



THE STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO WRITING A BUSINESS BOOK

Want a business book that will transform your career by helping you land more and higher-paying clients, as well as establish you as a leader in your field?

You've come to the right place.

Although we've published several successful business books, the one with the structure that's the easiest to follow is [*The Gorga Guide to Success*](#), which is made up of the greatest business lessons Joe Gorga has learned over the course of his life.

You can follow the format by brainstorming the most important things you've gleaned on your road to success. The easiest way to do this is to focus on your greatest challenges.

Ask yourself:

- What were those lessons I had to learn the hard way?
- What were the most challenging times in my career and what, specifically, did I do to overcome them?
- What were some of the most surprising hardships I endured and how did I handle them?

Just keep writing until you're spent.

Once you have a list of about 20, take a look at the guide below and pick 10 of them to slot into different chapters. And once you have your list, aim to write roughly 15 pages for each chapter.

If the blank page is tormenting you, try recording your thoughts or even having a friend interview you.

NOW FOR YOUR 10 LESSONS:

LESSON 1:

Something audacious that has contributed greatly to your success

LESSON 2:

Something you learned early on in your career and have been able to apply again and again

LESSON 3:

Something you know to be true and have specific anecdotes that can back it up

LESSON 4:

A unique expression you have for something that you strongly believe and have stories to illustrate

LESSON 5:

Something you learned but then developed a new perspective on over time

LESSON 6:

Something we all know to be true but can be hard to accept due to its unfairness

LESSON 7:

A personal experience you had which has a lesson also applicable to business

LESSON 8:

An even more personal experience than the previous chapter which is also relevant for your business

LESSON 9:

A lesson that harkens back to a lesson early in the book but that illustrates it in even more dramatic ways

LESSON 10:

Your most surprising lesson—something that many people won't agree with—and your twist on how you can make it work for you

And there you have it: the 10 lessons! You should follow those with a...

CONCLUSION: A 2-3 page summary of your philosophy, harkening back to the introduction and touching on what you want the reader to take away. Ask yourself: After reading through these lessons, what's the overriding theme? And then summarize it.

What else does your manuscript need?

[OPTIONAL] A DEDICATION:

Pick the most important person or people in the world to you. You can also pick a group (i.e., “all the aspiring marketing professionals out there”) or your dog or anyone you damn well please. It's your dedication!

Next:

[OPTIONAL] A FOREWORD:

This is for authors who have a well-known person in their life who would be willing to write a few pages about them. Usually between one and five pages, the foreword speaks to the excellence of the author and WHY this author is so qualified to be telling this story. While very few people buy a book because of the foreword writer, a foreword by a luminary can be an amazing credibility builder. (The foreword writer's name is listed on Amazon as your co-writer; [check out the memoir we did that had a foreword by Magic Johnson](#) to see how lovely that can be.)

Note: The foreword can be about you as a person, not necessarily about the book so be sure to explain to your foreword writer that they don't need to read the book in order to write it!

Next:

AN INTRODUCTION

This is where you answer: Who are you? Why are you writing this book? Why should we care? How did you originally get into the business you're writing about in this book? Note: Keep this short and to the point; plenty of readers skip intros so get right into it.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: A few pages at the end of the book acknowledging the people that helped you either with your book or with your life in general. This is different than your dedication since your dedication is for one person while your acknowledgments section is where you show your gratitude for those who got you to the point where you could release this book.

Once you have a completed manuscript, you need a few more things in order to publish. These are:

AN EDIT: Don't skip this part! If you've just written out your first draft, chances are it will need a rewrite and you're best off getting professional help with it. At Launch Pad, we actually do three edits by three different people—a developmental editor, a copy editor and a proofreader. While you can [hire us for the job](#), we can also recommend less expensive options (just email assistant@annadavid.com).

EFFECTIVE TITLE: Now, don't make this any harder than it is and always go for clear or clever. In other words, don't reference something that only a person who's read the book would understand, although you could use one of your lessons as the title (as in: *Be Silent When Necessary and 9 Other Lessons I've Learned During My Two Decades in Marketing*). Also consider having a subtitle that focuses on a benefit of the book in order to attract readers who are looking to have a specific problem solved. (Another thing to keep in mind regarding titles: in this increasingly Amazonian world we live in, it's a good idea to think about keywords—that is, the words readers led to your book will be using in their searches. Of course, never sacrifice the quality of the title in order to pack it with keywords.)

BLURBS: Also called “endorsements,” blurbs are those short recommendations from well-known people that pepper the back and sometimes front of books and are also often included on a book’s Amazon page. Blurbs also do not tend to sell books but they are highly recommended and also work as fantastic social proof. This is different than your foreword since your foreword is multiple pages and these are just single quotes. [Note: if you’re asking a really busy person, mention that you are open to writing the blurb and having them approve it.]

A LAYOUT: There are many programs as well as individuals you can hire (you can also upload a Word doc directly into Amazon and have the behind-the-scenes Amazonian wizards lay it out for you for free) but keep in mind that you get what you pay for. Expect to pay between \$300-\$1000 for a top-notch layout designer.

A COVER: Design fees vary widely; you can go the DIY route, either with the Amazon cover creator (amazingly, these can look pretty good) or with a free cover on Canva (also surprisingly great). But again, if you’re putting effort into publishing a book, it may make more sense to invest here. They say you can’t judge a book by its cover but we happen to not agree.

