



Claim Your Authority: Make writing your book easier with a manifesto

I knew what I wanted to say. When I talked about my book idea with my colleagues, I felt the fire and the passion of what I want to share with my readers.

This was followed by the impulse to write an introduction, a 'what this is about'. I wanted to write something that rang true, that would incite joy and possibility and empowerment.

But when I sat down to write my introduction, the idea of drafting something that big and meaningful hindered me. My writing felt stiff and formal.

Does this happen to you? Here's my solution: write a manifesto for your book and work instead of your book's introduction.

A manifesto is easier to write than an introduction

A manifesto is about what the impact you're committed to having for your audience. Thinking about what you want for them will help you get away from the work being about you.

An introduction is an explanation of what is to come. You may not know what exactly will be in your book, so it's better to write the introduction after you've written the book.

A manifesto is a stake – what you're taking a stand for. It can be used for your work outside the book, if you do workshops or book tours, for example.

Speak your intention

Okay, even though the difference between a manifesto and an introduction is clear, it can still feel difficult to sit down and draft your manifesto.

Try this exercise that I use with my clients and that finally worked for me to carve out what I wanted to say.

(Note: if you have stage fright or dread public speaking, imagine that for the sake of this exercise, you are released of that fear.)

Imagine that you're in a room full of the people you wish to reach. You're on stage, looking out over your audience. They're smiling at you, sending love and appreciation. They are eager to hear what you have to say.

You have five minutes to tell them what you want to share. Answer these three questions to get to the heart of your work:

- What do you want for them?
- What must they know now?
- What do you want them to do with the knowledge you've given them?

Imagine yourself speaking to your people, from your heart, as if this were your one and only opportunity to do so. The time is now. The need to share your work is urgent.

Feel free to speak it aloud and record it. You can play it back later. Use Dragon Dictation software or other recording device to do it. Or just speak it, then type like mad what you've written.

I believe that for this kind of writing, if you're not crying or nearly crying, you haven't dug deep enough to write what's truly meaningful for you.

Imagining a direct and sincere communication with the people you're writing for can lead you past insecurities that are common at this stage.

Draft your book's manifesto now

Drafting your manifesto can help you focus on your work as a gift to your people instead of a reflection on how great you are. Your manifesto will help you get out of your own way and hush your inner critic.

This may take several drafts, and it may take time. Don't worry about it. Get the gist of it out with your manifesto and keep going.

Have you written your manifesto for your life, work or book? How do you use it to fuel your writing? Share in a comment below.

Here are some resources for further exploration on how to write a manifesto.

<http://www.lifeoptimizer.org/2012/01/20/how-to-write-a-manifesto/>

http://www.creativecreativity.com/2007/04/write_a_manifes.html