

Workbook provides everything needed for success in nonfiction magazine writing

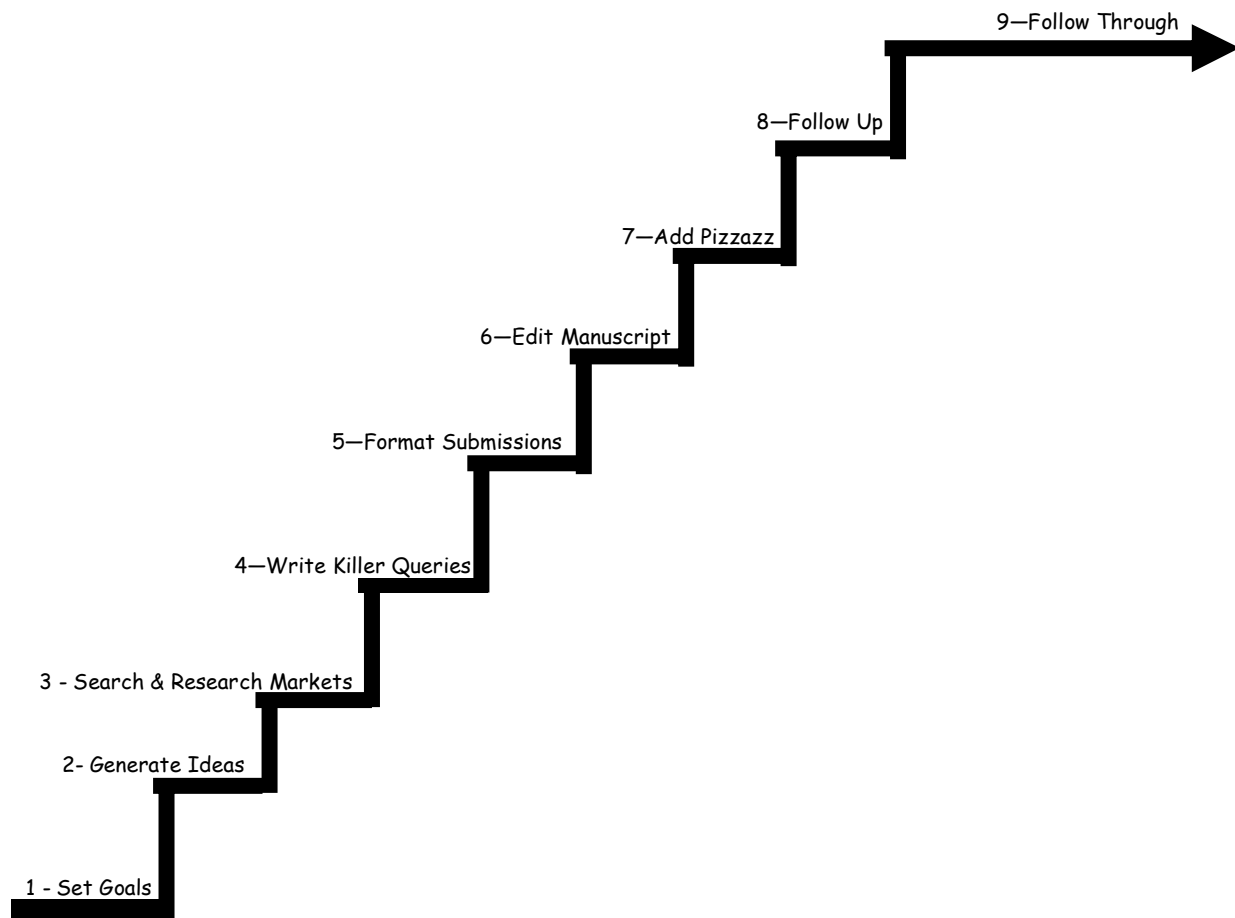
Nine Steps to Successful Nonfiction Magazine Writing

**Buy The Complete Version of This Book at  
Booklocker.com:**

<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/2880.html?s=pdf>

# Nine Steps to Successful Nonfiction Magazine Writing

by Angela Dion



## Contents

<b>Welcome to Success</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Step 1: Set Goals</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Step 2: Generate Ideas</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Step 3: Search &amp; Research Markets</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Step 4: Write Killer Queries</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Step 5: Format Submissions</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Step 6: Edit Manuscripts</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Step 7: Add Pizzazz</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Step 8: Follow Up</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Step 9: Follow Through</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Appendix A: Glossary of Terms</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Appendix B: Answers to 25-point checklist</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Appendix C: Guidelines for Critiques</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Appendix D: Article “Four Reasons to Keep All of Your Rejections”</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Some Thoughts for the Rejected Writer</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>About the Author</b>	<b>32</b>

