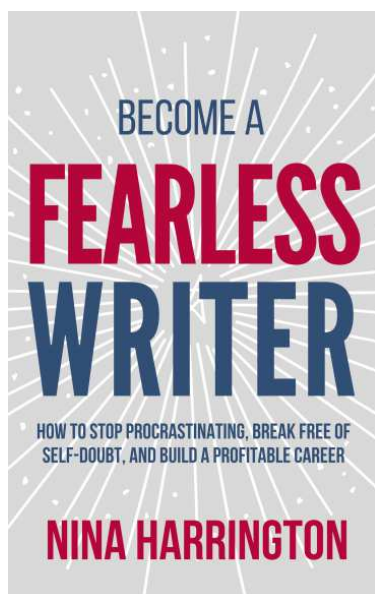




GAP ANALYSIS PLANNING

Objective: To create an Action Plan for your Writing Project

Now it is time for you to create your own timeline for your writing project.

This kind of plan is designed to be flexible.

If you are self-publishing your book, it is easy to adapt the plan from stage 5. You are in control of the publishing model, cover design, book launch and marketing plan for your work. Add these stages into your plan, with realistic timelines, so that you have a complete overview of the book to reader flowchart on one page.

Here is a worked example of a typical ten step timeline for a traditionally published novel of 80,000 words if you can write around 5,000 words a week.

Stage	Actions Needed to Complete this Stage	The Maximum Time You Would Need to Allocate to this Stage	Total Time
10	Book published and distributed.	Can be up to 18 months for a print run following revision and acceptance.	Publisher dependent
9	Book accepted by an editor at a publishing house following submission by agent – possibly following revisions	Can be 3 months or longer for a literary agent to find an editor who loves your work	Up to 6 months in some cases
8	Manuscript accepted by a literary agent	It can take 3 months or longer to hear from your first rounds of agents.	Up to 12 months and many rounds of submissions
From stages one to seven, you are in control and driving the action. From stage 8 the timeline for this example is dependent on other people.			

Stage	Actions Needed to Complete this Stage	The Maximum Time You Would Need to Allocate to this Stage	Total Time
7	Manuscript submitted to a literary agent who accepts your kind of novel	At least 2 or 3 days to prepare a synopsis and submission letter.	26 weeks
6	Research list completed of literary agents	2 or 3 days.	25 ½ weeks
5	Manuscript completed, fully edited and proofread	Final structural editing, copy-editing and proof-reading, ideally by beta-readers, 3 weeks.	25 weeks
4	Editing a second draft of the manuscript	At least 1 week.	22 weeks
3	Second draft of manuscript completed	4 weeks as an example at 5000 words a week.	21 weeks
2	A working first draft of the manuscript	16 weeks as an example at 5000 words a week.	17 weeks
1	A working outline of the book based on your idea	At least 1 week.	1 week

GAP ANALYSIS EXERCISE.

THE THREE CORE QUESTIONS THAT MAKE UP ANY GAP ANALYSIS

- **Where are you now as regards this project?**
- **What is your final dream destination? Can you describe it in detail?**
- **What is the gap between where you are now and where you want to go?**

Grab a pen and paper and write down the answers to the three critical questions as quickly as you can.

#1. Do you have a realistic outline plan for your project?

Quickly sketch out a sequence of steps as described in the worked example, starting with the completed project and working backwards to where you are now. Don't be scared to think big!

Break the entire sequence of events down into small chunks and stages which you can measure. It could take a lot more than ten steps.

#2. How much time and energy can you allocate to this project every day and every week?

One hour a day? Two hours a day? It does not have to be one continuous block of time. Many authors, including myself, write in 20 or 30 minute sprints.

Can you block out two 30 minute sprints every day for five days a week? Or can you manage more than that?

Be brutally honest. If you can work effectively for an hour a day, even if that hour is broken into 20 minute timed writing sessions, that is a brilliant achievement and you will make progress.

#3. Can you create an achievable timeline for this project based on the answers to questions #1 and #2?

You know how much time you have to work on the project.

Many authors set themselves a target number of words per week to measure progress. Could that work for you?

Using this approach, create a timeline plan for your project for the next six months, and then work backwards to the next three months, and then the next four weeks.

"If you talk about it, it's a dream, if you envision it, it's possible, if you schedule it, it's real." Tony Robbins



I love to hear from my readers, so if you have any questions or suggestions, feel free to get in touch at: Nina@ninaharrington.com and visit my website for the latest posts and news: <http://ninaharrington.com/>