

How to Prepare a Non-Fiction Query Letter

This is an extra resource to go along with the original article:

[How to Pitch Your Non-Fiction Manuscript Like a Pro](#)

As a quick reminder, a query letter is essentially a one-page cover letter that introduces you and your book. It should be about three paragraphs—a hook, a description, and a short bio.

There's no real reason to try to get creative here, but there are some things you should be aware of before sending queries to publishing companies.

Step One: Create a Lead-In or Hook

You need to put together an introduction that grabs the literary agent's attention. You'll need to switch gears a bit from when you wrote the book and think like a journalist. Lead with the most compelling information to hook the reader. The idea is to get them interested enough from the get-go to keep reading.

If you're approaching an individual agent, you may want to mention why you're pitching this person or how you know them—did you hear them speak at a conference? Did someone refer you? If there's some sort of "in" be sure to make it known.

Step Two: Go in For the Pitch

Here, you'll pitch the benefits of your book, along with the general mood and genre. While this could easily go on for multiple paragraphs, less is more. In fact, you should aim for 25 words or less.

Additionally, this may be an excellent place to add cover quotes or mention whether someone has offered to write the book's foreword.

Step Three: Why You?

The third paragraph should be a short bio that covers why you're the right person to write this book. Explain your education, expertise, author's platform and anything else that gives you some credibility.

Finally, Make Sure You Proofread

Edit and proofread your query letter several times over. This is your first contact with publishers and agents, and they'll likely toss your proposal aside if you make careless mistakes.

You spent all that time putting together a great story, but the finishing touches need to be on point if you want to make it to the next level.