*If you want to change the world, pick up your pen. -Martin Luther*

*The grace to be a beginner is always the best prayer for an artist. The beginner's  
humility and openness lead to exploration. Exploration leads to accomplishment.  
All of it begins at the beginning, with the first small and scary step.  
-Julia Cameron*

## Step 2 - Generate Ideas.

It always fascinates me when people say they don't have any ideas about what to write. Ideas are everywhere: in the newspaper, on television, at the supermarket, in your dreams, from your personal experiences, etc. If something gets you excited, write about it. As you think of, read about, or see things you want to write about, jot them down. Out of ideas? Try these three techniques to generate ideas for your writing.

**First,** the best stories are the ones that you are passionate about, that begin with your own personal experience. To get those grey cells moving, jot down answers to these questions.

**A. What is unique about your family?**

---

---

**B. What kinds of jobs have you held in the past?**

---

---

**C. What are some of your hobbies?**

---

---

**D. What makes you angry?**

---

---

**E. What are you afraid of?**

---

---

**F. Who is your best friend and why?**

---

---

**G. What has most helped your writing?**

---

---

Use your answers as a springboard for new ideas.

Every person you meet-and everything you do in life is an opportunity to learn something. That's important to all of us, but most of all to a writer because a writer can use anything.

—Tom Clancy

**A Second** way to generate ideas is to use the calendar. Editors love seasonal writers who tie their writing into the time of year. Use this Calendar of Special Days. This calendar lists a few of the many special events for each month—some serious, some funny. See if you can tie special days into your article. For example, the 183rd days of the year in July is “I Forgot Day,” August 1-7 is “Simplify Your Life Week,” and September is “Be kind to Editors and Writers Month.”

<p><b>January</b></p> <p>New Year’s Day (1), Letter writing week (8-14), Super Bowl (last Sunday), Martin Luther King, Jr., birthday (15), Elementary school teacher day (15), Roe V. Wade decision (22, 1973), Celebration on life week (1-7)</p>	<p><b>February</b></p> <p>American heart month, Black history month, Celebration of chocolate month, Lincoln(12)/ Washington(22)/Presidents (19), Valentine’s day (14), Ground hog day (2), Race relations day (14), Freelance writer’s appreciation week (2nd wk)</p>	<p><b>March</b></p> <p>Red cross month, Bible women month, Spring (20), St. Patrick’s (17), First U.S. income tax (8,1913), Write a letter of appreciation week (1-7), Procrastination week (2-8), Clutter awareness week (last full wk), Maryland Day (25)</p>
<p><b>April</b></p> <p>Alcohol awareness month, Listening awareness month, National child abuse prevention month, April fool’s (1), Easter, Taxes (15th), Arbor day (3), No housework day (7), National birthparents week (1st full), 1st McDonald’s (15, 1955)</p>	<p><b>May</b></p> <p>Better sleep month, Date your mate month, National family week (1st full), National day of prayer (1st Thurs.), Mother’s day (2nd Sun.), Armed forces day (3rd Sat.), Memorial day (last Mon.), Sigmund Freud birthday (6, 1856)</p>	<p><b>June</b></p> <p>Summer (21), Father’s day (3rd Sun), Pet appreciation week (6-12), National hug week (7-13), Loving vs. Virginia (12, 1967), National columnists day (23), First typewriter (23, 1868), National HIV testing day (27)</p>
<p><b>July</b></p> <p>Anti-boredom month, cultivate your character month, National financial freedom day (1), National purposeful parenting month, Independence day (4), Take charge of change week (6-12), I forgot day (183rd day, exact middle of the year)</p>	<p><b>August</b></p> <p>Simplify your life week (1-7), back to school, Friendship day (2), Bad poetry day (18), National relaxation day (15th), John the Baptist beheading (29, 29 AD), National smile week (begins 1st Mon.), National hand holding day (9th)</p>	<p><b>September</b></p> <p>Be kind to editors and writers month, Marriage health month, U.S takes out first loan (18, 1789), National home education week, Grandparents day (2nd Sun.), Fall (22), Johnny Appleseed birthday (26, 1774), Yom Kippur (30)</p>
<p><b>October</b></p> <p>Diversity awareness month, National dental hygiene month, Depression education/awareness month, clergy appreciation day (10), Columbus day (8), Fire prevention week (4-10), Halloween (31), Daylight savings ends, Mother-in-law day</p>	<p><b>November</b></p> <p>Veteran’s day (11), Election day (7), Thanksgiving (4th Thurs.), National author’s day (1), World peace day (17), Martin Luther birthday (10, 1483), National adoption week and National Bible week (week of Thanksgiving)</p>	<p><b>December</b></p> <p>Winter (21), Christmas (25), Hanukkah (9), Pearl harbor (7, 1941), Sam Mudd’s birthday (20, 1833), New Year’s eve (31), 13th Amendment - abolish slavery (6, 1865), Jane Austin birthday (16, 1775), National whiners day (26)</p>

