

Bonus Material from Jay Heavner

Things you need to be a Successful Writer according to Jerry Jenkins

Author of 200+ books with 21 on the NY Times Best Seller List

1. Get rid of distractions, especially electronics. You need a writing spot and time to write. Got to just do it.
2. Make time to rest. You need to write, but you also don't want to neglect your life. Make time for family, fun, exercise, and rest to rejuvenate mind and body.
3. Writing and editing are do different mindsets. Only wear one hat at a time.
4. FEAR! Every writer has it. Even Jerry Jenkins. Don't let it paralyze you. Keep at it. Persistence. Like eating an elephant, one bite at a time. Hard work leads to success.
5. You need a schedule and deadline to get things done. Schedule work. Schedule procrastination. After all, you are going to do both. Set a deadline. There's no finishing unless you start.

Why do people write?

How many of these reasons describe you?

You write because you have to. There's something inside of you that has to get out.
You have something to say that no one else can.
You write because you like to make things up.
You like to express yourself.

You like to find things out. You discover things you never would have if you hadn't decided to tell a story. Your imaginary characters will tell you things and secrets you would have never known.

It's better and cheaper therapy than a psychiatrist's couch. It releases stress. It's a good place to find yourself.

Give yourself the freedom to create something worthy of your signature at the end. And make it worthy of readership. Make it enrich your life and the lives of those who read your books.

Writing is one of the few professions you get better as you age. You won't do that with sports.

Writing is the beautiful inner music you produce with words and sentences. You create a story that sings in the heads of your readers. When you do that, they can't put it down. It's so satisfying at the end they're sorry to see it end, and must come back for more.

Writing is a painful and bloody process that takes up our free time, haunts you in the night, and pains you as your novel grows. Some have compared it to pregnancy. It pains you and stretches you as it develops and becomes larger. With great pain, it's birthed. And then we forget the struggle and pain and bask in the joy of our creation. Shortly afterward, we ask, "Now what? What's there's more?" Yes. There's more. Much more. Now you must introduce your baby to the world that doesn't know it exists.

Do you have to be a little crazy to do all this? Probably, but it's something you can't not do. Kick back, enjoy the ride, and make it the best ever. You only walk this way one time.

Do you have a goal? Do you have a plan? What is your mission statement? Again, why are you doing this? To become famous or a millionaire or both? It's unlikely you will, but if you want this, find someone who has done it. I believe they'll tell you it's knowing what you want, going after it, a lot of hard work, perseverance, and a bit of luck.

Why do people read? 4 reasons.

1. Escape.
2. Entertainment
3. To learn
4. To be inspired

The more of these you can put in your book and do it well makes a book your reader can't and won't put down. Satisfied readers will return for more. Have more for them to devour.

To connect with your readers, tug at their heartstrings, their emotions. Emotions carry a story, not the plot, nor characters, or dialog, although all are important. Story is a safe place to face danger, but you don't have a story until something goes wrong.

Readers want to put on the hero's skin and become him or her. They want to experience what he does. In a good story, your reader sits on the hero's shoulder and sees the story. In a great story, your reader sees it thru the hero's eyes and hears it thru his ears. He experiences it thru all 5 senses. Make your reader and character become one and people will want more.

You tell a good story, but you show a great story.

Tell vs. show example

Tell – He was angry.

Show – He clinched his fists. His breath came in gasps. If the other man said a word, he'd deck him.

Hemingway described writing as your heart bleeding on a page.

Fill your pages with your heart's breathings.

Create characters your readers love, feel for, and relate to. Make them become alive and real. And then do terrible things to them. Squeeze them like grapes and then see what's inside.

Marketing

You must market. You got to get the word out about your baby. It's your responsibility whether self-published or traditional. Successful writers are successful marketers. There's an old story in the Bible about hiding our lamp under a basket. Marketing is shining our light, fiction or nonfiction, to the world.

Think of it as a business. Do you have a marketing plan? You spent all those many hours and dollars creating your work. Don't you think you should spend as much marketing it? It's okay to make a profit. Some do. Some don't. If your goal is to make money, maybe even a lot, find out what the writers are doing that make a lot, and duplicate their pattern. If there is a secret, that's it. Great story. Great cover. Great blurb. Exposure. Like real estate, location, location, location. Writers need eyeballs, eyeballs, eyeballs. And we get that with marketing. If your book is worth reading, it's worth promoting. You need a marketing plan.

Email list to stay in touch with your fans, readers.
Website? Got one?

Do you have a platform? Think of it as a pulpit of a preacher. Who do you touch with your work? For a preacher, it's the congregation in the church or online broadcast. Think of Billy Graham. - What was his platform, his pulpit? Who was felt his influence? That was his platform. That was his pulpit. He had a plan to get His story out to the world. Do you have a plan to tell the world about what you've created? You need one you will carry out.

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