

Melvin & Leigh's Book Proposal Guidelines

A well-developed prospectus should be brief (approximately 5-7 pages) and include the following six elements.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Write a brief (no more than 2-3 pages) description of your proposed book's subject matter and its importance to the field. Be specific in explaining your rationale for writing the book and how it fills a need(s) you have identified. Don't assume that readers of your proposal are experts, so go easy on the jargon.

AUDIENCE AND MARKET

Describe your book's intended audience. What fields or subfields? Academic or practitioner? Undergraduate or graduate? Basic text, or supplement? If it is designed for course use, list all potential courses that could adopt your proposed book – but most importantly, identify the primary course target.

List any associations or specific divisions of organizations that could potentially provide targeted mailing lists for promoting your book.

COMPETITION

List at least two or three directly competitive books (author, title, publisher, year) and describe how your proposed book would distinguish itself from these competitors. What will be the "sales hooks" of your book?

YOUR QUALIFICATIONS

Summarize your background, experience, and past writing experience – anything that you bring to the project that uniquely qualifies you to undertake it. Also, please attach a vita.

SPECIFICATIONS

What do you anticipate will be the manuscript's length in double-spaced pages, its timetable for completion, and estimates of the amounts of figures, tables, maps, and any other illustrations?

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Include a draft of the table of contents, and (ideally) one or two sample chapters.