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The Recipe for Getting Published

By Mridu Khullar (<http://www.WritersCrossing.com>)

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Got talent but no clips? Here's the recipe for getting published...

*** Procrastinating**

When you've finally decided you have to put into writing the fabulous idea that just struck, you enter the first phase of the writing process. "I'll start tomorrow," "I'm not inspired yet" and "I just don't have the time" are some of the phrases that will form a part of your vocabulary. When you've incorporated them into your daily lifestyle, you're ready to enter the second phase.

*** The Blank Screen**

You sit in front of your computer, usually without a clue to what you're supposed to be doing. You stare at the blank screen constantly without blinking. You may take short coffee breaks or a walk, but you still make it back to where you started. Type a few lines of crap, then erase. Repeat this process a number of times, and proceed.

*** Feeling Guilty**

Now you begin to wonder what kind of a writer you actually are. Your love for writing suddenly disappears and you make futile efforts to convince yourself that this was what you were meant to do. You know you're in this phase when you start considering other job options. When you've finally decided to quit writing, the next phase begins.

*** Getting Over it**

You inform your family and friends that won't be writing any more and they do everything in their power to convince you otherwise. Sooner or later, you give in to the pressure and decide to write again. The time taken in this step can vary according to the intensity of your denial and the inability to land another job.

*** Writing**

In this stage, you finally manage to prepare your first draft. This may take several days, and in some cases, several years. But after this stage, you'll be back on track and the fears and anxieties of the

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earlier steps will slowly die out. Pat yourself on the back (if you can) or get somebody else to do it for you.

* Editing and rewriting

Read and reread your work so many times that you're totally sick of it, as you correct mistakes, improve the style and add important things. Now your writing is almost in its completion stages. But before you start flying again, you might want to come back on earth to complete the remaining steps.

* Showing off

You show your manuscript or article to your friends, family and neighbors asking for opinions on it. Try not to think about the check you'll be getting while they voice their thoughts. Some of you may want to hire professional help. In that case, opinions from friends and family don't count.

* Submission

Convinced that you have a winner, you approach the editors or publishers you're planning to submit to. Arm yourself with a good query and convince them to ask you to send in your work.

Caution: Editors have an uncanny habit of throwing things out the window. So, read the submission guidelines before making any moves!

* Desperately Waiting

A long process, but can vary depending on the cruelty of the editor. This phase could last from as little as a week, to more than a few months. Try to stay patient, and don't lose your cool. DO NOT send inquiries about your submitted work (at least for the first few weeks).

* Rejection

If you're new to writing, this stage will almost always have to be dealt with. If you're lucky enough to get accepted right away, you may skip the next step. This stage could lead to excessive drinking and spells of depression.

* Repeat

Repeat the submission and waiting steps as per requirement.

* Acceptance

You should be flinging your arms in the air and screaming at the top of your voice. Try not to scare the neighbors though. This stage is marked by a temporary spell of insanity.

* Getting published

When your work is published and you're carrying your work all over the place to tell people about it, you can be sure you've reached the final stage. This marks the final line. Now just sit back and enjoy!

>> This article originally appeared on <http://www.WritersCrossing.com>

Mridu Khullar is the editor-in-chief of www.WritersCrossing.com, a free online magazine for writers. Sign up for the free weekly newsletter to get a complimentary e-book with 400+ paying markets. Also

check out her e-book, "Knock Their Socks Off! A Freelance Writer's Guide to Query Letters That Sell," available at <http://www.writerscrossing.com/queries.html>

My Mother's Recipe Box

By Rachel Paxton

Remember the days when cookbooks weren't so readily available, and you or your mother relied on only one or two different cookbooks for cooking all of your family's meals? I still have my mother's old cookbooks, as well as my grandmother's. Each one is worn from age and use—if you flip through the tattered pages it is obvious which recipes were turned to time and time again. These cookbooks will always number among my most precious treasures.

When our mothers wanted to try new recipes, they most likely didn't run out and buy new cookbooks. They often didn't have the extra money to spend, and often there weren't very many to choose from. So where did they get new recipes? From each other.

When I was a child I remember my mother exchanging recipe cards with friends and relatives and bringing them home and filing them away in her recipe box. I always loved going through her recipes (although she often got mad at me for getting them all out of order!)

All the years while I was learning how to cook I went through her recipe box time and time again, pulling out my favorite recipes and preparing them again and again.

Seeing who the recipes were from made them all the more special. I also love looking back at all the recipe cards I prepared myself while I was in 4-H and spent much of my time learning how to cook. I still prepare many of the recipes I used back then. To this day, all I have to do is open my recipe card box, and I am instantly transported back in time.

My mother hasn't exchanged recipe cards with anyone in more than 20 years. I have very few of my own (although I hope to inherit hers someday!) But even to this day there is no better place to find favorite family recipes than in my mother's recipe box.

Twenty years from now, I look forward to going through my recipe box with my own daughter, telling her stories about where all of my different recipes came from.

Rachel Paxton is a freelance writer and mom who publishes the Creative Homemaking Recipe of the Week Club, a weekly newsletter that contains quick, easy dinner ideas and money-saving household hints. To subscribe send a blank e-mail message to

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