

EPISODE 156

Find the Right Editor for Your Nonfiction Book

Jodi Brandon [00:00:05]:

Welcome to the Write publish market podcast. If you're an entrepreneur considering writing a book to serve your business, you're in the right place. Or maybe you've already decided that's even better. I'm your host, Jody Brandon, book publishing partner for entrepreneurs and 20 year veteran of the book publishing industry, on the Write publish market podcast. In addition to learning from me, you'll meet entrepreneurs just like you and hear about their experiences as we explore all facets of writing, publishing, and marketing, a book that will help your business grow in ways you might not even have dreamed of yet.

Jodi Brandon [00:00:39]:

Our guest today is Ellen Polk, the founder of Sage House Editorial, a business dedicated to helping ambitious, mission driven women transform their expertise, experience, and insights into powerful nonfiction books that allow them to amplify their impacts, inspire action, grow their businesses, create new opportunities, and position themselves as a go to in their industry. Through end to end editorial support and one on one creative consulting, Ellen is committed to helping women take their big ideas from bucket list to bookshelf and become modern authors.

Jodi Brandon [00:01:09]:

So welcome, Ellen.

Jodi Brandon [00:01:10]:

So happy to talk to you today.

Jodi Brandon [00:01:11]:

Thank you for having me.

Jodi Brandon [00:01:13]:

I did read your formal intro, but if you could just give us, like, the skinny real quick, you know, just informally, who you are, what you do, who you serve, all the things.

Ellen Polk [00:01:22]:

Sure.

Jodi Brandon [00:01:23]:

I'm Ellen Polk. I'm the founder of Sage House Editorial. I'm a solo business owner, and, and I work with women who are writing nonfiction books to increase their impact, income, and influence. So usually these books are a part of their larger business ecosystem, and they're packaging some sort of expertise or knowledge or experience or life story in a way to help their existing or maybe potentially a new audience that they're trying to target. And that's really fulfilling for me because I love working with women, but also, it kind of gets me, my business

juice is flowing, and I can see the bigger impact for them, and it gets me so fired up. So it's absolutely incredible work. And I love working with these types of people, and I get to work with books all day, so what's not to love?

Jodi Brandon [00:02:07]:

We have similar client base. And I say all the time, it's the best job in the world.

Ellen Polk [00:02:12]:

Right?

Jodi Brandon [00:02:12]:

I mean, I love it.

Jodi Brandon [00:02:13]:

It's just the best job in the world. All right, so let's dig into. We are. So we're going to talk about editors and finding the right editor and all things related to finding the right editor. And I'm going to, we're going to reference a few times. So anybody listening? We do have Ellen's freebie, which is this comprehensive guide to questions you should be asking when you're looking for an editor. So we're going to, we're going to go through some of that. We're going to answer some of those questions, like throughout this conversation.

Jodi Brandon [00:02:44]:

But I urge you to check that out. And we're, we've linked in the show notes. It's one of the most comprehensive resources on this topic I've ever seen. So do not stop and collect \$200. Do not, you know, just go get that resource. It's so, so good. So let's start, Ellen, like sort of like big picture.

Ellen Polk [00:03:05]:

Like, let's.

Jodi Brandon [00:03:07]:

We talk, we've talked about this before in the podcast, and I know people who follow both of us know that there are different types of editors. But let's just go through in your perspective, what those different types of editors are. Because some people, I think the common misconception that I find anyway, and maybe you feel differently or find differently, is that most people, when they're thinking of a book editor, are thinking of a copy editor that like 7th grade english red pen on your report. But there's really more to it than that. So in your opinion, can you kind of go through the types of editors?

Jodi Brandon [00:03:41]:

Yeah, I think you're spot on. And I tell people this all the time. When most people think, oh, I'm working with an editor, that's what they're thinking of is the copy editing, the really technical. I'm fixing problems in your writing. There's, of course, a step above that and a step below that, like pre and post copy editing types that can happen. So before you get to the copy editing, there's

developmental editing. And this is kind of the macro big picture. You're working with somebody to actually shape the story, to help you build a cohesive narrative.

