



THE EDITING PROCESS DEFINED

At To Press & Beyond content is king, and we view editing as a vital part of any book project. We understand that especially for first-time authors the editing process can be baffling, if not daunting. We perform all levels of editing — from helping you shape your book, to content, substantive, and copyediting to proofreading.

Here is some further information about the process and the different levels of editing we offer at TP&B to help you determine your needs.

1. **Helping You Shape Your Book** — This is when you have not written a draft, but have an idea and perhaps some raw material for a book. We work with you to flesh out an outline and then continue to work with you on a chapter-by-chapter basis, giving critical feedback and suggestions along the way.
2. **Content Edit** — When a first draft of your manuscript is completed and you are looking for feedback, we will read and give a written critique of the manuscript. There is one follow up meeting with you (either in person or by phone). At this point you may decide to make some changes or additions based on the feedback we give you. The editing process continues with giving feedback on changes and new material.
3. **Substantive Edit** — A substantive edit (or developmental editing) includes some content and copyediting but is much more. It deals with correcting errors of word usage (redundancy, passive voice, wordiness, and word choice). It involves editing sentence structure and paragraph structure. It also includes checking organization of the material and querying you with major problems. In a substantive edit we keep an eye on style (the tone and voice of your writing and make sure you are using the appropriate level of language for your audience). We verify that headings reflect the text that follows. Substantive editing involves rewriting awkward or confusing sections and querying you if we are not sure of the meaning of something. As well, we review your manuscript for sentences, paragraphs, and sections that could be cut.
4. **Copyedit** — This happens when you have already had a content edit and/or a substantive edit and are now looking for a line edit (punctuation, grammar, spelling, repetition, clarity, consistency of style).

5. **Proofreading** — It is recommended that this be done before the book goes to the designer or typographer and again before the book goes to the printer. This takes place after all the above has been accomplished. Small changes may be made, spelling errors caught, and inconsistencies found that were not picked up during the copyedit stage. Proofing also is done at the blue lines stage (either digital proofs or hard copies) that comes from the printer. Always insist on seeing the blue line proofs before you go to final printing.

In today's publishing landscape, with so many books being published traditionally and independently, there is no substitute for a professional book editor. They can improve your work immensely. They'll pick up things that your high school English teacher or friend who works for the local newspaper won't. Even if you're looking for a traditional publishing deal, you need to submit a manuscript that won't end up in the round file because it wasn't professionally edited. The bottom line is that every writer needs an editor!

"Finish the first draft and then we'll talk." Michael Korda, former editor-in-chief of Simon & Schuster, New York City.