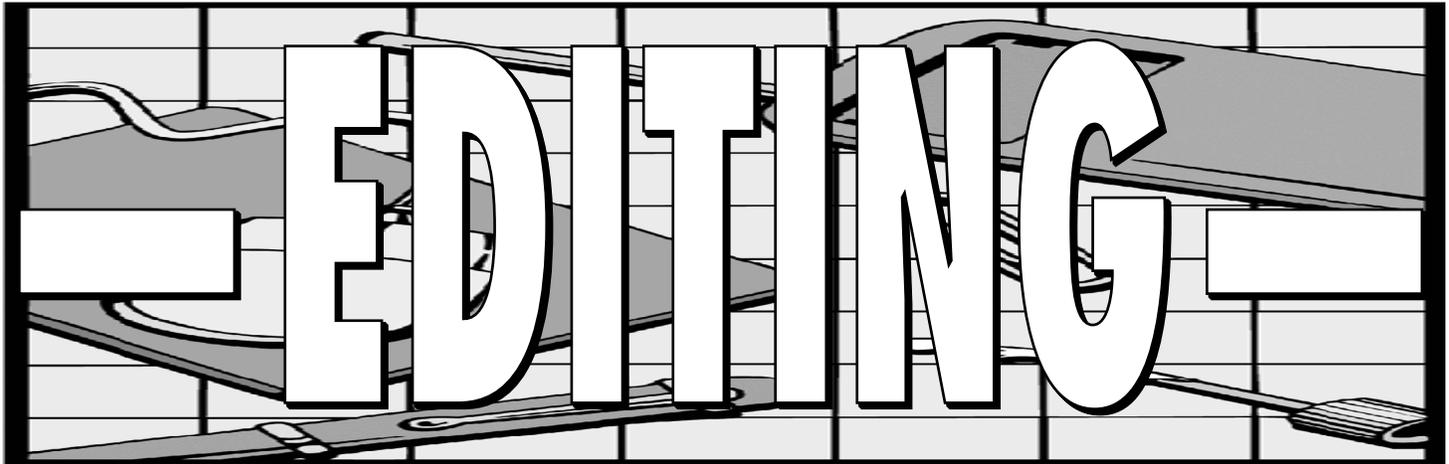




TOOL TIME

Number 12

Tips, tools, and timely tidbits to make your publishing job easier



Helping you say what you wanted to say.

It is said that you have not properly communicated until your audience has understood what you meant, not what you said. That is particularly true in ministry and in dealing with spiritual issues.

Everyone processes what he reads and hears based on the information and beliefs he already has in his mind. If the reader/hearer is working from a different reference or starting point than the communicator, then it is likely that he will reinterpret your data so it fits with the information and beliefs he already accepts as truth. This can easily lead to jumbled messages and even misunderstandings.

How does this relate to you? Let's assume that you are preparing to write a book, develop class notes, or even write a newsletter. Your goal is to communicate specific ideas. If you don't successfully share your thoughts, your readers will either dismiss what you are saying or misunderstand

your message. An example of this happened during our first year on the mission field. We were enrolled in language school and spending 6-8 hours a day learning the local language. Somehow, my father-in-law had misunderstood what we said in the letters we wrote home. He told family and friends in his Christmas letter that we were teaching English to the nationals. This same type of misunderstanding can happen in your writing, teaching and preaching. Spiritual and theological concepts are often difficult to explain to someone of our own culture. It is even more difficult when you are working across language and culture barriers.

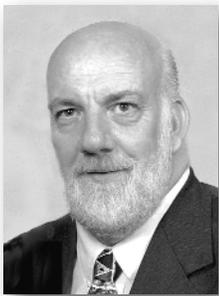
How can this type of mistake be avoided? One of the best ways is to work with an editor or several editors who understand both your material and the mindset of your target audience. Here are several of the types of editors you may wish to consider:

Critique: Many authors find a critique helpful in making deci-

sions as to the need or viability of a project. He can provide suggestions about the method chosen to deal with the subject. The critique must reflect an in-depth knowledge of your readers. The educational level, reading ability and thought processes they use to digest information will govern your approach. For example, you will not want to present abstract ideas in logical terms with a culture which uses story-forms to communicate concepts.

Copyeditor: The copyeditor corrects faulty grammar, spelling, punctuation and syntax. He may also improve the readability and flow of your material. He keeps the viewpoint and style throughout the manuscript.

Substantive editor: The editor makes certain that the completed manuscript remains true to its purpose and goals. He checks facts, logical structure and looks for vague assumptions, extraneous information, or "holes" in your presentation. He can also help you avoid possible legal problems.



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Specialist: Have an expert in the field about which you are writing evaluate your work. If, for example, you are developing children's ministry materials, work with an appropriate age-level specialist. Someone who teaches eight to ten year-olds may not be a great theologian. Someone who knows music may not read the New Testament Greek language, nor may a Bible scholar know much about public health. It is important that you choose an appropriate specialist to assist you.

The Bible says: "There in the counsel of many, there is safety." Rockefeller said, "If you want to be successful, surround yourself with successful people." So if you want to be a good communicator, surround yourself with people who can help you make your work even better. Editors can enhance the acceptance of your ministry and make you more effective. While it is often hard to submit one's creative efforts to critical review, God deserves the best product you can produce.



Suggestions for additional reading on writing tools:

Chicago Manual of Style (The University of Chicago Press)
ISBN: 0226103897

Children's Writer's Work Book (Writer's Digest Books)
ISBN: 0898799511

Writing Dramatic Non-Fiction (Writer's Digest Books)
ISBN: 083978645X

All of the above books are available on Amazon.com.



Here are some examples of editing marks used by professional proofreaders. Note there are marks in the outer column as well as within the text itself.



This newsletter is dedicated to providing you, our partners in God's work, with tools and information that will make your work easier. If you would like to see specific topics or would like to contribute an article, please mail it or send it to us via e-mail at info@lifepublishers.org and mark the "subject" as "Newsletter".

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∩ ∪ ∩	delete; take it out
⊂	close up; as one word
⊃	delete and close up
^ > ˆ	caret; insert here
#	insert a space ^{something}
eg #	space evenly where indicated
stet	let marked <u>error</u> stand as set
tr	transpose; change order the
×	imperfect or broken character
¶	begin a new paragraph
Ⓢ	spell out (set 5 lbs as five pounds)
cap	set in capitals (CAPITALS)
lc	set in lowercase (lowercase)
italic	set in italic (<i>italic</i>)
bf	set in boldface (boldface)
= - / ∑	hyphen
↵	comma
∇	apostrophe
⊙	period
∴ ∴	semicolon
⊙	colon
⌈ ⌋	quotation marks