

NO, THANK YOU

REJECTED

You Can Write Books

**Break Through the Brick
Wall of Rejection—Fast!**

By Andrew John and Stephen Blake

PLEASE GO AWAY!

DON'T CALL US

This book will tell you how *you* can find the gaps in the brick wall of rejection, write a book and get it published. That's right: *you* can be an author. *We* became authors, and soon had a dozen books to our names. They were not self-published. We'll tell you how *you* can do it—quickly and easily.

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Introduction: What This Book Can Do for You

Rejection letters land in a million mailboxes a day. They can be depressing. In fact, they can make you want to decide that writing was never the thing for you right from the start. *It doesn't have to be that way.* Do you want to know more? We'll tell you how we wrote a dozen books that sell—and they were *not* self-published: the publisher paid us, *not* the other way round. Were they easy to write and research? You bet!

Why do you want to write? Is it because you feel you've got something to say? Maybe it's because you think it will make money—it can! Perhaps it will make you feel good about yourself, useful, valued—it does! People write for all of these reasons and more besides, but for every writer who gets within sniffing distance of a published work there are hundreds—possibly thousands—who just never make it. Why?

Some try again, with dogged determination but no more success. A few do go on to make it. Most get disillusioned—and give up.

We know this. We've been there. We tried lots of really good book proposals on lots of publishers and agents, but all were turned down. We thought we would never make it onto the shelves of the bookstores—and we were even working in the publishing business as freelance editors!

We didn't keep hitting our heads against that brick wall of rejection the way most people do. We took time out to figure out why we were getting nowhere fast. After all, we were in the books business already, so we knew that the *quality* of what we were

writing was OK. So what were we missing? The mistake we made was obvious, so obvious that we couldn't see it. We thought book publishers were in the business of publishing books, but they're not!

It was something that we realized by accident while we searched the pages of Amazon on the Internet, while we browsed the shelves in bookstores, while we talked with successful writers about why it is that some get the breaks while others don't—even if they've got a darned good idea that *demand*s to be published and to sell.

Once you know how, writing books isn't hard

You don't have to be a creative genius—although a little creativity helps. You don't have to be the world's best grammarian—although some knowledge of the nuts and bolts of English helps (but don't worry too much about that: there's help aplenty in these pages).

What you *do* need is to understand what book publishing is *really* all about, and a little imagination to use this knowledge. We will show you:

- what the publishing industry is really all about and how to avoid the common mistakes that mean rejection and failure;
- how to harness your natural creativity to come up with books the publishers will *really* want to publish;
- the research tools and other techniques you will need to write successful books *fast*;
- how to structure a book that publishers will *want* to buy from you;
- how to ensure that your grammar, punctuation, and consistency are just right and why this is so crucial in today's publishing world; and

You Can Write Books

- how to get your idea before a publisher—the right way—and get noticed.

This book is your guide to how to make it into the world of the published author without a lot of hard work and a thousand rejection letters.

It is also packed with advice on how to put together your proposal, how to structure your book, and, yes, how to write it.

You Can Write Books will help you to do all that. As well as many tips and much advice along the way, at the end of each chapter is a helpful summary of what you've read, and at the end of the book is the Bibliography, containing some well-chosen book titles and website addresses that will be useful to you in your new career as a successful published author.

Do you want to be an author? Of course you do. Read on!

1

Writing is Not Just for the Elite: Anybody Can Become a Writer

Imagine the scene. You're browsing in your local bookstore and just can't keep your eyes off those books with the red/yellow/green spines with the black/white/gold lettering up there on the shelf a little to the right of where you're standing. Why are you looking at these spines? Why, *because they have your name on them*, of course. However, you're trying very hard not to be so obvious about it. (After all, you're a very modest person!)

But you still can't suppress that wonderful buzz—that feeling of elation that we've all felt when something really good has happened to us—at seeing those copies of *your book* on the shelf. Then there's another jolt of elation when somebody picks up your book and browses through it—and yet another buzz when she takes it to the sales clerk and actually hands over money for it.

But to get a book published you have to sit in your room, slaving over a hot typewriter or word processor for three years and produce a hundred thousand words, right? Then you spend the next six months polishing and editing, right? Then, when you've approached a dozen publishers with your idea and been

rejected, you're thoroughly dejected and vow never to write another word for publication, right?

Wrong, wrong, and wrong. In that order.

You can produce books easily by knowing how to research and then how to present what you've found in a form that will please a publisher—that will make the publisher say, “This is one that will sell!”

Before you should even think about what to write, you have to know what is likely to make a successful book. To know this you've got to understand first what the publishing industry is really all about. Without this knowledge you are doomed, as are most people who try writing books, to failure. Because this is such a crucial key factor in your success, the next chapter is devoted to this.

Once you know how to come up with winning ideas you need to know how to craft the book into a form the publisher will love. If you don't do this right, you're still going to be disappointed by a rejection. This all-important aspect is covered in depth in *You Can Write Books*. The chapters that follow cover each and every one of the skills you will need to produce a well-crafted book. Once you've decided on the book you're going to write you need to consider:

- what the **publisher really needs**;
- **ideas** for your book;
- **researching** your book, using both online and offline resources;
- how you're going to **structure** your book;
- how you're going to **marshal** and **organize** your information;
- using the source information to **write** stories, sections or

chapters *in your own words*;

- putting **headings** (preferably amusing ones) on your chapters and on sections within chapters;
- using the skills you'll read in Chapters 6 and 7 to ensure that your manuscript is **acceptable to a publisher**, which means the **grammar** and **punctuation** are as they should be and it's written in a **readable, enjoyable** style; and
- writing an **approach letter** and a **sample chapter** or two, along with an outline of your proposed book.

Once you have chosen the right book to write and have used the steps above to craft it, you will soon see that, with the right formula, you *can* sell an idea to a publisher. Once the publisher has said, "Yes, we'll take your manuscript," you agree a deadline and a few other things, and off you go. Suddenly, you're a writer.

As the title of this chapter tells you, writing is not for just a few brainy individuals whom you see and hear on the talk shows, telling you how they've made several million dollars with their fourth bestseller and how Steven Spielberg has bought the film rights to the first three. There are writers at all levels, and most of them started low and worked their way up.

It's not all fiction—and that's a fact

Most published authors are not writers of fiction. This is a very important point to remember, so we'll say it again. *Most published authors are not writers of fiction.* Many people aspire to be, and probably give up if they can't get their opus, which they've sweated over for five years, before the eyes of a commissioning editor. But what many people fail to notice is that there's a lot of *nonfiction* out there—far more than there is fiction. *Somebody* is writing this—why isn't it you? Every example of the printed word you pick up every day has been

written by someone—and that someone is *getting paid* to write it. You do not need to be an expert in anything to write successful books; in fact, it is probably better if you are not, for reasons you will see in the next chapter.

With a little imagination and the knowledge you will gain from this book, you can put together books that publishers will want to sell and people will want to buy—and buy again. Why? Because, when they read them, they feel informed, entertained, and amused. You can find books in every bookstore—in real space or cyberspace—that have these qualities, and they are not difficult to write, once you know how.

And *how* is exactly what you will learn in this book.