Jodi Brandon [00:04:13]:

If you're writing nonfiction, somebody who's going to be helping you really pinpoint the claim, the thesis, the main argument, and how to be speaking to the reader's problem. If you're working on fiction, this is somebody who's going to be helping you with the three act structure and the hero's journey and plot holes and things like that. So you're really helping to shape the story with developmental editing. And then we move into the line or the stylistic editing and copy editing. Some editors separate these out into two different services. I lump mine together just because, personally, I have a really hard time doing one without the other. If I'm looking at that sentence level structure, I'm going to be helping you like holistically, make sure it sounds and reads really clearly. We're thinking about the audience.

Jodi Brandon [00:04:57]:

We're not just looking at grammar choices and punctuation. We're thinking about, does the sentence belong here? Is the sentence actually working? Is it providing value in where it's placed in the paragraph? I would say most editors, in my experience, lump those two together, whether or not they call it one or the other, or they describe it as some sort of combo service. And then there's proofreading, which I would argue, is not actually editing. It's just a quality control check. And this is a place where some authors can get a little bit hung up because they think, oh, you know, I've done self editing. I just need a proofreader, and they'll edit my book for me. And I always caution people with that mindset, because a proofreader is, it's not their job to be making substantial changes to your manuscript. They're really just checking the, you know, the dotting, the last I's and the p's and cues.

Jodi Brandon [00:05:44]:

Like, it's really a final quality control check. There's not a lot of really substantial editing that happens there. So, proofreading, I argue, is not actually editing. It's just quality control.

Jodi Brandon [00:05:53]:

I love that you call it quality control.

Ellen Polk [00:05:56]:

That's.

Jodi Brandon [00:05:57]:

Yes, absolutely. And I completely agree that a lot of people think, oh, I did revisions, I had beta feedback, I self edited. I just need a proofread. When I would say, nine and three quarters times out of ten, that's not just what you need.

Jodi Brandon [00:06:14]:

Yes, yes. And I think this is important for authors to have conversations with editors, because you can have that type of conversation with somebody who's in the industry and who can give

you some honest feedback. They may be pitching you on their services or not, but it's still important to kind of have that conversation, because a lot of authors I speak to don't realize that there are differences between these levels of editing. And so you have that conversation, and they have this moment of realization, like, oh, maybe I need to rethink my editing plan, because I hadn't considered x, y, or z yet.

Ellen Polk [00:06:46]:
Right.

Jodi Brandon [00:06:46]:
Well, and it's so important from the get go for everybody to be on the same page. Like, you might think you need one thing, the editor might think you need something else. But making sure that everything's sort of in order and buttoned up before you get started. I mean, that's the time for those conversations.

Jodi Brandon [00:07:03]:
Yes.

Ellen Polk [00:07:04]:
Okay, so let's.

Jodi Brandon [00:07:05]:
Let's dig into the nitty gritty a little bit now. Like, first of all, let's talk about when we should be looking for an editor, because I, I would bet that you have the same issue with this that I do, which is that people wait too long.

Jodi Brandon [00:07:18]:
Yes. I always tell people the right time to start looking for an editor was yesterday, because. Because there, there's been so many times when I've had an author come to me, and, and I work exclusively with nonfiction authors right now. So I have somebody come to me. They send me an email, or they fill out my inquiry form. They have a 50,000 word manuscript, and they're ready to start editing two weeks from now. And I am booked out several weeks to maybe a month or two in advance, and I miss out on a book that maybe I really want to work on or an author who I really want to partner with. And it's just because it's poor timing.

Jodi Brandon [00:07:51]:
I just don't have this space on my calendar. I'm happy to refer them to a trusted editor in my network. But, you know, if you know of somebody who you want to work with and you're an author and you've been dreaming about working with this editor, you need to reach out to them sooner rather than later. Like editing, looking for an editor, sourcing an editor, interviewing editors, should happen much earlier on in the writing process. And people often, you know, place it in their timeline because they think, oh, I'll start looking for editors once I finished writing. It's like, well, you should probably actually start putting out inquiries, doing interviews with them, making a decision, gathering information about pricing and the packaging and personality and

timing those types of things before your manuscript is probably even done, to be completely honest.

