

BETA AUTHOR BOOST

Handout

How to Choose a Killer Title

Inspiration

There's a word for a writer who never gives up: published.

- **Joe Konrath** <http://jakonrath.blogspot.com/>

Write even when you don't want to, don't much like what you're writing, and aren't writing particularly well.

- **Agatha Christie**

What you're missing on our Facebook page

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/237458769713830/>

Jump in and leave a comment or post a link to something you're reading about eBooks. This is where you can get to know - and get feedback from - the other Beta Authors.

Share your writing with Debbie

First official deadline to turn in a chunk of your writing is Dec. 13, 2012.

I will review and send complete feedback by Friday, Dec. 21st. I will send quick feedback as soon as I can. You may email me your draft as a Word doc. Or... create a Google doc, paste whatever chunk of writing you've done into it and share it with me using this email: wordbiz@gmail.com *Important: you must use my wordbiz email.* I will provide feedback on your draft via the nifty Comments function. <https://docs.google.com/>

Stay in touch to keep yourself accountable

I encourage you to stay in touch with me via email to keep yourself accountable for writing your book. Send me updates. Ask me questions. Tell me when and if you are stuck. I am here for you. Email me at debbie@voxiemedia.com or wordbiz@gmail.com.



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3 Frameworks to Create a Compelling Title for Your Book

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Intro

Choosing a title for your book or eBook is hard. But it's really important. More important, in fact, than choosing a name for your company. Nobody really cares what the name of your business is. They care about what you can do for them. And they're willing to poke around your site or read your blog to find out.

When it comes to eBooks, the only thing you have to grab the reader with is *your title* and your *cover design*. No jacket copy. No blurbs on the back. No spine. Yes, you have some space for marketing or descriptive copy on an Amazon Kindle page. But if readers are seeing your book in a list or on their device, they generally see only the title or cover. More on cover design soon.

Below are three frameworks to help you generate ideas for a title. You'll see that they overlap. *If you boil it down, what's most important is that your book make a promise that answers a need. And does so in a way that is easy to remember and as specific as possible.*

Choosing a title for your book takes time and it can be frustrating. Ideally, you need to generate dozens of ideas to find the right one. Getting feedback from other discerning authors is also helpful. **Hence the homework for this week: post a possible title or two for your book to the Facebook page and ask for feedback.**



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I. PINC

PINC comes from Michael Hyatt, CEO of Thomas Nelson Publishers and a prolific blogger (also an author) himself. <http://michaelhyatt.com>

According to Michael, “Great titles are **PINC** (pronounced “pink”). They do at least one of the following: make a **promise**, create **intrigue**, identify a **need**, or simply state the **content**.”

So the framework for testing your title idea is:

- What is the promise?
- Does it create intrigue?
- Does it identify a need in the market?
- Does it state the content (i.e. say clearly what the book is about)

Some of the most successful nonfiction books combine several or all the attributes of PINC. Tim Ferriss’s second book makes a promise that no one can resist: [*The 4-Hour Body: An Uncommon Guide to Rapid Fat-Loss, Incredible Sex, and Becoming Superhuman*](#). The specificity of the subtitle identifies and answers specific needs, states the content and, of course, creates intrigue.

2. Six Questions to Ask Yourself

These come from Roger C. Parker, author of 38 books and an expert on publication design and marketing at <http://www.publishedandprofitable.com>. He recommends that you ask yourself the following questions as you consider different titles:

1. What is the change your market wants?
2. How and when will change take place?
3. Who is your book’s intended market?
4. How does this book differ from other books?
5. How can you make your title easy to remember?
6. How can you make money with your title?



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1. What is the change your market wants?

Hint: This is the *benefit*. It usually means solving a problem or achieving a goal.

2. How and when will change take place?

Be as specific as possible: *30-Minute Meals* by Rachael Ray or *21 Pounds in 21 Days*. Hint: the change can be quantified as *results* or a *time period* or *number of steps* it takes to solve the problem or achieve the goal.



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3. Who is your book's intended market?

Can you make clear who the book is written for? The bestseller *What to Expect When You're Expecting* nails the audience of pregnant women.

4. How does your book differ from other books?

It's written from a specific or unique perspective. Garr Reynolds' *Presentation Zen* is a perfect example. *Presentation* is his topic (powerpoint slide design) and *Zen* is his thoughtful, balanced approach.



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5. How can you make your title easy to remember?

Note that the following bestsellers also answer several other questions: *What Color Is Your Parachute?* (not “How to Find Work”); *Poke the Box* (his riff on “Think Different” at work) by Seth Godin and *The 4-Hour Workweek* by Tim Ferriss.

6. How can you make money with your title?

The title hints at other services or products you offer. As Roger Parker puts it, “pre-sell your competence to your intended market.” Here’s an example: *Get Clients Now!(TM): A 28-Day Marketing Program for Professionals, Consultants, and Coaches* by C.J. Hayden.



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3. Brainstorm word combinations

This technique comes from literary agent Rachelle Gardner. You'll find great resources on her blog about traditional publishing <http://www.rachellegardner.com/> (See the list of popular posts in the right-hand column.)

Her approach is more of a method than a framework but, like Mark Levy's *List Making*, it is worth the time it takes. She suggests that you find 20 books on Amazon in the same genre (or on the same topic) as the one you're planning to publish. Ask yourself what you like - or dislike - about each one. Note that titles generally create a *tone* for a book as well as an *expectation*.

Then, with paper and pencil, or a whiteboard, brainstorm a list of up to 100 words related to your book. These words can be anything that conveys something about your book: a visual description, an emotion, a question. List them in columns: nouns, verbs and adjectives. Choosing from your columns, come up with different word combinations. Is there a single word that will work with a longer, descriptive subtitle?

For nonfiction books, she recommends that you "list words that capture what you want your reader to think, feel or do after reading it. And words that describe what your book is about." (Similar advice to *PINC* and *6 Questions to Ask Yourself*.)

Then put your title list away for at least 24 hours and let your ideas gestate. When you come back to the list, narrow your list of possible titles down to three to five. Finally, go back to the list of books you researched on Amazon. Does your title fit into that topic or genre? Does it stand out as more specific, memorable and compelling?

<http://www.rachellegardner.com/2010/03/how-to-title-your-book/>

Your homework! Post your book title(s) to our Facebook page

Post your title(s) on our FB page. Tell us briefly which of the framework(s) you used. The other Beta Authors will give you feedback as to what works - and what doesn't. So your homework is to post your proposed titles AND offer feedback to the others.



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Useful resources for choosing a title

Four Strategies for Creating Titles That Jump Off the Page by Michael Hyatt
<http://michaelhyatt.com/four-strategies-for-creating-titles-that-jump-off-the-page.html>

How to Choose the Right Title for Your Book by Roger C. Parker
<http://www.squidoo.com/rightbooktitle>

POP!: Create the Perfect Pitch, Title and Tagline for Anything by Sam Horn (fascinating book)
<http://www.amazon.com/Pop-Perfect-Tagline-Anything-ebook/dp/B000OCXFXS/>

How to Name Your Nonfiction Book by Dan Poynter
http://www2.xlibris.com/authors_lounge_QA_howto_namenonfiction.htm

How to Choose Your Bestselling Title (special report - \$14.95)
<http://www.choosingyourbestsellingtitle.com/Bestselling-Title-Special-Report.html>

Remember, stay in touch

I will provide feedback and review of your writing twice during the program. The two deadlines for submitting your writing are Dec. 13, 2012 and Jan. 10, 2013.

Yours in eBook excitement and, always in beta,



Debbie Weil, founder and CEO, Voxie Media: Big Ideas, Short Books™