UPLOADING ASSISTANCE: This step can be the most complicated of all since Amazon is constantly tweaking the system and also makes some aspects harder than they need to be (for example, accepting a cover you upload and then sending it back to you umpteen times, telling you different things are wrong with it every time). Also there are a bunch of tweaks you can do in the back end that can make the difference between a book release that no one cares about and a bestseller launch that gets people excited (for instance, having the book listed in 10 categories instead of the two Amazon asks for and coordinating an Advanced Reader Team to review the book the day it comes out). That being said, you can 100% do it on your own and Amazon provides a step-by-step guide on how to do it [here](#).

BTW, a lot of people don’t know this but Amazon now prints paperback copies on demand, which means you don’t have to order and pay for your own copies and then give them to Amazon to stock. This is an amazing development so please take a second to appreciate it if you can.

MARKETING: Your work doesn’t end on release day; you could, in fact, argue it’s just beginning. So sell the hell out of this book once it’s out! Ask people to promote it for you. Bring copies with you everywhere and take selfies with it and

any person of influence you know. Mail it to prospective or existing clients (tip: if it's going to an existing client, always mail two copies, one inscribed for your client and another signed but not personalized, since people are less likely to ever get rid of signed books and if you ask your client to pass the second copy along to someone who might be interested, that could be your new client). There are a million other ways to make the most of your book (including social media posts, video creation, book readings, podcasts and traditional press; definitely check out [our courses](#) to get ideas).

On a related note: many business books have opt-ins sprinkled throughout, so the authors can add readers to their email lists. Consider peppering these in your manuscript (or just at the beginning and end), giving readers a reason to want to give up their email address (such as a quiz, cheat sheet or download). Then these people who've already spent time reading your work can become your fans and/or clients for life.

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR BOOK: [We have clients who have made hundreds of thousands of dollars from their books](#)—not from book sales but from what they've been able to build as a result of their books. Here are a few of the many ideas for you to pursue now that you're an author:

- **Speaking**

By far the most common transition authors take into other work is speaking. This is not just as simple as publishing a book and waiting for the speaking offers to roll in. [While we have a course on the exact steps to take](#), the most important thing to keep in mind is that although it can be a slow build, speaking is one of those careers where your fee can skyrocket once you have success.

- **Coaching**

Creating a one-on-one or group coaching program, either based on material in the book or simply on the topic, provides an author not only with the opportunity to help people on an even deeper level but also a way to take a deeper dive into the topic (possibly providing you with material for book two?)

- **Consulting services**

Want to take the coaching to the next level (and possibly get paid better for it)? Consider offering consulting services to companies who could use whatever expertise you established with the book.

- **Certifications**

If your coaching program is in full swing, maybe you want to create a bunch of mini-me's—or at least train other people in what you've been teaching. Developing a curriculum and providing certification shouldn't be hard if you have a thorough coaching program.

- **Subscription/membership programs**

The same material you create for a coaching program can be used in a monthly membership program. You can run these however you want—with videos and worksheets you've created, with guest interviews, with in-person events or with daily or weekly video check-ins. The main thing to remember is that people abandon monthly programs that they don't use so make this as value-packed as possible (the more the group includes direct involvement with you, the more value it's going to have).

- **Events**

We're living in the day and age of event throwing and your event can be anything from a workshop to a retreat to a weekly gathering and it can be held at a cafe, theater, holistic health center or Airbnb (we've held events at all of them). Your programming can cover the same material that your monthly programs and everything else does but here's the secret about gatherings: oftentimes people are just aching to connect with a like-minded community and thus the activities matter far less than simply the fact that the event is happening.

- **Masterminds**

Call masterminds either the most ingenious concept or the greatest racket out there but plenty of authors are launching them—and with hefty membership fees. Joe Polish runs two Genius Network groups (with a \$100,000 and \$25,000 annual cost respectively)—and he's not the only one. The key to a mastermind is in its members: the price tag is the ultimate weeding out process, leaving members to network and do business with those whose businesses are thriving.

- **Products/swag**

Selling an on-brand product can be a way to take your expertise to another commercial level. James Swanwick, the author of *The 30-Day No Alcohol Challenge: Your Simple Guide to Easily Reduce Or Quit Alcohol*, was doing well with his 30 Day No Alcohol Challenge program but his career skyrocketed when he developed and started selling [blue blocking glasses](#).

- **Podcasts**

Yes, there are a billion podcasts out there. But anyone who tells you it's too late to start one is lying (just look at what we have to say on the topic [here](#)). If you're looking for the next steps to get started, consider taking Anna's [free class](#) on it. One thing to keep in mind: podcasts are very rarely a source of revenue; much like a book, they are a credibility builder but they are even better for providing an opportunity for people to develop a "know and trust" factor with you and therefore support all your other endeavors (detailed above).

For more on what a book can do for your career,
read Anna's stories on the topic:

[Arts Plus Marketing](#)

[Entrepreneur](#)

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN GETTING HELP WITH THAT BUSINESS BOOK THAT'S DYING TO COME OUT OF YOU, [PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM](#) AND LET'S FIGURE OUT IF WE MAKE GOOD PARTNERS!



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