Ellen Polk [00:08:36]:

Yes.

Jodi Brandon [00:08:37]:

Agree. Well, I think. And it's an honest thing, right. This is a new world for people, and they don't have any concept of what the process is, how long it's going to take, what it looks like, anything like that. But like you're saying, all the more reason to, you know, start early. And I also get, too, that that's overwhelming for a lot of people. Right. They're like, just let me write the book, and then I'll deal with everything else.

Jodi Brandon [00:09:02]:

But that really then can back up your schedule.

Ellen Polk [00:09:05]:

Right.

Jodi Brandon [00:09:05]:

And it's part of why I created this guide is because I do an exit interview with all of my authors and so many of them, you know, I asked the question of what were your concerns when you were looking for an editor? And almost every single person answers. I was really worried about finding somebody who was able to or back up the skills that they claimed to have on their website or to, to have somebody who was going to be a good partner for me. And I didn't know about the editing process or what that was going to look like. I didn't know what to ask you when I was onboarding. And so that's partly why I created this guide, is because I took all the questions that I wished people were asking me or things that I would say, you know, you didn't ask me about this, but I'm going to talk you through this part of the process during discovery calls. And I just packaged all those questions up into this guide, and it just happened to be 21 nice, simple questions with a bow on the top. That, and hiring an editor is like you're building a team of people. This is your editorial team.

Jodi Brandon [00:09:57]:

This is your publication team. And so you should treat it like you're hiring somebody to join your company. You are an author. The book is your product. And so you want to be hiring and sourcing people who are a good fit for your product, your company, your goals, your timeline, your budget, those types of things. And so there is absolutely nothing wrong with thinking about hiring an editor as you are in the position of power. You are asking these interview questions because you want to find the right person for you, your book.

Ellen Polk [00:10:26]:

Yes, absolutely.

Jodi Brandon [00:10:28]:

You mentioned, too, the magic word there, which I think is fit. And that's something I really want to talk about because I think, again, like you're saying, the author, the business owner, the clients, is in the position of control and power. But a lot of times they seed it, because, again, this is an unfamiliar world for them, which I think makes it all even more important that you find somebody that you trust and it is the right fit for you. So, like, how would you define fit in that sense?

Jodi Brandon [00:11:01]:

Well, I always say that the interviewing process is going to come down to three kind of buckets of questions. It's the pricing and packaging, the editor's experience, the timing, of course, and then the personality, which is that right fit. And so if you're sourcing editors, you should be looking at their website and kind of getting a feel. Hopefully, they've written some website copy that has a little bit of their voice and personality in it. Maybe you've looked them up on social media and connected with them there. Again, we're looking a little bit of personal brand and their own voice to be coming through. How do they speak about their projects? How do they speak about their clients? You know, does that align with you? And what you're looking for in a support partner with an editor. But then it's, I always encourage people, even if the editor doesn't offer discovery calls, like I used to not offer discovery calls.

Jodi Brandon [00:11:46]:

And then I realized the power that those just quick 1520 minutes calls had when I was able to speak to authors pre, you know, signing a proposal or contract or anything like that, just being able to connect with somebody face to face. Not only can you answer people's questions and speak to them about the process or the pricing and your packages, but that's an opportunity for me as an editor to ask the author, what are your goals? What are your vision? You know, what do you want to do with this book? Why is this on your heart to write and publish? And maybe they filled out my inquiry form, and so I have a little bit of information about them. But authors looking for editors who are a good fit for them and their personality and their vision for their book is going to make that experience, that author editor relationship so much more successful, because you're going to feel like you have a partner in your publishing process, and it's not going to feel like, oh, my editor stripped out my voice. They tore up my manuscript with their red pen. It doesn't sound like me anymore. They're trying to force me to do x, Y, and z. If you find somebody who feels like a true ally in the writing process, who you can be vulnerable with, who you can ask questions with, that relationship is going to outlast just this one book that you work on together.

Jodi Brandon [00:12:58]:

Yes, I'm nodding along as you're talking.

