

## How to Work with an Editor

By Rachael Bush

### Types of Editors:

- Developmental editor
- Content editor
- Line editor
- Copy editor
- Proofreader

### What Can You Do Before You Submit?

- Brainstorm with a friend – everyone has ideas!
- Keep a copy of every version
- Work with a critique group or partner
- Work with a beta reader
- Keep track of feedback – are you hearing the same thing over and over?
- Self-edit, self-edit, self-edit
- Read other works in the genre you're currently working in
- Reward every setback so editing doesn't feel so personal

### Responsibilities of The Author:

- Be professional
- Be timely
- Make the changes they see as necessary
- Communicate about changes you are unsure about and about the story as a whole
- Be open-minded to all suggested changes
- Accept this as feedback/constructive criticism and not a rejection of your skills
- Make editing a part of your process
- Keep a copy of every version

### Responsibilities of The Editor:

- Be professional
- Be timely
- Use their experience and expertise to bring a work to its best draft
- Communicate clearly and concisely with the author
- Know that feedback may hurt the author's feelings
- Make suggestions on how to improve the writing in front of them
- Be respectful of the work and its authentic nature
- Keep a copy of every version

### Editor's First Round:

- On the first pass, highlight trouble areas that are glaring, but don't leave comments
- On the second pass, point out, leave comments (not line or copy edits):
  - Parts that were confusing
  - Parts that were boring
  - Parts you loved
  - Ask questions

#### Author's First Round:

- Things to keep in mind:
  - It's not personal
  - Be professional
  - Give yourself some time before you respond (if you have it)
  - Think about every comment the editor makes. Are they valid? Have you seen this feedback from other people?
  - Do their changes make your story better?
  - Do their edits change too much of your story?
  - It's okay to ask questions
  - Understand the editor is emotionally invested in your story

#### Other Rounds of Developmental Edits:

- Communicate! You're not each other's brains
- Teamwork is key. Get clarification if issues have not been resolved
- This is a slow process. Don't try to fix everything in one pass
- You will get sick of reading your story. If you're not tired of it at the end, you haven't edited it enough
- The editor has experience. Trust them
- The author knows this story. Trust them
- Repeat these steps until the story is fully developed

#### Now Show It to Someone Else:

- After all the changes have been made, send it to another editor
- Each editor brings something new to the story. We all have our strengths
- Repeat edits in the same way until your story is polished
- Don't make changes that erase the author's voice or compromise the heart of the story

#### Things to Remember:

- Be professional
- Be timely
- Communication and trust are key
- Ask questions and seek answers
- Be patient
- Repetitive feedback should always be noted
- Don't take edits personally

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