

Michael J. Dowling
Award-Winning Professional Ghostwriter & Editor



7 Key Qualities to Look for When Hiring a Professional Writer

(So You Don't Make a Costly Mistake!)

By Michael J. Dowling

About the Author

Michael J. Dowling helps professionals write and publish books that accomplish their goals and advance their careers.

When you hire a professional ghostwriter, an element of risk is involved.

If you hire wisely, your finished book will exceed your expectations, and you will have enjoyed the creative journey. But if you choose the wrong writer, you could end up wasting time, missing deadlines, falling short of your goals, and suffering diminished credibility in the marketplace.

How can you avoid a costly mistake? What qualities should you look for when hiring a ghostwriter?

I believe outstanding professional writers are characterized by seven key qualities: *proficiency, efficiency, creativity, productivity, reliability, accuracy, and courtesy*. This article tells you what to look for, so you'll get pleasing results instead of painful headaches.

The 7 Key Qualities to Look For

- **Quality #1 – Proficiency**

Every time you put something in writing, your image is on the line. A proficient writer will produce clear, concise, creative, convincing, and grammatically correct writing that accomplishes your goals. A mediocre writer can tarnish your image and waste your time and money.

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To assess a writer's proficiency, review writing samples. Consider asking someone who writes well to assist you.

"A highly qualified professional ghostwriter will make your authorship journey enjoyable."

- **Quality #2 – Efficiency**

Your time is valuable. An inexperienced, disorganized writer will waste your time, drain your energy, and give you headaches. A highly qualified professional ghostwriter will make your authorship journey enjoyable. One of your ghostwriter's highest priorities should be to conserve your time, so you are free to perform your normal day-to-day responsibilities.

As the author, you are responsible for providing your book's content. You set the goals and call the shots at every point. Your professional writer will do the heavy lifting by expressing your thoughts in your voice on the written page. To evaluate a prospective writer's efficiency, check his references and note his efficiency during the interview.

- **Quality #3 – Creativity**

"A creative writer can turn your good idea into an outstanding one."

A creative writer can turn your good idea into an outstanding one. He'll craft your book so it stands out from the crowd. People will be more likely to read it, remember it, and respond to it. Many writers do an adequate job of putting words on paper, but far fewer apply strong creative skills to a project.

Look for more than just an ordinary wordsmith. Creative ghostwriters use dialog, stories, case studies, humor, and other techniques to enhance readability and impact. To assess a writer's creativity, review writing samples and discuss the conceptual thinking involved in some of his past projects.

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- **Quality #4 – Productivity**

The goal of top-notch ghostwriters is to help their clients accomplish their goals. Before they accept an assignment, they will make sure that the project makes economic sense for the author. They work productively to make their client's project productive.

“How a book is conceptualized can determine whether it succeeds or fails.”

How a book is conceptualized can determine whether it succeeds or fails. A knowledgeable and experienced ghostwriter can help you position your book for maximum impact. The results you achieve together will far exceed anything you could have accomplished alone. To assess a prospective writer's productivity, check his references.

- **Quality #5 – Reliability**

When your deadlines are at stake and your image is on the line, reliability is critical. A writer who lets you down can cost you dearly.

“When your deadlines are at stake and your image is on the line, reliability is critical.”

A reliable writer can be trusted to provide consistently outstanding service and supportive accountability. To assess reliability, evaluate the writer's attitudes during the interviewing process and check his references.

- **Quality #6 – Accuracy**

Writing a successful non-fiction book requires perseverance, patience, and attention to detail. The content of the book must flow logically without errors, unintended redundancies, or careless omissions.

To avoid mistakes that can undermine your credibility, look for a writer who is careful and precise. To evaluate accuracy, review writing samples and check references.

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“Look for a writer who listens well and respects your desires and opinions.”

- **Quality #7 – Courtesy**

Writing a book is an intimate endeavor that typically requires several months. You and your writer will get to know each other quite well. If your writer is insensitive and discourteous, several months could seem like several years.

Look for a writer who listens well, respects your desires and opinions, and is motivated to serve you. He should be willing to speak up and offer his opinion, but without being dictatorial or inflexible. To find a courteous writer who will work collaboratively with you, note attitudes during the interviewing process and check references.

About the Author



Michael J. Dowling is an award-winning author and the ghostwriter and editor of more than twenty non-fiction books for professionals. He offers turnkey services that make the writing and publishing process understandable, cost-effective, time-efficient, and enjoyable for his clients.

Mike earned an MBA degree from Columbia Business School, where he was a Harriman Scholar, and a Bachelor of Science degree with honors from the University of Florida. Prior to founding Wool Street Writers in 1999, he served as president of an educational publishing company, president of a national gift company, and administrator of a 1000-member church.

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