Ellen Polk [00:13:03]:

I love all of that.

Jodi Brandon [00:13:05]:

Every single thing that you said, I think is so important.

Ellen Polk [00:13:07]:

And I think that that kind of.

Jodi Brandon [00:13:09]:

Ties back in some of that a little bit to what we were talking about with, like, the grammar and the red pen. I think that if you find the more you can share with a potential editor about the project and get in alignment so that they can make sure, like, okay, this is what Jodie's trying to do with her book. Is she doing that? It's not just about, you know, is this comma, in the right place? I mean, listen, Grammar has its place. Grammar rules have their place, all of that. I mean, I love the Chicago manual of style as much as the next editor does, but I think the, especially for business owners, you're writing a book that has a very specific goal, or you should be writing a book that has a very specific goal. So if you're not, if you're not sharing that with your editor, so that they can help make sure that you are, I mean, I call it, with my one on one clients, their north star. What is the North Star? And how are we getting readers there, chapter by chapter, section by section? Because if we're not, then it doesn't matter if all of your commas are in the right place. Right? You're still not.

Jodi Brandon [00:14:14]:

You're not solving the problem you say you're solving for your reader. So, yeah, I love all of that. I also love that you mentioned vulnerability, because, let's face it, that comes up. I mean, way more often than I ever thought it was going to when I started as a copy editor. Mindset, work and trust and vulnerability. Right. I mean, it comes up all the time.

Jodi Brandon [00:14:37]:

Yes.

Ellen Polk [00:14:37]:

And it's.

Jodi Brandon [00:14:38]:

Writing in itself is a very vulnerable process. And publishing to an audience that may or may not be educated about the writing process is one thing. But I always say sharing your work with somebody who is an expert in the industry is the most nerve wracking thing. Because you know when you hand over this thing that you've created, they're going to be looking at what you've written with a very critical eye because they know what's good, what's not. They know if you've done a good job or not, and they're probably going to point out some deficiencies. But again, if you found somebody who's the right fit, being vulnerable feels less scary because you know that they're going to shepherd you through that experience and provide you with suggestions. And I do the same thing with my one on one clients is we spend that first session, really, we don't even really touch the manuscript. We're just talking about goals, desired outcomes, you know, the big vision, what you want the reader to experience.

Jodi Brandon [00:15:29]:

If you've done that work with your editor, then you know that their suggestions are well intentioned. They're going to be helping you work towards the goal. And so kind of going back to what we're talking about, the power imbalance.

Ellen Polk [00:15:40]:

You know, you and I are on.

Jodi Brandon [00:15:42]:

The opposite side of the fence where we say, you know, the client really does have all the power. But again, this is why I created this guide, is they don't feel that way. They feel very vulnerable. They feel like, oh, this editor is a professional. They're going to look at my manuscript. And I've even had potential clients sign off their emails with like, please don't mind if there's any typos in the email. And I'm like, no, no, no, that's not who I am. Please don't think that I'm, like, judging your emails.

Jodi Brandon [00:16:07]:

This is a safe space to improve, and because, you know, as soon as we start working together, we're allies. And so I want the same thing that you want from your manuscript, and I'm here to help you achieve that big vision and that big goal. So it's a partnership for sure.

Jodi Brandon [00:16:22]:

Hey, business owner, if you've listened to this podcast for a while now, you know how important I think a writing routine is. Preferably one that's in place before you begin that book writing, though, it's never too late. So if you'd like some guidance in developing one, I've created the ready set write challenge for you to help you figure out where, when, and how you're the most productive writer that's going to.

Jodi Brandon [00:16:42]:

Make your book writing so much more efficient.

Jodi Brandon [00:16:45]:

Check out jodiebrandoneditorial.com readyssetwrite. Now back to the show. Yeah, I use the same word, partner, and I think it's, you can't use it enough, I think, with business owners, really, I mean, all authors, but I have found, as I've worked exclusively with business owners, it's really, I like the phrase that you use to power imbalance, because I think what your, your question, your freebie, all of the questions in the freebie, what it does is give them their power to make them understand that, like, yes, you might not, you might not have the book publishing industry knowledge that I have, but this is your project in your business, so you need to be the one taking ownership, for sure.

