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**4 Questions to Answer Before Contacting a Book Agent**

By Roger C. Parker

**4 Questions to Answer Before Contacting a Book Agent**

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Obtaining agency representation is your first step toward getting profitably published. Most publishers won't even look at unsolicited manuscripts.

But, before approaching an agent to represent you, you should finalize the presentation of your book.

Agents don't have time to waste dealing with publishing `wannabees' who don't have, and may never have, a concrete project to represent. To busy agents, dreams don't make it.

If you approach an agent before you're prepared, you may never be able to contact them again. They'll consider you a `dreamer' and disregard your emails and phone calls.

**Elevator Speech**

Before approaching an agent, prepare an `elevator speech' describing your project in the less than thirty-seconds it takes for an average elevator ride. If you can't, your project probably isn't ready for prime time.

Your elevator speech must answer four major questions: What is your book about? Who is going to buy it? How does it differ from existing books on the subject? How are you going to promote it?

**1. What is your book about?**

Finalize your book's title and contents before contacting an agent.

The title is crucial to your book's success. It must attract the attention of acquisition editors, book reviewers, bookstore managers, web surfers and readers. The title is often your one - and only - chance to make a sale.

## 4 Questions to Answer Before Contacting a Book Agent

Finalize your book's table of contents and prepare a brief description of the contents of each chapter. You should also know how long your book is going to be and the number of illustrations, graphics or worksheet

Prepare two - three, if you're a first-time author - sample chapters and hire a professional editor to fine-tune them. It's better to show three perfect chapters than a finished manuscript filled with spelling errors.

You don't have to write your whole book before approaching agents. And your sample chapters don't have to begin with the first chapter, nor do they have to be in sequence. But, they must represent your writing at its best.

### 2. Who's going to buy your book?

Next, show that there is a reachable market for your book.

Strive for urgency. Describe the market intrigued by, or frustrated by, your book's topic. What symptoms does your book help solve? How many people share the problem? What are the consequences of the problem your book addresses?

Quantify your book's market in terms of buying power, willingness to buy books and ability to be reached through associations or publications.

### 3. How will your book be different?

Next, position your book relative to existing books on the topic. Existing books on the same topic are a plus, not a minus. They prove there is a market for books on the subject. What are the strengths and weaknesses of existing books? Why will readers choose your book over existing books?

This section offers you an opportunity to describe your background and how it contributes to your book.

### 4. How will you promote your book?

Promotion is your responsibility, not the publisher's. Your ability to promote your book is as important as your ability to write your book.

Start by identifying book reviewers and editorial contacts who can help promote your book. List publications that might run an extract from your book. Research producers who book guests for radio and TV interviews.

Discuss your speaking experience and willingness to travel to support your book. Describe how you will promote your book on your web site.

List authorities in your field who have offered to write a foreword or provide you with cover testimonials.

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Agents are busy. To the extent you can sell your book idea as a realistic possibility in thirty seconds and can support your answers with research and strong sample chapters, you are well on your way to success.

After you've been successfully published, you may be able to sell a book on just the basis of an email. But for now, you must be fully prepared.

Roger C. Parker is the \$32,000,000 author with over 1.6 million copies in print. Do you make these marketing and design mistakes? Find out at

## 7 Questions To Test The Loyalty Of A Real Estate Agent

By Noel Peebles

### 7 Questions To Test The Loyalty Of A Real Estate Agent by Noel Peebles

Buying or selling a home can be especially difficult when dealing with an incompetent or disloyal real estate agent. Now, don't get me wrong, I'm not out to knock realtors.

I'm the first to admit that many agents are excellent and worth their weight in gold. However, most real estate agents fall into one of three categories: good, average or poor.

Then, there is that worrying small percentage of agents who are downright incompetent. Every industry is inflicted with this type of person and I suspect the real estate industry has more than its fair share of incompetent agents.

The truth is; a good and a bad agent have one thing in common - their job is to be a "deal-maker." But, be warned - some real estate agents will perform all sorts of tricks to stitch up a deal. This is fine so long as they are not "stitching up" the buyer or the seller. There's nothing wrong with enthusiasm to pull a deal together - it is to be applauded. However, a good agent needs to remain professional and ethical at all times throughout the selling process.

Unfortunately, most homeowner's are reasonably inexperienced when it comes to buying or selling a property. They rely greatly on the "perceived" ability of the agent they are dealing with. In reality, most homeowner's are "fair game" for a disloyal, dishonest, or incompetent agent!

In any negotiation, WIN - WIN deals are the best. But, sometimes when buying or selling a house, things happen to benefit just one party... the buyer, the seller or possibly just the real estate agent. Therein lies

## 4 Questions to Answer Before Contacting a Book Agent

the danger. Who is the real estate agent really working for? Where do his or her true loyalties lie? With the seller, the buyer or themselves?

These 7 questions will help you decide who the agent is really working for. Visit any open home and test these questions out on an agent. Good or bad, the answers will reveal something about that agent and his or her ability and true loyalties. If the real estate agent betrays the seller, they will betray you as well. If they defend the seller, it's likely they will defend you too. Ask the real estate agent these 7 questions:

1. How much will the seller take?

You may learn the bottom price that the seller will accept.

2. How much do you think the home will sell for?

You may discover that the agent has an opinion less than the asking price.

3. When does the seller need to move out?

The agent may reveal an urgent deadline. This could be an advantage in negotiating a lower price.

4. Why is the homeowner selling?

The agents may reveal a confidential reason for selling.

5. How long has the property been on the market?

The agent may reveal if, or why, the property has been difficult to sell.

6. Who priced the property?

The agent may be quick to deny any involvement and in some cases may blame the seller for being greedy.

7. What other homes are there in competition to this property?

This is particularly useful information, so long as the agent gives you an honest answer. Ask the agent to show you some of these competing properties.

These questions are simple and not hard to ask. However, failing to ask these types of questions can put a buyer (or seller) at the mercy of a disloyal, dishonest, or incompetent agent. Buying or selling a home is a big investment for most people; so it is well worth the effort to select an agent you can trust and have confidence in.

Home Selling Secrets Revealed. Tips and ideas on how to get top price selling your home, how to choose real estate agents, or advertise your house for sale privately. <http://www.instantsellhome.com>

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