FROM EXPERT TO AUTHOR

How YOU Can Write YOUR Business Book

GILLIAN WHITNEY

Easy Peasy Books Series

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Las Vegas, NV 89107

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Dedication

Thank you to Devon, who's been cheering me on since the day we were married. A dedicated and loving husband, Devon believed I could write a book before I did myself. I'm grateful he learned about book publishing, ensuring my books would go from manuscript to market. More than a spouse, Devon's been my business partner and mentor.

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Introduction

> "The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."
>
> —Lao Tzu

Let me guess—you've been toying with the idea of writing a book for your business, but something's been holding you back. Maybe you're feeling overwhelmed, doubting yourself, or just can't seem to find the time. Trust me, I get it. I spent 21 years—yes, that's right, 21 years!—not writing my book.

The 21-Year Journey

I remember when I first realized I wanted to write a book. I was pushing my youngest child in a stroller through a campground in northern Arizona. Tall pine trees surrounded us, their branches filtering the bright sunlight that flickered on the path. As I walked, I was listening to a cassette tape on my Sony Walkman. The voice of motivational speaker Les Brown thundered through my headphones: "Don't die with the music inside you." He then challenged,

"What would you do if you could do anything? What is the ONE thing you want to make sure doesn't die with you?"

For me, the answer was simple: write a book. This had been my dream since childhood, when I would curl up in a beanbag chair at the public library with my favorite books. I'd always imagined seeing my name on the front cover of a book one day. I had stories to tell and wisdom to share. But life got in the way. Days turned into weeks, then months, then years. And before I knew it, 21 years had passed, and still no book.

Fast forward to just a few years ago. I found myself in a strangely familiar situation—pushing a stroller once again, but this time through a park in Las Vegas. Cactus and rocks replaced the pine trees, and the hot sun blazed down on the path. Inside the stroller, my little dog with his injured paw had taken the place of my little boy. As I walked, my iPhone was nestled in the cup holder of the stroller and I wore AirPods in my ears. I was listening to a Tony Robbins podcast about achieving your dreams, his crisp voice a stark contrast to the scratchy tape of Les Brown from two decades earlier. Memories of that day 21 years ago came rushing back. The desire to write a book was still there, strong as ever.

That moment of déjà vu sparked an epiphany. While the landscape had changed, my unfulfilled dream remained constant. At first, I started to beat myself up for not having accomplished my book writing goal. However, I quickly caught myself and refused to go down that negative rabbit

hole. Instead, I had a paradigm shift about the intervening years.

The Power of Content Repurposing

I realized, during those 21 years of "not writing a book," I'd actually been writing all along. Journal entries, blog posts, speeches, presentations—I'd accumulated a ton of writing without even realizing it. Not to mention the dozens of books I'd "half-started" and abandoned along the way. I just hadn't compiled any of it into a finished book.

This revelation led me to discover the power of content repurposing—the art of taking existing content and transforming it into new formats. In my case, it meant turning years of scattered writings into a cohesive book.

Which is why I'm writing this book now; I don't want you to spend 21 years not writing your book. I don't want you to push your dream aside, only to have it collect dust while life races by. Your ideas, your expertise, your unique perspective—the world needs them now, not two decades from now.

What to Expect in This Book

Consider this book your shortcut, your secret weapon to avoid the long delay I experienced. It's about making the process of writing your business book easy peasy by unlocking your expertise through content repurposing. Because you're probably much closer to having a book written than you think.

In the pages that follow, we'll explore how you can transform the valuable content you've already created into a compelling and authoritative business book. I'll take you on a journey from content creator to finished manuscript. And, trust me, it's going to be easier than you ever imagined. (Think of me as your literary GPS—minus the frustrating "recalculating" every five minutes.)

I've been where you are. I was literally the queen of unfinished manuscripts. But once I discovered the power of content repurposing and the strategies that I'll share with you in this book, I was able to publish three books in less than a year. If I can do it, so can you.

Throughout this book, we'll tackle the mental hurdles that hold many of us back from becoming an author. We'll dive into practical strategies for organizing your ideas, repurposing your content, and filling in the gaps. We'll explore how your reading habits can fuel your writing, and guide you through the process of refining your manuscript. And we'll do it all in a way that fits into your busy schedule.

So, are you ready to make the move from business professional to author? Are you ready to leverage your existing content into a book that will establish your authority, attract more clients, and open new opportunities?

Good. Because I'm ready too. Let's begin this journey together. It's time to write the business book you've always dreamed of—in a way that's both efficient and effective. No stroller-pushing required, just your expertise and a little guidance from me.

Chapter 1

Why Write a Business Book?

"Ideas are the currency of the 21st century."
—William Gibson

In today's fast-paced business world, standing out from the crowd is more important than ever. In this book, I'll guide you through the process of writing your own business book, helping you leverage your expertise and experiences to establish yourself as an authority in your field. But before we dive into the 'how,' let's explore the 'why.'

Let me tell you a tale of two parents—my mother and father. Their approach to sharing their life experiences couldn't have been more different, and their stories illustrate perfectly why writing a book matters.

My Father's Written Legacy

In his later years, my dad embarked on a journey to write his life story. For several years, he toiled away, capturing

not just his own experiences but those of his family—including his parents, grandparents, and beyond. He even took the time to illustrate it with old photographs. It was an incredible accomplishment and a testament to a life well-lived.