Ellen Polk [00:17:27]:

Yeah.

Jodi Brandon [00:17:28]:

And I tell every author, like, we go through this whole conversation about my edits, our suggestions, and it's a conversation and a dialogue, and I remind every single person, because I end up using the royal we like, hey, we need to make this change, or maybe we should try this word here. I always do. The caveat of this is your work, and no way am I trying to take ownership of it. And just remember that it's your name on the COVID And I am privileged that you chose me to work with you on this book. And so, like you said, it's that reminding the author, the client, that they are actually in the position of power and they should take ownership over their manuscript. Not in a way that you want to inspire conflict between the author and their editor, but just to remind them that even though you are working with this industry expert, you have chosen to bring somebody onto your team to help make you and your product better. And that should be a collaboration.

Ellen Polk [00:18:20]:

Absolutely. Yes.

Jodi Brandon [00:18:21]:

I love that. Let's dig into a couple, like, examples of the question. I like that you have them in sort of not in the guide, but in your mind in buckets, because that's how I saw it, too, as I was going through all of the questions, you know, so. Okay, so the three buckets are experience and timing, pricing and packages and personality. Am I saying that those right?

Ellen Polk [00:18:47]:

Yep. Okay.

Jodi Brandon [00:18:48]:

So could we let. Could we maybe do just, like, give us an example of a question or two you would ask for each of those buckets?

Jodi Brandon [00:18:54]:

Sure. So, package and pricing. Some of these questions in the guide are going to depend on whether or not you've done a little digging on the editor's website, which I would encourage you to do. If you're looking for potential editors, make the list of people who you think would maybe be a good fit. And then the first step should be to go check out their website. You're probably going to get some information about the deliverables in their packages, maybe, or maybe not. They've listed pricing. A lot of editors list starting prices or, like, an average investment price.

Jodi Brandon [00:19:26]:

So you're going to start to gather that type of information. So that way, when you're on a call with an editor, you can ask them a question like, what is the turnaround time for editing a book of a similar length to mine? Or what would be the price for a book that is nonfiction and 50,000 words? And I would like to get started in two months from now. Or, what is your policy on revisions, and how many rounds of revisions are we going to be doing for this type of investor? So those are some questions that you can ask about pricing and packaging to get a little bit of

information about where, what's happening with my investment dollars. Like, what do I actually get physically out of this experience?

Ellen Polk [00:20:05]:

Yeah.

Jodi Brandon [00:20:06]:

Yeah. I love that. The revisions question, I think, is so important, too, because a lot of people think that it's like a one and done, when really it's not. Like, I mean, there's so much going.

Jodi Brandon [00:20:18]:

On in it, and with some editors, it is. That's why it's important to ask some editors. You hand me the manuscript, I do my edits, I send it back to you via email, and that's it. I send you the final invoice, and we're done. But I would say my packages and your packages, it's a lot. There's a lot more back and forth. There's a lot more collaboration. I do two round editing phase with an in person feedback call and recorded feedback, and written feedback.

Jodi Brandon [00:20:47]:

And if we're doing developmental editing, we might be meeting, like, every single week. Or if it's coaching, you know, there's. There's so much regularly.

Ellen Polk [00:20:54]:

Right? Yeah.

Jodi Brandon [00:20:55]:

That's why it's important to ask, because there are some editors out there who will just say, yep, email me your manuscript, and in x amount of weeks, I'll email it back to you.

Ellen Polk [00:21:04]:

Goodbye.

Jodi Brandon [00:21:05]:

And so it's just important to ask kind of what that back and forth is going to look like.

Ellen Polk [00:21:11]:

Yeah, agree.

Jodi Brandon [00:21:12]:

Okay, so that's the pricing and example of some questions and pricing and packaging. How about experience and timing?

