

Essential 10

Author's Guide

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Draft 2.1

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1. Select a Topic and Determine ESSENTIAL10 Book Type

Selecting a topic for your Essential10® book is the most important essential. This is the core premise of an ESSENTIAL10 Book. There are several qualifying factors:

- You are an authority on a topic.
- You have a reputation in the field or topic area.
- You have learned how to create an ESSENTIAL10 book on a topic.

Type of ESSENTIAL10 Book

Once you have chosen your topic, you need to determine what type of ESSENTIAL10 Book you want to write.

Essential10: Certified

An Essential10 Certified book is one by an acknowledged expert in his or her field or a book that has been reviewed and certified by the Essential10 staff as an outstanding work.

This label can be granted by applying as an expert on the Author's page. Additional fees may apply, as review is required for certification.

Essential10 Certified books contain exactly 10 essentials and are recognized in our bookstore and the iTunes Store as such. A Certified title will typically support higher pricing in the bookstore.

Essential10: Straight to the Point

An Essential10: Straight to the Point title is one that can be written by anyone who feels he or she has something to say about any topic. A book can be about whatever the author wishes. It should have exactly ten

essentials and can be of any length, although readers will expect succinctness.

Essential Book™

An Essential Book is any title that does not follow the standard Essential10 format. It may contain a list of 10 essentials or not. It can even be formatted and written in a completely unique style. The sky is the limit. Whether your book is a novel, humor, self-help, or any other form of non-fiction, bring all your creativity and write the book you've always wanted to. Make it as long or short as you like.

Essentials Series™

Authors who have an idea for a series may contact Essential10 with a series proposal. The form for this is found on the Author's page. Once accepted into the series program, an author will be expected to develop three Essential10 Books within 90 days and then deploy at least one additional book every quarter for one year. Essential Series Authors receive a free Authors Page Upgrade and a listing on the bookstore Essential Series rotating marquee.

2. Create The Outline

No matter how certain you are of what you want to say, it's not always easy to know where to begin. There are as many "right" ways to write a book as there are writers. We each have to discover our preferred methodology. In the meantime, these suggestions can help you dive right in.

Outline your ESSENTIAL10 book as you would a school paper. List your 10 critical points. Then list 3-5 or more ideas you want to include for each essential. For example, if you're writing "The Essential 10 Spots Everyone

Should Visit in Boston,” your list of essentials may include the following two items:

1. A trip to the Aquarium, and
2. A meal at Union Square Oyster House.

When writing about the Aquarium, 3 things you might want to mention are

1. A trip to the Aquarium
 - The address
 - The most popular attraction
 - Best times to avoid crowds

For Union Square Oyster House, you could include

1. A Meal at Union Square Oyster House
 - Year founded
 - A story about the best meal you ever ate there
 - A list of famous historic figures who have dined there

And so on.

Don't worry about wording everything perfectly. Just get the basic ideas down on paper.

Decide what you want to write about in addition to your list of 10 essentials. Do you think an introduction would be useful, perhaps to give readers an overview of your material or the intention of the book? If so, list those points in your outline. Do you want to include a bio of yourself? Include that, too. Other things you might want to include in your Essential 10 book are

- References (other books or websites you recommend)
- Acknowledgements (it's always good to thank someone!)
- Photographs or illustrations (if useful)

When creating your outline, it is best to brainstorm or free-associate to capture thoughts. This will give you an indication of the scope you have in mind. If you come up with fifty topic areas, perhaps you have actually just defined five ESSENTIAL10 books. For example, if you were writing a grammar guide, you might sketch out eleven comma rules, eight semicolon rules, thirteen common verb usage errors, fifteen common word choice errors, and twelve miscellaneous punctuation rules. With a little more work you might have outlined five ESSENTIAL10 books on grammar: ESSENTIAL10 Comma Usage, ESSENTIAL10 Grammar: Semicolons Essentials, ESSENTIAL10 Verb Usage, ESSENTIAL10 Common Word Choice Errors, and ESSENTIAL10 Miscellaneous Punctuation Rules.

