

Ghostwriters

50 Essential Questions to Ask

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1. How long have you been a professional ghostwriter?
2. Did you formally study creative writing in college? Where?
3. How did you learn your craft?
4. Do you have other experience that makes you a better ghostwriter than your competition?
5. For example, are you also an editor?
6. How many of your ghostwritten books have been published by New York trade publishing houses?
7. Which publishing houses?
8. Who else published your work, i.e. non-New York trade publishing companies?
9. Name a few books, please, if they're not under a non-disclosure agreement.
10. Will you please give me a list of, say, five happy former clients of yours, so I can interview them about you and your work?
11. If you have no previous work that you can share with me, how am I expected to learn about you and your qualifications?
12. What's your writing style?
13. How will you ensure your writing style fits with my "voice"?
14. Will you automatically be listed as a co-author on my book, or are you a true ghostwriter whose name is never mentioned?

15. How do you work with a new client on a project, from beginning to end?
16. Will you send me your ghostwriter-client agreement, so I can look it over?
17. If I don't like something in the ghostwriter-client agreement, can I change it?
18. How do you charge for your fees?
19. Are your fees based on an accepted industry standard?
20. How would I pay you during the course of our project?
21. Will you work for free with the possibility that my book will sell well so I can pay you at a later time? In other words, do you work on spec?
22. What kind of research would you do for my book?
23. Would you visit me to interview me in person?
24. Do I pay for this visit and your research?
25. What are your other fees, e.g. research, interviews, etc.?
26. What if I don't like your work? Do I still have to pay for work I really do not like?
27. How long will it take you to write a fully completed manuscript?
28. Will you accept my telephone calls and/or emails at odds hours, should I need to brainstorm ideas with you?
29. If not, what hours do you set for working on our project and when can I contact you?
30. How often will you send me sections or chapters of my book?
31. How long does it take you to write a first draft?
32. Will you allow me to see your first draft, or do you edit it before sharing it with me?
33. How will I be able to make changes to your first draft?
34. Do you use MS Word's Track Changes feature to make changes or edit my book?
35. If not, how do you edit my book?

36. Do I have to suffer through reading tiny handwritten notes in the margins of a hard copy of the manuscript?
37. How many drafts will you write for the fee you're charging me?
38. Does this fee also include formal editing?
39. Who does the editing if not you?
40. What is their formal editing experience?
41. If there is no formal editing done on my manuscript, will you help me find a suitable editor to complete my project?
42. If this editor takes on my work and needs further work done on my manuscript, will you do it on my behalf?
43. What will you charge additionally for this work?
44. When you've completed the project, what happens next?
45. Will you help me get an agent or find a publisher for my newly created manuscript?
46. Do you know any agents, senior editors at big publishing houses, or publishers?
47. If not, how will you help me develop a way to get the attention of an agent or senior editor?
48. What if my manuscript is rejected by everyone I send it to?
49. Do you offer a money-back guarantee if my manuscript isn't picked up by a reputable agent or does not sell to a New York trade publishing house?
50. What additional work will you do to ensure that my investment in my manuscript and this entire project results in my getting published?

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