

My Top 18 Tips for Authors

Frank Viola

The following are my top 18 tips. They are small slice and preview of my [SCRIBE online training](#) for aspiring and accomplished authors.

The SCRIBE training is all online. Once you get it, you have it for LIFE and go through it at your own PACE.

It only opens once a year (in March), so if it's March, you can get it now. If you are reading this before or after March, join the wait list so you're notified when it reopens.

Just go to ScribeOnline.org for details.

Writing Tip #1: Discover the power of the cumulative effect. A little writing over time equals a book. So learn the art of plodding. This is how I write [my own books](#). Plod, plod, plod.

When I'm motivated, I write longer. When I'm not, I still write something. I write whether motivated or not. Even if it's a paragraph. Eventually, I push myself from my desk, and I'm looking at a finished book.

Writing Tip #2: Writer's block can be cured easily. While an author may get stuck and the pages may go blank, no one gets "talker's block."

There are nine cures for writer's block (I go through them all in the SCRIBE training). But one of the most effective is to sit down with a friend or spouse and have them interview you about the subject of your book.

Encourage them to ask you many follow-up questions. Record the interview with a digital recorder. Then pay someone to transcribe it or use an online transcription service (there are several that are excellent).

You will have content for your book, and you'll have obliterated your writer's block. Simply by talking, talking about your subject.

Writing Tip #3: The title for your book is critical. One word, two word, or three words titles are best. Making the title too long can be problematic. The subtitle gives the explanation of the content so it can be longer.

If you're stuck finding a good, compelling title, here are some strategies. Look up the best albums of all time in every genre (rock, pop, country, jazz, classical, etc.). You'll be stimulated with some great ideas.

If a title is already taken by a recent book, use a Thesaurus for other ideas. Book titles aren't copyrighted. Old titles or unknown titles are often reused in new books. You just don't want to use a title from a recent book or a book that's well known.

Writing Tip #4: Never, evah, evah write and edit at the same time. Write first. Get the clay on the wheel, raw and imperfect. Then edit.

Writing is a left brain activity. Editing is a right brain activity. Consequently, to write while editing is to constantly switch between brain hemispheres. The result is hampered progress. So write like a drunk and edit like a surgeon.

Writing Tip #5: It takes a great deal of bravery to send a book into the world. Fear is your main hindrance and obstacle. Learn to dance with fear and refuse to be undermined by it.

Note that training from successful authors can teach you how to defeat fear. There are many strategies for this. If fear wins, you don't finish or publish.

Writing Tip #6: Create a daily writing ritual and treat your writing sessions exactly like you would an important appointment with a human being. Meaning, if someone asks for your time then, you simply say, "I must decline; I have a previous commitment."

If not, you'll probably never complete your book. 80% of Americans say they want to write a book, but most never complete it. And among the few who do, they have no idea how to promote it. Sadly, most refuse to invest in training that teaches proven and effective methods of book promotion and marketing. (Something we cover in SCRIBE.)

Writing Tip #7: Always write for and to the reader. Keep the question that every reader has in mind at all times, "What's in this book for me?" Most authors fail here. They write only for themselves instead of for the reader.

Your job is to give the reader something of value. When they consider buying your book, their main question is always: "Why do I want to spend time and money on this book? What's in it for me?" You must answer this question for them in the book and in all your promo material. Answer it compellingly.

Writing Tip #8: Write your easiest chapters first, even if they are not sequential in your Table of Contents. This will give you momentum. Many authors get stuck in a difficult chapter and their work freezes. So start with the easiest first and the hardest last.

Writing Tip #9: Don't make the mistake of investing your time, energy, and money in writing a book and ZERO time and money investing in being trained on how to promote it effectively.

This mistake is why most books don't sell more than 300 copies in their entire lifetime. Instead, most authors today will spam Facebook groups, LinkedIn personalities, and A-list bloggers. But this doesn't work.

Investing time, energy, and money into writing a book, but little investment in being trained on how to promote it is like a baseball hitter who has invested all his resources into learning how to hit fastballs, but zero investment in learning how to hit curves. The result – endless strikeouts.