Research how some of these days got started to make your piece more interesting by including, “I didn’t know that information.” For example, an article about weight loss—a good January topic—can be tied into the origin of the New Year’s resolution.

Remember, the typical magazine editor is planning at least six months in advance. Send queries for New Year’s in June of the previous year. It’s weird, but you eventually get used to writing six months ahead.

To get other calendar ideas try these web sites...

<http://familycrafts.about.com/cs/holidays//blspecdays.htm>

[http://www.wilsonsalmannac.com/book/book\\_of\\_days.html](http://www.wilsonsalmannac.com/book/book_of_days.html)

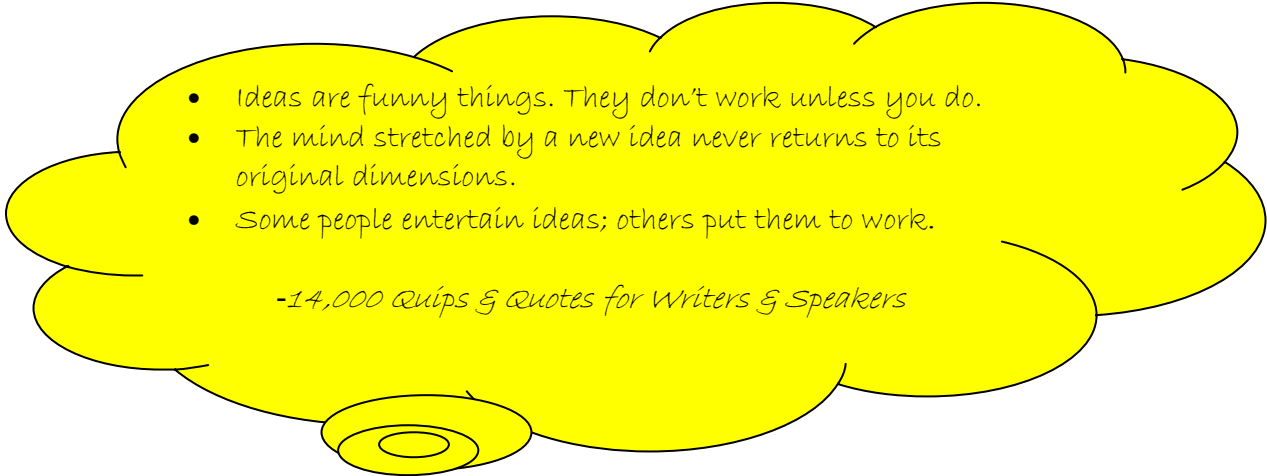
**The third** way to generate article ideas is to keep a file. My file is entitled “Ideas to Focus.” If I read an interesting newspaper article, hear (or overhear) a great story, or learn a life lesson, I clip it or write it down. Whenever I think I’m out of ideas or experiencing writer’s block, I go to my idea file. Usually within a few minutes I have a topic to write about. Within a couple of hours I might have a query, outline, rough draft or even a column or book idea.

### Homework:

- Start an idea file.
- Read the newspaper or your favorite magazine, clip anything that appeals to you.
- Look over your answers from page 7 and your idea clips. Pick five topics to write an article about.

As you see, ideas truly are everywhere. At this point you should be armed with more than enough ammunition to write about.

So, let’s move on to finding markets for those ideas.

- 
- Ideas are funny things. They don't work unless you do.
  - The mind stretched by a new idea never returns to its original dimensions.
  - Some people entertain ideas; others put them to work.

*-14,000 quips & quotes for writers & speakers*

Workbook provides everything needed for success in nonfiction magazine writing

Nine Steps to Successful Nonfiction Magazine Writing

**Buy The Complete Version of This Book at  
Booklocker.com:**

<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/2880.html?s=pdf>