

7 Essentials to Writing an Award-Worthy Book

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1. Research your readers.

- Talk to readers.
- Run a focus group.
- Survey core audience (group on social media, email list, etc.)
- Find beta readers in your target market.
- Research comp books' Amazon Reviews. What do readers say they want/like/need?

2. Consider timely topics and trends in title, chapters, and perspectives. For example:

- Diversity and inclusion
- Civil society
- Appealing to young people
- Technology and innovation
- Environment and sustainability

Research what's timely within your niche/topic and in the larger world.

3. Strive for excellence in all areas.

Book awards ask judges to rate the book in a number of categories. Sloppiness in one category can hurt your chances. Your book should excel in all of these:

- Writing
- Editing
- Design
- Book Cover
- Features

From the feedback I received from the judges for the Benjamin Franklin Award:
 “Mechanics/Organization. 10 The book is free of grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors. The text is flawless.” This feedback demonstrates the importance of proofreading (more than once perhaps!)

4. Hire Professionals

- Professional editor or book coach
- Professional designer
- Award professional: the categories I would have chosen would not have won. Melissa Sones Consulting identified winning categories!

5. Think Creatively!

Judges like to see innovative thinking and fresh ideas. Think out of the box.

- What features will make your book particularly engaging and useful, to your readers?
- What can make your book unique?
- Can you identify a particular real life character in the book who adds color?
- Research comp books; what do readers say they want in book reviews/Amazon reviews?
 What do they say is missing in other books?

6. Identify/Avoid Biases; Be Inclusive

Seek diversity in Beta Readers and editor(s):

- Race
- Gender

- Age
- Background
- Geography
- Opinions/Politics/Philosophies

Note: Your target market may preclude full diversity – for example a book for women, a book for empty nesters, a book for parents, a book for Black women or Asian men would be more targeted. Yet, you still may benefit from hearing diverse viewpoints so that you're not writing in a silo.

7. Write from Deep in Your Heart

"Write for the world from the deepest knowing of your heart and soul and it will likely be a Nautilus book and maybe even a winner. "

- Melissa (Mel) Granchi LMFT, DMin, Director, Nautilus Book Awards

About the author: Lisa Tener is an award winning author, [book writing and publishing coach](#), and speaker. Lisa is known for helping writers easily access creative flow, find their voice, and bring forth their best work. She is the author of the forthcoming book ***Breathe. Write. Breathe.: 18 Energizing Practices to Spark Your Writing and Free Your Voice*** (coming June 12, 2024).

Lisa served on the faculty of Harvard Medical School's CME publishing course for over a dozen years. She holds bachelor's and master's degrees in management from MIT and is certified by RP Qigong to teach Empowerments and Happiness Qigong. Her book *The Joy of Writing Journal* won five book awards, including the Nautilus, IPPY and Ben Franklin book awards.

Lisa received the Stevie Award for Coach/Mentor and has helped thousands of writers tap into their creativity and successfully publish. Her clients have signed 5- and 6-figure book deals with Hachette, Random House and other top publishers. Lisa is quoted in the *New York Times*, *Boston Globe*, *Vice*, and appeared on national and local TV, including PBS. Read Lisa's articles, tips and discover more about her book writing and publishing services at LisaTener.com

Connect with Lisa on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#). Get on the list for Lisa's extra-special virtual book launch party here LisaTener.com.