Jodi Brandon [00:21:19]:

So this is. I wouldn't say hotly contested, but it's always, there's always discourse happening in the editing and publishing sphere about what it means to be qualified to be an editor. And I'm

sure almost every editing professional is going to have a different answer for you on this, but generally, you are going to need, or you should be looking to work with somebody, in my opinion, somebody who has some level of training or long term experience doing this type of work. We always say, or I always say, you don't need to find somebody who has a degree, an english degree, whether that be a creative writing degree. I have a degree in public and professional communication. So I spent four years specifically working on nonfiction. But that's not a prerequisite for working with a good editor. You can have find somebody with, maybe they have ten years of working in the industry experience, or maybe they're just getting started and so they have a lower price point and they've been honest with you about, hey, I'm just getting started on this.

Jodi Brandon [00:22:19]:

No, I would love to partner with you because this is something that I'm learning and practicing. So there's no standard threshold of, you need to find an editor with XYZ certifications to be qualified to be an editor. That's a good thing and a bad thing, right? Because then anybody can call themselves editor. But you should be asking your editor, what makes you qualified? What training and experience do you have? How long have you been working as an editor? Do you have a portfolio that I can look at? Is there a specific type of editing, either genre or phase of editing, that you specialize in? Do you have testimonials that I can maybe even reach out to your past clients to say, hey, how was it working with Ellen on this type of project? You want to be able to back up the work that you're doing with social proof, with some sort of portfolio of experience where potential clients can go and look and say, I see that she has done this type of work before. And it's been successful. And she's had positive outcomes with her clients. And so I feel comfortable then handing her my manuscript. Knowing that she has a certain level of education or expertise or experience working with my type of manuscript.

Jodi Brandon [00:23:29]:

The good thing and the bad thing. Like you said, it's good and bad that anybody can call themselves an editor. I feel like it's similar to, you know, like, what self publishing used to. Like, self publishing used to have horrible reputation. Because there was, like, no barrier to entry whatsoever. And it's sort of like the same thing. So you really do, though, and the onus is on you as the author. To do the homework.

Jodi Brandon [00:23:53]:

And ask the right questions. To figure out, you know, does this person really have the experience that I want them to have. Before I hand over again this vulnerable work that I have poured myself into?

Jodi Brandon [00:24:06]:

Right. And there's partial ownership, too, on editors, new editors coming into the space to be transparent with the potential clients. To say. To not position themselves as this tenured expert. When really, you just started calling yourself an editor maybe two months ago. It's also on us as editors to be really honest with potential clients. To say, hey, I'm trying out this new service. Or, hey, I'm stepping into this new genre of editing.

Jodi Brandon [00:24:30]:

And so, therefore, I am offering this service at a lower price point. Or, I'm being upfront with you that this is new for me. Because I want you, as the author, to be able to make an informed decision. I think also, yes, it is totally on the author. To be asking these types of questions. But it is also on us as editors. To be honest about our level of expertise and experience.

Jodi Brandon [00:24:50]:

Yeah, I love that. You're right.

Ellen Polk [00:24:52]:

I love that. Okay.

Jodi Brandon [00:24:54]:

And then that leads into the personality piece of the puzzle. And I think that what you were saying before about discovery calls really comes into play here. Because I think it's the more experience you have, I think the easier it is to tell quickly whether it's a good personality, like, or not. But, like, give us a couple questions. You should be asking, you know, under that sort of umbrella category.

Ellen Polk [00:25:20]:

Yeah.

Jodi Brandon [00:25:21]:

I always encourage authors, especially. So it's specifically in this scenario where maybe we've worked together on a nonfiction book. But they're going to be writing a fiction book in the future. And so I already know that I'm not going to be the one working on that. I encourage those clients of mine. And anybody who's ever asking, you know, what to ask an editor is, there's absolutely no problem in asking an editor, why do you want to work on my book? You know, kind of turning the tables a little bit and trying to suss out whether or not this is just, you know, dollars in the bank for an editor or if they really do have an interest because they think like, oh, I love the work that you're doing, or this concept sounds really interesting to me, or we have similar backgrounds, or I really resonated with this piece of the sample edit that you sent over to me. Or, you know, I've followed you on Instagram for so long, and I've always thought, you know, this would be a really great book that I would love to work on sometime, even though I've never done one in this genre before. So it's totally fair for you as an author to ask the editor on a discovery call, why do you want to work with me? What makes you excited to work on this manuscript? Why do you think this would be a good fit for your portfolio of work? And so that's a totally valid question.