If your answer to being trained is, "I can't afford it," then you're a hobbyist, not a professional. And your books will have limited distribution.

Writing Tip #10: Many authors believe that posting their books in different Facebook groups is effective. It's not. Few people see those updates in a Facebook group. And even fewer actually click the links. Still fewer will purchase the book.

Posting on *your* Facebook page is different because that's your home field. People voluntarily chose to be your friend, which indicates they are interested in knowing what you're up to. Even so, promoting your book on social media isn't terribly effective.

Writing Tip #11: All authors should start a podcast. In June 2018, I released my signature book on the kingdom of God – [Insurgence: Reclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom](#).

Six months later, January 2019, we launched [the Insurgence podcast](#), and it's already received over 300,000 downloads.

So my advice – start a podcast using the #1 rated podcast app – [Podbean](#). It's easy to use and powerful.

Podcasts will help you grow your audience, and in turn, they will convert into book sales. They also allow you to create a closer relationship with your readers.

Writing Tip #12: Learn how to deal with criticism.

Unless your only readers are your best friends and parents, you will receive criticism. It's essential, however, that you recognize [the three different kinds of critics and how to react to each one](#).

If you have thin skin and can't tolerate criticism, then find something else to do. Writing isn't for you.

Writing Tip #13: Accept interview requests even from radio stations and podcasts that have small audiences. Get the recording of those interviews. Edit them and retain the best parts. Then put the excerpts of the interviews on your podcast.

One of the first interviews I ever did had a very small radio audience, but I published an edited version of the interview on my podcast, and it's had over 14,000 downloads.

I do the same with spoken talks. Once I delivered a message at a conference where only 200 people attended. I recorded the message and put it on my [Christ is All podcast](#) where it's received over 46,000 downloads.

Writing Tip #14: Use exclamation points sparingly! (They communicate anger instead of passion like they used to.) Instead, use *italics* for emphasis.

Writing Tip #15: One of the greatest obstacles to writing is when you are feeling depressed, upset, or frustrated. These negative emotions kill creativity and productivity.

You've got to find a way to soldier through them, and write regardless of how you feel. One of the ways that I've found helpful in this regard is to listen to music that speaks to my emotions. Music is language for the emotions. Remember David playing his harp for Saul and the results.

Writing Tip #16: Sitting is the new smoking. As a writer, try to do at least 50% of your writing standing up. This requires that you either buy or create a stand-up desk.

([My PROLIFIC course](#) includes photos of my workstation and the stand-up desk I've created along with links to the supplies and tools I use.*)

Writing Tip #17: Perhaps the best tip I can give to authors is to start a blog. Right now, the space for blogging is wide open because the majority of bloggers have quit.

A blog does many things. It allows you to build an audience of faithful readers who will be eager to read your book when it releases; it gives you a platform to test drive your writing and receive feedback on it; and it helps you hone your writing craft.

(Some of the top writers of our time and I created an online course for bloggers that you take at your own pace. It's called [The Buzz Seminar Master Course](#).* The course will teach you everything you need to know about creating and maintaining a successful blog.)

Writing Tip #18: The untold secret about writing is that it is one of the most difficult things a human being can do. No one tells us that it's virtually impossible to write and write well. The most intelligent people on the planet cannot pull it off.

So the first lesson for the writer is to know this: It's profoundly difficult, nearly impossible. The process of excavating your mind and heart and then putting what you discover there onto a blank page that is pleasing to the ears is the impossible task. The only way through is to recognize this, accept it, make peace with your mediocrity, and take the plunge by writing and writing and rewriting – regularly. And sticking with it no matter how difficult it is.

This is where most people who attempt to write fail. They eventually quit. It's just too hard. The relatively few who push through and refuse to give up are those who end up pulling off the impossible.

The second lesson is to find ways to reward yourself every time you write, and employ systems that have worked for other writers. Therein lies the secret of moving from mediocrity to excellence.

In this light, what is a book? It's an empirical proof that's managed to push through the veil of the impossible into the possible.

* When you order [the SCRIBE online training for authors](#), you will get both the [PROLIFIC course](#) and the [Buzz Seminar Master Course](#) as free bonuses.