

THE WRITING LIFE

by Bobbi Linkemer

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Book Thoughts

I spend a lot of time thinking about books — reading them, writing them, helping other people write them, and teaching classes in how to create them out of dreams (and hard work, of course). I love books, but I have no illusions about them. So, let me share some thoughts with those of you who are aspiring authors.

- § Books do not appear out of thin air; they are the product of much thought, planning, discipline, and effort.
- § Most of all, they depend on a process and the determination to trust and follow that process from start to finish.
- § Most of the work takes place *before* the formal writing begins.
- § Every book begins with a concept, and that concept will be tested many times before a finished product emerges. Sometimes, it won't stand up to those tests.
- § One of the best ways to think through and test a concept is by writing a book proposal. That is true whether the manuscript will be submitted to a publisher or become self-published.
- § A proposal is a blueprint that is refined and fleshed out step by step until it finally grows into a complete book.
- § There are no shortcuts to doing it right, and, if you're not going to do it right, why are you doing it?
- § The best part of being an author should be the process, not the end result, although it certainly does feel great to see your name on the cover of your book. The best part is, for *me*, is the act of writing.
- § As an author, you need six characteristics to take you through the process: desire, a compelling idea, a plan, a long attention span, self-discipline, and support.