Think like your readers when envisioning a book or series. Grammar books are very long and cover a variety of topics. You might want to make a book specific to comma usage and price it at \$.99. Then readers (who may also be writers) can buy the specific content they need. This is the purpose of the new ESSENTIAL10 paradigm and is true to our tag line—All You Need to Know!

For an ESSENTIAL10: Certified or Straight to the Point book, there must be exactly 10 essentials. This can be a challenge, as you do not want to artificially bundle points to make the 10 essentials. Look closely at what you are trying to say and take care that you have the scope correctly defined. If you find that an exact number of 10 essentials is simply not appropriate, consider creating an Essential Book. That format is more flexible.

3. Decide on A Title

The exact title is important. While every title will be preceded with the name of its category, for example, "ESSENTIAL10: Certified" or "ESSENTIAL10: Straight to the Point," what comes next will be your title. Here are a few examples:

- Essential 10 Certified: The 10 Most Poisonous Snakes of Latin America
- Essential 10 Certified: What You Must Know Before Purchasing a Home
- Essential 10 Straight to the Point: The Most Romantic Poems of All Time
- Essential 10 Straight to the Point: Scariest Zombies in Motion Picture History

There are several things to consider when selecting your title. These include the following:

- The title must be unique within Essential10. You cannot reserve a title for future use, so your title is only accepted when you upload your book for publishing.
- The title cannot have copyrighted or trademarked words owned by someone else.
- The title should be an accurate, short description of your work.
- Avoid "cute" titles to get attention. Your book will eventually succeed on its merits, not a gimmicky title. However, don't be afraid to be a little playful.

4. Write Your Book

A systematic approach is good even for highly creative writers as it provides structure for the content for producing your books. Some helpful steps include conducting research, learning your writing style, and formatting and logistics.

Conducting Research

There are two types of research to conduct for your book's content. First, you need to ensure the accuracy of the material in a non-fiction Essential10 book. This will require verification of all of your facts and recommendations. This will be fun for the cookbook authors!

The second type of research is to see how your books will look on the iPhone or Kindle reader. Perhaps buy one or two other books that may be similar in styling to your concept. Then you can see how well the length, illustrations, photos, cover, and other style points look when delivered via the iPhone or Kindle.

Writing Style

Pay close attention to your writing style. It is important that your voice match both your content and your targeted audience. Write in your most natural tone. Don't feel you need to sound academic or literary. Write in the same voice that you speak with and although at first it may sound rough, from this, your unique voice will begin to emerge.

Finally, think carefully about vocabulary, sentence, and paragraph structure. Remember that the iPhone reader is a small format. A twenty-five-sentence paragraph might be harder to follow on a digital book than in a print format.

Keep in mind that an Essential10 book is meant to fill the gap between a Wikipedia™ entry and a full-length book. Your work should be short, meaty, and clear. Readers will expect you to get right to the point. It is deceptively difficult to write short works. Authors that can combine clarity, brevity, and usefulness will become the best sellers.

Formatting and Styling

Since Essential10 will automatically convert your Word document into a finished book *without proofreading*, it is your responsibility to submit material that is styled and formatted correctly. When you upload your book, some checks will be performed to ensure you meet technical requirements. While some of these checks may help ensure better formatting, it is your responsibility to submit a document that has been fully vetted.

The best way to do this is to use the Essential10.doc template from your Author's Resource Kit. This template has examples of each allowable element (i.e., heading text, table, picture, and illustrations) that you can use in your Essential10 book. Pay close attention to this template and be sure to check your book in your own reader before you approve the final publishing.

5. Cover, Illustrations, Photos, Tables

In a traditional book, the proper use of illustrations, photos, tables, and diagrams are key to both its functional and usefulness. Likewise, a cover and references to other resources are important in a traditional book. For books created for delivery on multiple devices such as a computer, iPhone, Blackberry, and Kindle, the use of these components needs to be carefully thought out and planned.

Cover

Your cover art will be used to identify your book in the Essential10 bookstore and will be used on the Essential10 iPhone app bookshelf. You have two choices for a cover. First, you may elect to use a default Essential10 cover. Alternatively, you elect to submit a custom cover. There will be a charge for this. Remember, the cover will appear quite small on a mobile device, so consider this when designing your cover. If you are an Essential Series author, you could use a common theme for covers to help readers get to know your brand.

