have you chosen to query this publisher over others)

(About your book: include title, total word count, total number of image files or tables, if applicable, and summarize the book in 1-3 sentences)

(List two comparable titles published within the last 5 years or note that there are no books on the market right now on this topic; distinguish your book from the comparables—why is your book different and special)

(Assure that the completed manuscript is available for review and you will mail it immediately upon request. Thank the editor)

Yours Sincerely,
(Your Name)

Enclosures

USE IF SENT BY ELECTRONIC MAIL
(TEXT ONLY; DO NOT USE ANY HTML)

[Email Subject Line: Most publishers will specify exactly how your subject line needs to appear, e.g., "Submission for Nonfiction..." so you should follow each publisher's set guidelines. If none are specified, a good rule of thumb is to include either the word "Submission" or "Query"]

To: editor@email-address.com
Cc: another.editor@email-address.com
Re: Query for a Nonfiction Book on _____

Date of Letter

Attn: Editor Name from the "To" Line Above (Be Specific)
Department or Editor Title
Publisher Company Name

Dear Mr./Ms. Editor Name:

(How did you come across this publisher and why specifically have you chosen to query this publisher over others)

(About your book: include title, total word count, total number of image files or tables, if applicable, and summarize the book in 1-3 sentences)

(List two comparable titles published within the last 5 years or note that there are no books on the market right now on this topic; distinguish your book from the comparables—why is your book different and special)

(Assure that the completed manuscript is available for review and you will mail it immediately upon request. Thank the editor)

Yours Sincerely,
(Your Name)

Enclosures
Cc: Editor Name from the "Cc" Line Above (if any)

[Requested Documents Below]

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(Copy and paste as text only the requested documents, e.g., proposal, table of contents, sample chapters, etc.)