

# *Self-Publishing Made Easy*

## Editing, Friend of Foe?

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With printing, cover design and editing, the publishing process can be pricey, especially if you don't know what you're doing. So to cut costs, many new authors eliminate editing. WRONG! This step of purposeful publishing is mandatory, if you want to be taken seriously in this business.

Once you have completed the self and POWER Team edits identified in the ***Self-Publishing Made Easy Passionate Writing Journal***, you are ready for professional editing. When contracting with an editor, several factors must be considered:

1. Is the editor experienced in your genre?
2. What is the editor's specialty?
  - a. Developmental / content edit
  - b. Copy edit
  - c. Proofreading
3. What is the editor's preferred format for editing?
  - a. Hard copy
  - b. Electronic - Request that the editor use Microsoft Word's Track Changes feature
4. What are the submission requirements including font, margins and spacing?
5. What is the completion date?
6. Will an editorial critique be provided?
7. What's the fee structure? Per page, per word or per hour?

Friend and fellow literary aficionado, Lynel Johnson Washington, shares her wisdom about the types of edits on the following page.

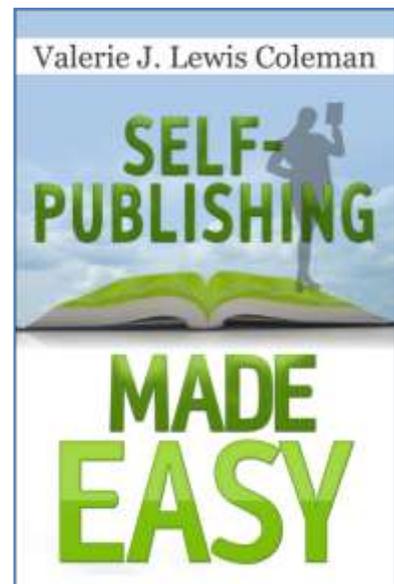
For details on the editing process, locating the best professional editor for your manuscript and tips to save you thousands of dollars, get your copy of

### ***Self-Publishing Made Easy!***

Available at [PenOfTheWriter.com](http://PenOfTheWriter.com)

A list of editors is available at [QueenVPublishing.com](http://QueenVPublishing.com) including

- Susan Mary Malone of [MaloneEditorial.com](http://MaloneEditorial.com)
- Tenita C. Johnson of [SoltIsWritten.net](http://SoltIsWritten.net)



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### **Editing—Why Bother?**

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Let's be real! No one wants to hear that his or her self-determined work of art is subpar, but if you are serious about producing an above-average product, tough skin is essential.

Editing consists of three stages; however, many authors hesitate to invest in all three. Recognizing the importance of each step and then adherence are vital to your success. Seek professional editing services, not close friends or family members who love to read. The purpose of professional editing is to strengthen the content and minimize the flaws in your manuscript after the cycle of self-editing, critique-group feedback and rewriting. Your “baby” deserves an objective, experienced caregiver.

The following summary illustrates key purposes of each editing method:

The first priority is to acquire a developmental editor who will work side-by-side with you to

- Explain what works in the manuscript and what doesn't
- Point out areas in which the story does not make sense
- Ensure that the plot is well-defined
- Determine if the characters' motivations line up with the characters' personalities, feelings, thoughts and actions
- Evaluate the point-of-view's validity throughout the document
- Check that the showing of the characters' actions is not overshadowed by an exhausting amount of telling
- Assist in the proper set-up of dialogue and paragraph formation
- Flag inconsistencies in setting and descriptions
- Establish proper pacing and conflict resolution
- Eliminate aspects of the manuscript that are not true to its established genre
- Reorganize, add or remove scenes/content as needed
- Provide guidance on all trouble areas

Once that detailed assessment has been completed and all of the necessary changes have been made, seek a copy editor skilled in the fine art of

- Sentence structure
- Word reduction
- Spelling
- Grammar
- Punctuation
- Reducing redundancy
- Improving the flow of the text

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One may assume that the aforementioned steps are enough to guarantee a fine-tuned manuscript, but that is not the case. A proofreader is the essential missing link in this equation. What can a proofreader offer that developmental and copy editors cannot? The proofreader serves as the final official set of eyes on your manuscript. He/she is the polisher, so to speak; the one who adds that missing punctuation, forgotten word or two or three, and seals any loose ends—misspellings, misconstrued character names or minor formatting issues.

In essence, no editing stage should be skipped. The developmental editor, copy editor and proofreader are key participants in the transition from a mediocre effort to a job well-done.

Lynel Johnson Washington  
Freelance Editor/Virtual Author's Assistant

Lynel Johnson Washington, a native of New Orleans, is a contributing author to the anthology *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Twins and More*. Her story, *The Revelation of My Destiny*, appeared in the *Color Me Butterfly* newsletter. She began her career path as a counselor, but has always enjoyed the written word. This love of reading directed her to the field of editing. Devoted to literary enrichment, she enjoys reading a variety of genres. An enthusiastic editor, Lynel pays close attention to detail and thrives on creativity. Sharp proofreading and honest feedback are her specialties.

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