Illustrations and Diagrams

Illustrations can be helpful in traditional print books and do it yourself manuals. They might work well in your Essential10 book, too. However, remember that iPhone readers have a small screen. While they can zoom, small illustrations will need to be clear and crisp to be viewable. Think carefully before adding detailed illustrations.

Photos

Photos can really spice up an Essential10 work. Note that, as per your contract, you may use up to five photos for no charge. After that, there is a

charge to include additional photos. As with illustrations, pay close attention to how a photo will look on a small screen.

Tables

Tables can be a good method to display summary information. Take great care in creating a table, as it may not show up as you hope on a small display. Be sure to look at the template in your Author's Resource Kit for an example of sizes and formatting that will work.

6. Editing

Proper editing and proofreading is critical to your book's credibility. Even if you are the wisest sage ever on your topic and have written an incredible work, a misspelled word in the first paragraph will destroy a reader's confidence. Take care and have someone proofread your work.

Here are several suggestions for proofreading your book:

- Read it backwards sentence by sentence. This forces you to read each sentence as a stand alone entity. Even if you read one of your essential points per day, the ten days of proofreading will be invaluable.
- Hire a freelance editor. You can use the Essential10 Referral Page or find a local editor. Some authors seek out and pay a small amount to an English teacher at a nearby school.

7. References and Links

It is possible to list references with embedded links to web pages in your Essential10 book. References are links that you use to send the reader to other books, written by you or otherwise. For example, you may have a reference to a book you sell on Amazon.com. Use the Template to set this up and test the link from your proof before approving your book for publication.

Links will take the reader away from your book and into the iPhone Safari browser on the iPhone.

8. Legal Issues

Please read and understand your author's contract. If you use content that you do not own (i.e., copyrighted material), we will remove your title the moment this comes to light. If you are not sure about copyrights or fair use, please contact an attorney for clarification, as you do not want to illegally use someone else's work and expose yourself up to a legal problem.

Likewise, if you find your work has been plagiarized or stolen, please contact Essential10 and report that book. We will investigate and take appropriate action.

Please avoid tricks such as using an alias to con readers into buying your book. Please do not submit the Essential10 Guide to Writing A Suspense Novel by Stephen King unless you really are Stephen King. In which case, bring it on!!

We will not accept porn, hate, or other written works that defame public figures.

9. Price Your Book

Pricing is an interesting and complex topic. Proper pricing is as much an art as a science, and it is up to you price your book. Choose a price that seems right after considering the options listed below. Note that you may change your price at any time by visiting your MyEssential10 Author's home.

We suggest pricing your Essential10 work between \$0.99 and \$9.99. The books that will sell the most will be priced in the lower range.

Apple requires the minimum price of \$0.99 for books in the iTunes Store, so your work must cost at least this amount. While Essential10 does not dictate a top price, a book that costs over \$20.00 would be an oddity in the new digital world.

Therefore, consider the following points when pricing your book:

- Who is your target audience? If this is a professional book for executives, full of great advice, and you are a best selling business book author, a higher price will likely be supported. If you are Molly from Mississippi who is writing her first cookbook for teenagers, then you may opt for a lower price. (Sorry Molly!)
- The price should be appropriate for the material. If your book is short and light, then a \$0.99 price is probably right. If it is incredibly insightful and contains material found nowhere else, then go ahead and ask \$9.99!
- Pricing can be changed in MyEssentail10, so you may want to experiment with different price points.

10. Promote Your Book

This is perhaps the single most difficult Essential for new authors. The truth for authors today (whether they self-publish or have a contract with a major print publisher) is that they still have to do their own promotion. You can elect to do almost nothing or start your own marketing company!

For an Essential10 Book, there are concrete steps you can take to promote your book.

- Write books people want!
- Write a book that is useful, endearing, charming, unique, and/or funny.
- Ensure your marketing copy for the Essential10 bookstore is compelling.
- Create and use the Essential10 Author's page.
- Promote your book on your own website and through social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, and blogs.