Jodi Brandon [00:26:29]:

It's also fine to be asking them, what is your process like? You know, what style of communication can I expect from you? Or is this going to be all via email or you want to set up WhatsApp or a voxer chat? Or are we going to be having regular meetings? And it's also fine to

just kind of pardon my friends, to shoot the shit on a discovery call to just say, hey, how are you? What's going on? Where are you located? And to just be yourself on that call instead of, I mean, it's easy to tell people, don't be nervous, but just be yourself as much as possible on that call, because again, you are looking for, can you laugh and joke with this person? Do you feel seen and heard by this person? Do you get the sense that they are really good at communicating? Has their communication via email up to this point been timely and clear? Those are all things to take into consideration when you're looking for a personality fit. And of course, if you've been connecting with them on Instagram or if you're on their newsletter or if you've, you know, checked out their website and you like the language that they're using, that's usually a good indicator as well that I think we're going to be, this is going to be a good vibe. But I just want to make sure that, you know, we are not going to be in opposition to each other for the next, you know, two months while we work on this manuscript together.

Ellen Polk [00:27:44]:
Absolutely.

Jodi Brandon [00:27:45]:
Yeah.

Jodi Brandon [00:27:45]:
I think the communication piece is so important too because people have different preferred ways of communicating. So you might get along with someone great, but you really would like, you know, feedback on a video call, for example, or so, or a loom video or something like that. And they only provide feedback via, you know, track changes within the manuscripts and email, something like that. I mean, I mean, it really could be that simple. As you get along great, you think they would be a great person and do a great job. But if they're not, if the communication and the process is not, you know, suitable for one or the other of you, then it's probably not the best, the best fit and that's how you find out is by asking those questions.

Ellen Polk [00:28:28]:
Yeah, love that.

Jodi Brandon [00:28:29]:
And some clients too, you know, I always ask them, you know, what is your preferred method of feedback? And some people have never thought about this question before, but some people know very clearly, like, I don't need you to explain it to me, just tell me what needs to change and I'll execute it. And if you have a question, let me know.

Ellen Polk [00:28:43]:
Yeah.

Jodi Brandon [00:28:44]:
On the other hand, I have some authors who say I need to know or I would like to know why you're recommending these changes. And so for client number one, I very rarely am referencing

the Chicago manual style a, they don't care. B, they told me upfront that they, that's not useful information to them. Client b, I am going to spend more time giving them the exact references to the places in the Chicago mail. This is like, this is 8.15. Here's the rule. Here's why it matters. And that is really important and valuable to them.

Jodi Brandon [00:29:13]:

So it's important to know what type of feedback and communication style works well for you as the authority to then communicate that with your editor. Say, hey, you don't need to spend time writing up a 30 page report for me. Can we just jump on a 1 hour call and talk through this? And that would actually be way more valuable for me. It's going to save you as the author a lot of heartache and you're going to be getting the information the way it works best for you. And you might actually save your editor a lot of time too, because typing up those reports take a lot of time when takes a lot of time. Let's just jump on a call. No problem. When do you want to schedule this?

Jodi Brandon [00:29:49]:

Let's do that.

Ellen Polk [00:29:50]:

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay.

Jodi Brandon [00:29:52]:

For anyone listening. So that's just a brief overview of some questions in those three buckets. Again, I mean, this. This guide that Ellen has put together is so valuable and comprehensive, and there's things in there that you, even if you've written a book before, even if you, you know, have honestly worked in the publishing industry, like, there are things in here that you have not thought of that you need to be thinking of. So kudos to you for putting this together. I love. I love that it's out there for, honestly, all of us to be able to point people to, because it's really going to. I feel like these are the types of resources that elevate, not just your clients or my clients or business owners writing books, but they elevate, you know, the whole book publishing industry.

Jodi Brandon [00:30:39]:

And I feel like that's something that we certainly can't have enough of.

