

How to Do One-Sheets for a Writer's Conference Meeting

(Prepared by Twila Belk, 2024)

One of the advantages of attending writers' conferences is the opportunity to meet one-on-one with agents and publishing house representatives. During these short appointments, you're invited to pitch book ideas. The best way to do that is with the help of a one-sheet.

A one-sheet serves as a concise marketing tool. It gives agents and acquisitions editors a snapshot of a proposed project.

Here are some of the items to include on your one-sheet:

- Name and contact info
- Name and contact info of your agent (if you have one)
- Picture that reflects your personality or one that is relevant to your proposed project, if fiction
- A short bio that highlights your qualifications
- Summary statement (nonfiction) or storyline (fiction) or HOOK—no longer than 2–3 sentences
- Brief synopsis/description of the book (1–3 paragraphs), written in a similar way as back cover copy
- Tentative title
- Genre
- Target audience
- Projected word count
- Brief comparative analysis
- Short description of your platform and marketing plan
- Possible endorsers (if you have firm commitments)

Tips:

Keep it uncluttered and user-friendly. Bullet points work well.

Shading, boxes, or other design tools help organize and highlight the most important elements an agent or editor wants to see, such as a title, hook, and brief description.

An editor or agent can find it easily in a stack by having your name at the top of the sheet.

If possible, keep all the info on the front side of the sheet, although sometimes the back side is also needed.

Bring extra copies of the one-sheet with you because impromptu connections occasionally occur in the hallway, after a workshop, or during a meal.

If, after meeting with you and reviewing your one-sheet, the editor or agent hands you their card and asks you to send in a proposal, make sure you follow through. Not everyone gets that opportunity.

Questions to ask yourself as you're creating the one-sheet:

- Does it have a nice layout with plenty of white space?
- Did I use easy-to-read nuggets of information?
- Do I have an intriguing hook?
- Did I proofread it to ensure no spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors?
- Did I keep all the info on one sheet?
- Does it represent me well?

You'll find many examples and styles of one-sheets through a quick online search [such as this](#). No two are alike, and some are quite elaborate. **Put your mind at ease by remembering this:** the information on the document is more important than how fancy it is or the type of paper you use.

As you pitch your project, be confident in who you are and what you have to offer. Believe in your message. (If you don't believe it, no one else will.) And be grateful for any direction the agents and editors give you. They are there to help you.

Lastly, pray for divine appointments. God is amazing in the way He works.