In an eerie sort of way, it was almost as if he made peace with the universe while creating a legacy. His book now serves as a mark showing he lived a life that mattered. He was able to capture our family stories on paper, ensuring that once he was gone, all those stories would live on.

My Mother's Unwritten Stories

My mother's approach, on the other hand, was entirely different. She had a fascinating life—born in England, raised in Egypt, survived World War II (complete with the London Blitz), and endured the loss of many relatives (including her own mother). She grew up in boarding schools and married way too young.

Later in life, she immigrated to Canada by ship, got divorced and became a single parent (when it wasn't fashionable), had a Bat Mitzvah at the age of 40, travelled to Israel (during the Yom Kippur War), and survived multiple illnesses for decades.

Such a full and interesting life. And yet, my mother struggled to write any of those stories down. We asked her so many times, and while she could dictate the facts ("I was born in London - August 26, 1931... blah blah blah"), she was never able to capture the "stories."

When my dad passed, we were left with a written testimonial to his time here on this planet. But when my mother passed, even though she had led such an interesting life, all her stories left with her.

The Business Professional's Choice

These personal stories illustrate a crucial point for business professionals. Like my parents, we face a similar choice in our professional lives. We can be like my dad, taking the time to capture our knowledge, experiences, and insights in a book. Or we can be like my mother, letting our stories and expertise fade away with no lasting record.

Now, maybe you're thinking, "Writing a book sounds great, but I don't have time to start from scratch!" I get it. The thought of writing a book can be totally overwhelming. But what if I told you that you've probably done a lot of the hard work already without even realizing it?

You're Already a Ghostwriter

That's right. All those presentations you've given, the blog posts you've published, the LinkedIn Lives you've participated in, and the video and audio podcasts you've been a guest of—they're all pieces of your future book, just waiting to be put together.

You're not starting from ground zero. You're starting with years of experience, insights, and content that you've built up over your entire career. It's like you've been secretly writing a book all along, and you didn't even know it.

This is where the magic of content repurposing comes in. With me as your guide, we're going to take all that valuable content you've already created and transform it into a compelling, authoritative business book. It's like you've been your own ghostwriter this whole time.

Why Bother Writing a Book?

But why should you bother writing a book at all?

Let's break it down:

- **Establishes Your Authority:** A book is like a 100-page business card. It instantly positions you as an expert in your field.
- **Shares Your Unique Perspective:** You've got insights that no one else has. A book is your chance to share them with the world.
- **Creates Lasting Impact:** Your book summarizes your business wisdom, creating a legacy that extends way beyond your day-to-day work.

Beyond Financial Rewards

While sharing your knowledge is important, there are even more compelling reasons to write a business book. Let's explore how your book can become a powerful tool for your business growth and professional development.

From my experience, I learned that publishing a book doesn't make you rich—so don't quit your day job just yet.

However, I've found that the rewards extended far beyond financial gain:

- **Increased Visibility:** Your book will open doors to new opportunities, possibly including invitations to be a guest on podcasts and LinkedIn Lives. These platforms will allow you to reach a wider audience and share your expertise.
- **Speaking Engagements:** As a published author, you may receive more speaking opportunities. This not only helps establish your authority in your field but also allows you to connect with potential clients face-to-face.
- **Credibility Boost:** Your book will serve as a powerful credibility tool, showcasing your expertise to potential clients who might never have discovered you otherwise. Whether on a Zoom call or speaking from a stage, it's a thrill to hold up your book.
- **Business Growth:** Perhaps most significantly, the increased visibility from your book will likely result in more clients for your services.
- **Personal Satisfaction:** Last, but certainly not least, you'll experience a profound sense of accomplishment in seeing your ideas and experiences in print. It's not just about business growth—it's about leaving a legacy.

The impact of your book will go far beyond direct sales. It's about the doors that can open when you become a

published author, the connections you'll make, and the opportunities to share your expertise with a broader audience.

From Expert to Author

While the rewards of writing a book are numerous and varied, there's an even deeper reason to put pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard). Writing a book isn't just about leaving a legacy or growing your business. It's about living fully, pursuing your passions, and not dying with your music still inside you.

It's about making every day count, because you never know which one might be your last.

You don't have to have it all figured out to start. When I wrote one of my books, I was flat on my back with pneumonia, talking into my phone using a note-taking app. If I can write a book under those circumstances, just think what you can do. No excuses about writer's block when you're vertical and breathing normally!

So, let me ask you this: If you only had three months to live, what would you be doing with your life that you're not doing now? If writing a book is on that list, why wait?

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, we explored the compelling reasons to write a business book and the benefits that extend far beyond financial rewards. We discussed how your book can establish your authority, boost your credibility, and open doors to new professional opportunities. By understanding the 'why' behind writing your book, you're now equipped with the motivation to overcome challenges and create a powerful addition to your professional toolkit.

Looking Ahead

In the next chapter, we'll explore how being a well-read business professional can significantly enhance your journey to becoming an author. We'll dive into how reading can broaden your perspective and influence your business thinking. Get ready to discover how reading can be your secret weapon in creating a standout business book.

Homework

1. Write down three specific ways a book could benefit your business.

2. Set a tentative date to publish your book. This is just a target to aim for and can be adjusted as you progress through your writing journey.

3. Share your intention to write a book with a colleague or friend who can offer support and accountability.

Notes