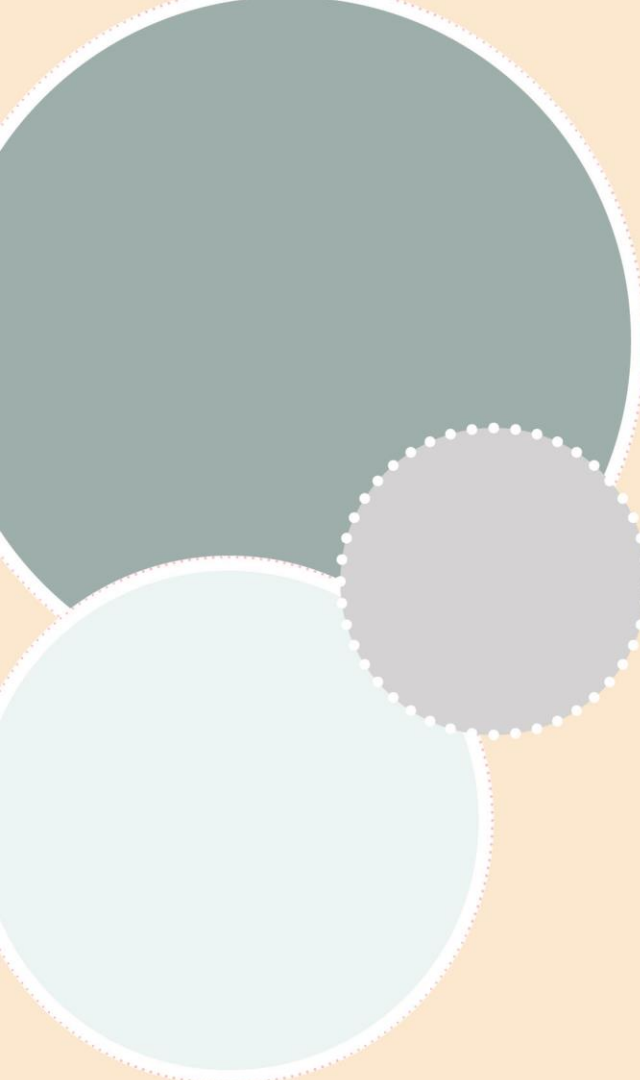




Outlining Session

Getting Your Book Content
Out of Your Head and Onto the Page

*b*inspirebooks



Why Outlining?

- **It takes away the guesswork.** Staring at a blank page and trying to work up the energy to write is no fun. When you work from an outline, you know exactly what the next step is, and that makes writing easier.
- **It speeds up the writing process.** When you don't have to guess at what comes next, you will write faster. People who use thorough outlines when writing nonfiction books write much faster than those who don't.
- **It eliminates fluff.** The excess use of "fluff" (words used just to fill space) hijacks many books. When you use an outline for your book, you won't have to rely on fluff to reach your word count.

Step

1

Determine
Your Book's
Audience

- What need does your book fill?
- What problem does it solve?
- Who needs your book?
 - Think of three types of people who need to read your book.
 - Think of three types of people who WON'T need your book.