Ellen Polk [00:30:43]:

Yeah.

Jodi Brandon [00:30:44]:

So I'll get off my soapbox about that. But everybody download. Go download this resource. You will. You will not be sorry. You will love it. This was such a fun conversation. I feel like I, we could.

Jodi Brandon [00:30:55]:

We could have gone through all 21 of those questions and had like, an episode in each one of them, I think.

Jodi Brandon [00:31:00]:

But, yes, they each could be their own episode, and then we could have a master.

Jodi Brandon [00:31:05]:

They really could.

Jodi Brandon [00:31:06]:

3 hours long.

Ellen Polk [00:31:08]:

Yes.

Jodi Brandon [00:31:09]:

I don't let anyone leave this podcast, Ellen, as you know, without giving me a reading recommendation. So tell me something you've read recently and loved or are reading now and are loving so far. Give me something else to add to my always growing TBR pile.

Jodi Brandon [00:31:27]:

So not only do I work on nonfiction, I primarily read nonfiction. And right now, I'm almost done with Laura Belgrave's tough titties, which is the subtitle is on living your best life when you're the effing worst. And I have been following Laura for years and years and years. I'm part of her email newsletter. She has done some incredible work with Marie Forleo and Amy Porterfield, I think is actually how I first heard about her. But it is a memoir all about her life growing up in New York City, the craziness of the things in the nineties and the early two thousands, the things that she was writing as a copywriter for Nick at night and Bravo. And now she's been featured in fast Company and Forbes, and she's just an incredible writer. And so hearing which you want to talk about somebody's voice coming out on the page, her writing is absolutely incredible.

Jodi Brandon [00:32:18]:

I will say, if you're going to listen to it on audiobook, maybe put some headphones on, because there are some parts that are a little bit raunchy and over the top, but that's just totally Laura. And I love it. It is so funny. It is. There are so many good, like pop culture. Oh, yeah. We did that in the early two thousands collectively as a society, didn't we?

Jodi Brandon [00:32:37]:

Okay.

Jodi Brandon [00:32:38]:

It's such a fun read.

Jodi Brandon [00:32:40]:

Okay. I love her, but I have not read her book, so I'm glad to have a recommendation there. I like that category, too. Like the memoir, I also read primarily non fiction, and I find that we're in the minority.

Ellen Polk [00:32:52]:

There's.

Jodi Brandon [00:32:53]:

Yes. Yeah. I. I am not a Sarah J. Maas fan. I'll just sit now. You can come for me on instagram. Whatever.

Jodi Brandon [00:33:00]:

I just. That has never been my cup of tea. I really like real stories by real people, and that has just always kind of been my jam.

Ellen Polk [00:33:07]:

Yeah.

Jodi Brandon [00:33:08]:

I'm the exact same way. I feel like we're like long lost soul mates.

Jodi Brandon [00:33:12]:

Yeah.

Jodi Brandon [00:33:13]:

The way our minds work.

Jodi Brandon [00:33:16]:

Yeah.

Jodi Brandon [00:33:17]:

Well, this was a great conversation, Ellen. I'm so happy that you had the time and could spare the time, and we're happy to come on and share all of your knowledge. I so, so appreciate it.

Jodi Brandon [00:33:25]:

Yes. Thank you for having me.

Jodi Brandon [00:33:27]:

Thanks for listening to today's episode of the Wright Publish Market podcast. I know just how busy your schedule.

Jodi Brandon [00:33:32]:

Is as a business owner, so I'm.

Jodi Brandon [00:33:34]:

Grateful you've taken some time out of yours to journey into the world of book publishing with me today. If you are looking for even more book writing, marketing and publishing information and support, check out my mentorship membership, the author Entrepreneurs Lab, where each month we take a deep dive into one element, element of the book world with education, a Q and a session with me, your book publishing expert resources, co writing.

Jodi Brandon [00:33:58]:

Times, and so much more.

Jodi Brandon [00:33:59]:

You can learn more at the link.

Jodi Brandon [00:34:01]:

In the show notes. I hope to see you inside the lab.