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Dawn Kinzer [www.faithfullywriteediting.com](http://www.faithfullywriteediting.com) dawnkinzer@comcast.net

**Tips to Finding the Right Freelance Editor for You**

**Tip #1**

**Choose an editor who is knowledgeable about your genre and publishing guidelines in the industry.**

The publishing industry uses the following books as guidelines/rules when it comes to grammar, spelling, capitalization, hyphenating, punctuation, formatting, etc.

*The Chicago Manual of Style*

*The Christian Writer’s Manual of Style*

*The Merriam Webster Dictionary*

**Tip #2**

**Understand the different types of editing, and make sure your editor clarifies his/her definitions.**

My definitions:

**Developmental Editing**

This type of editing is more “big-picture” focused. A developmental editor works closely with the author on a specific project from the initial concept, outline, or draft (or some combination of the three) through any number of subsequent drafts.

**Critique**

A critique will provide an assessment/review of your manuscript, noting its strengths and weaknesses. I point out specific problem areas and give general suggestions for improvement. A critique doesn’t include detailed advice on grammatical and technical issues.

**Substantive (Content)**

A substantive edit focuses on the content being presented in a logical, engaging, and professional fashion. I check for flow, structure, clarity of subject, and readability. In fiction, this edit also focuses on character development, dialogue, tags, beats, plot, subplot(s), theme, pacing, tension, voice, point of view, setting, the five senses, passive writing, showing vs. telling, and a satisfying story resolution.

**Copyedit (line by line)**

A copyedit includes the elements of a proofread, but it also focuses on style, continuity, word choice, clarity, redundancies, and clichés. I don’t change the meaning, but I look for ways to make what you write better. In nonfiction, I check to see if sources are cited for statistics and quotations. In fiction, I look for inconsistencies in point of view and tense.

**Proofreading**

A proofread will catch errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, basic grammar, inconsistent format, typos, and word usage (such as further vs. farther).

**Tip #3**

**Don’t be afraid to ask questions or communicate your needs.**

Some questions to ask:

1. Does the editor provide a sample edit?
2. Does the editor use Track Changes?
3. Does the editor use a contract?

**Tip #4**

**Understand potential fees for editing and how your editor expects to be paid.**

1. Some editors charge by the word, some by the page, and others by the hour. Some also charge for time spent answering e-mails and phone calls.
2. Some editors require full payment up-front. Others will take half payment when they start work, then the rest of the payment at mid-point.

**Tip #5**

**Keep reasonable expectations.**

1. **Time.** Understand that it might take several months before the editor of your choice is able to begin work on your project, and good editing also takes time. As an example, it may take up to six weeks to have edits returned for a full-length novel.
2. **Perfection.** Don’t expect your returned manuscript to be error-free. Editors are human, and no matter how hard they work, they may still miss a few things.

**Resources**

**Christian Editor Connection (CEC)**

[www.christianeditor.com](http://www.christianeditor.com)

You have the opportunity to connect with qualified editors. There’s no charge for submitting a request, and there’s no obligation to hire anyone.

**National Freelancer’s Association** (average rates charged for editing)

<https://www.the-efa.org/rates/>