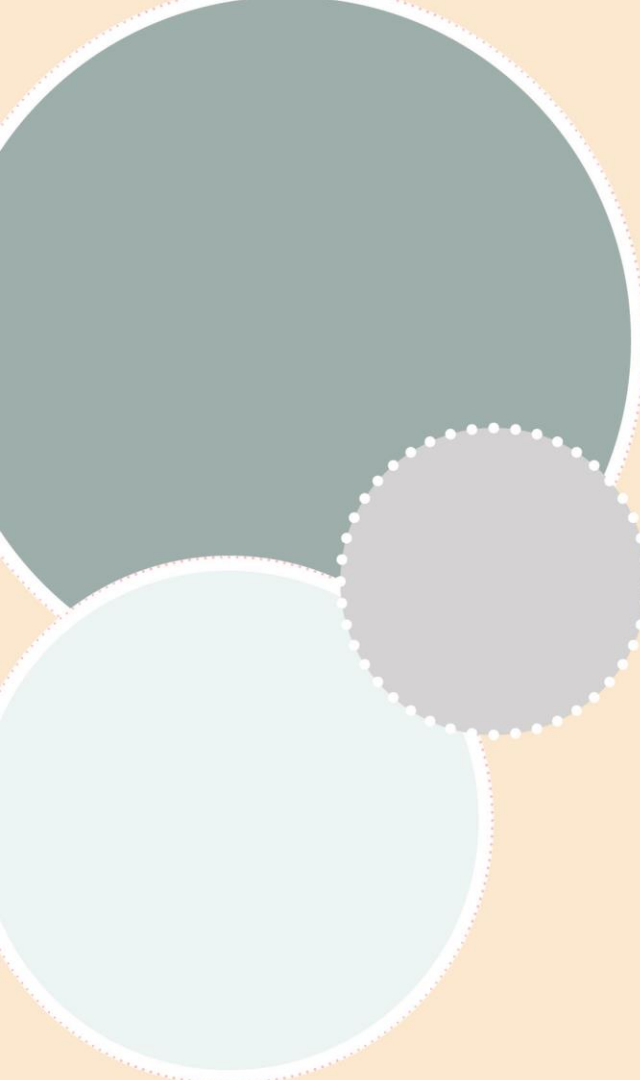
Step

2

Determine Your Book's Style & Tone

- **Expository.** An expository book explains something in detail to its readers without opinions or thoughts.
- **Descriptive.** Authors use this style when they want the reader to feel as if they are there right alongside them.
- **Narrative.** If your book lends itself to story form, you will write in the narrative style. A great example of this style is someone who is telling their business success story to position themselves as an expert in the industry.
- **Persuasive.** If you're writing a book to sell readers on an idea or convince them of something, you will use the persuasive style.

Which style or tone might be a good fit for your book?



*Take a moment now to write a one-line idea for your book based on your audience and the problem your book will solve.

For example, a one-line idea for the nonfiction bestseller Atomic Habits by James Clear would be the following:

“Atomic Habits offers a proven framework for improving every day through practical strategies that will teach you exactly how to form good habits, break bad ones, and master the tiny behaviors that lead to remarkable results.”

Step

3

Determine Your Book's Topics

- Once you know your audience and the problem you're solving for them, you can start to list topics you want to cover within your book.
- You can do this with sticky notes on a white board or wall, as a list in a Google Doc, a mind map, or with a more free-flowing posterboard of visual ideas.
- Within your topics, once you are finished listing them, identify your main idea or theme then find supporting ideas that will serve as chapters or sections.
- Keep in mind the need that you're filling for your target reader and how each chapter or section will move them closer to that goal.

Main ideas/themes you discovered in your topic brainstorming:

Step

4

Determine Your Book's Format

- **The three-part book.** If you're writing a book to disrupt an industry or make people think a different way about something, this is a good format to use. With it, you will break down the book into three logical parts with a beginning, a middle, and an end.
- **Themed books.** If you're writing about a large subject, you can use themes as the format for your book. With this method, you will break down the overall themes of your topic and assign each one a chapter.
- **The list.** If you're writing about a broad topic and want to break it down in a list style, this is a great book format. Example: Steven Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*.
- **Frontloaded.** If you're presenting a new idea or concept, this book format may work for you. When using it, you use the first half of the book to present your new concept or idea. Then, use the last half of the book to talk to the reader about how to incorporate it into their life.
- **Chronological.** This is common with how-to books, where you take a subject and break it down into a step-by-step process for your readers.

Step

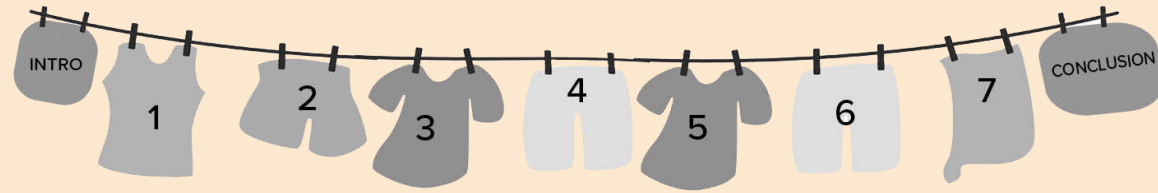
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Determine Your Outline Structure

Which book format(s) might be a good fit for your book?

- Once you determine your format, you can start creating the rough structure of your outline.
- For example, if you are using the “three-part book” format, your structure will neatly fall into a three-section book with supporting chapters. With a chronological format that has clear steps or a system, you would list those steps in order by chapter.
- You will want to include an introduction and a conclusion in your outline as well.

Notes



Outline Structure

- Think of your outline as a clothesline. Each chapter or section will be separate, but it will need to be connected or “hung” from the main theme or idea of your book.
- You can be as high-level or detailed as you want right now. The point of this initial outlining session is to get everything out of your head and into a visual representation.
- Your outline structure may change during your planning stages or even as you write. Be open to it!
- Always keep your reader in mind.

Final Thoughts

+ Next Steps

Outlining Session

Outlining is just a tool to get your thoughts and ideas on paper. Don't get too overwhelmed with perfection at this stage.

*After our initial Zoom session is complete, please send your rough draft outline with your notes on **target audience**, the **problem your book solves**, your **one-line idea**, and any other pertinent details.

I will work to create a formal outline for you in the format and structure we've decided are best for your content, along with prompts to create additional content and begin writing.

Feel free to reach out at any time for help. You're not alone. 😊