



QUESTIONS FOR AGENTS & PUBLISHERS, BOTH TRADITIONAL AND HYBRID

AGENTS

Before you submit to an agent, do your research. Whom do they represent? Have they sold anything recently? Which genres do they specialize in? Is their website current? Is their contact info readily available?

If an agent offers to represent you, here are some questions you should ask:

1. Why do you want to represent me?
2. What is your vision for my book?
3. What is your vision for my career as an author?
4. How could representing my book be a game-changer for *you*?
5. What revisions will I have to make to my proposal?
6. What is your submission strategy?
7. What is your policy about transparency during the submission process?
8. May I speak to one of your clients? (Note: You can always go directly to one of your agent's clients, but it's courtesy to inform an agent that you would like referrals.)
9. What can I expect from you in terms of communication?
10. What is your commission percentage?
11. What is the term of the contract?

TRADITIONAL PUBLISHERS

Even if you have an agent, it's important to vet traditional publishers before you sign with them. Some of these questions will be answered in your contract and can be explained by your agent.

Remember: If a publisher asks you to pay for *anything*, they are not a traditional publisher!

1. What is the advance?
2. What is the payout on the advance? (Some publishers pay advances in thirds, some split it into four payments.)
3. What bonuses will you provide if my book earns out within one year? If my book makes *The New York Times Bestseller* list?
4. What publishing rights will you own? (Digital, print, subsidiary, etc.)
5. Will I have an editor, or will my completed manuscript go straight to copy edit?
6. What is the proposed timeline?
7. Will I be expected to deliver a few chapters at a time, or all at once?
8. What happens if you are not satisfied with my manuscript?
9. Will you submit my book for trade review?
10. What approvals will I have? (Cover, book summary, etc.)
11. What is your marketing strategy?
12. How much marketing support will I receive?
13. Can I get galleys for distribution to influencers and as part of my launch strategy?
14. Will you help me get endorsements for my book from other authors in your publishing family?
15. Is there an option clause?

HYBRID PUBLISHERS

Hybrids offer a different path for publishing than traditional publishers, including more authorial control. However, not all hybrids are equal. Here are some questions I believe you should ask when meeting with them.

1. Do you require a book proposal for consideration?
2. How do you select the books for front list?
3. Will my book have trade distribution? And who is your distributor?
4. Will I have control over my cover, title, and the price of my book?
5. How do you plan to position my book in the marketplace?
6. Does your fee cover developmental/substantive editing? How many rounds?
7. Does your fee include submission to trade reviews?
8. What type of marketing support does your fee include?
9. When do you plan to release my book?
10. What is the royalty structure for print and digital?
11. Do you also handle audiobook production? What is the fee for that service?