

BUY THIS BOOK! **Roleplaying Sheet**

**Complete credit for this workshop goes to Jeff Kleinman of Folio Literary Management, who has presented this workshop to standing room audiences at the Backspace Literary Conference. We are presenting it here because it provides such a useful service to authors hoping to succeed in selling their books to a publishing house. Copyrights to this role-playing sheet belong exclusively to Jeff Kleinman and reproduction of this form is not allowed without permission of Jeff Kleinman.*

Object of the game: learn how to think like a publishing professional—how to "position" your book in the publishing marketplace.

Begin by filling in the accompanying Editor's Tip Sheet, which will have basic information about your book. For our purposes throughout this workshop, you are not the Author of the book; you are the Editor who has fallen in love with it, and hopes to convince the Editorial Board to purchase it.

Then get ready to join the Editorial Board—the people who decide which books, if any, to purchase. Each of you will be assigned one of the following roles, and will ask questions about the book being discussed. To start out, please use the questions provided for the discussion; once you're comfortable, feel free to add your own spin.

1. **PUBLISHER**: *Runs the show. Ultimate boss. Holder of purse strings.*
 1. Does this book fit in line with my vision for this publishing house?
 2. Does this author fit in line with my vision for this publishing house?
 3. Do we buy this book?

2. **DIRECTOR OF MARKETING**: *Controls how the book will be marketed to bookstores and consumers.*
 1. Who is the audience for this book, and how will we reach them?
 2. Is this book going to be review-driven or media-driven?
 3. Does the author have any great access to marketing opportunities?

3. **DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL SALES**: *Searches for niche markets to sell the book.*
 1. Are there any special groups who are/would be interested in bulk purchase of this book at a discount?
 2. Could this book be adopted for a high school or college course?
 3. What are competing/comparable books, and how have they performed? How does this book stand out from the competition? How will we position it?

4. **DIRECTOR OF PUBLICITY**: *Focuses on getting media attention for the book.*
 1. Who are the author's media contacts, and how promotable is the author (speaking, radio, TV, internet)?
 2. How will this book play in the media?
 3. Are there ways to promote this book beyond the usual print/radio/TV venues?

5. **CHAIN REPRESENTATIVE**: *Barnes & Noble, Borders, Amazon, Target, WalMart, etc, will decide how many books to purchase.*
 1. What are the author's previous book sales?
 2. Can the author get good blurbs/is the author well-connected?
 3. Are there other books out there that have done well for us that would make us enthusiastic about this one? (is this category a good seller for us?)

6. **DIRECTOR OF SUBRIGHTS**: *Handles dramatic, foreign, and/or serial rights.*
 1. Does the book have film or TV potential? If so, how strong are our contacts to sell dramatic rights?
 2. Does the book have a market outside the U.S.? If so, which countries do we think would be particularly interested?
 3. Can we get first serial rights (first serial rights are excerpts that appear in magazines either just before or concurrently with publication)? Would magazines be interested in such rights?

7. **EDITORIAL DIRECTOR/EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**: *Job varies—generally concerned with book's physical production.*

1. What list will this go on?
 2. Do I see this as a hardback or trade paperback?
 3. Will this balance/tip our list in one direction or another—i.e. do we have too many books on this topic already?
8. **EDITOR:** *Editorial position. This is author's main contact and in-house advocate for the author and the book.*
1. Do I LOVE this book? (will I jump out of the window if I can't buy it?)
 2. Do I miss my subway stop reading this book, and do I gush about it to anybody who will listen?
 3. What is the authors publishing history (or interesting bio)?

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Title:	<i>The title of your book should be snap and compelling</i>
Author:	<i>Your name goes here</i>
Genre:	<i>Fiction v. Nonfiction--if NF: narrative v. prescriptive; if F: commercial (genre) v. literary (genre)</i>
Imprint:	<i>Large publishers often have several divisions which concentrate on a particular area.</i>
Editor:	<i>Who your editor is may make or break your book</i>
Pub Date:	<i>When will the book be finished? Then add at least 9 months for production schedule</i>
Page Count:	<i>First novels are usually around 400 pages (80K-100K words)</i>
1st printing/Goal:	<i>What's the editor's ideal first print run for a book like this?</i>
Sales Handle:	<i>Also called a "log line". Boil your project down to a single, compelling sentence</i>
Key Selling Points:	<i>What really sets this book apart? What makes it special?</i>
Author Bio:	<i>Does the author have a history (either publishing or otherwise) that will help somehow to sell the book?</i>
Previous Titles:	<i>How have your previous books sold?</i>
Competing Works:	<i>What other books are the most similar to yours, and might cut into your book's sales?</i>
Comparable Works:	<i>What other books would you like to align your book with? -Good sales, -author with similar platform;-Book with similar message</i>

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