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# Working With Your Editor: A Quick Guide to Making the Most Out of the Relationship

Building a strong relationship with your editor gives your writing a real boost. Whether you're an author, academic, or professional, working with an editor can help your voice shine and bring clarity to your message. This guide breaks down what editors do, how you can get the best results as an author, what to expect, and the red flags to watch for.

## 1. Understanding Your Editor's Role

Editors wear many hats. Some focus on fixing grammar and spelling (proofreading), others work to improve flow and structure (line editing or copyediting).

Developmental editors deal with big-picture issues like organization, tone, and logic or content gaps.

If you want to dig further into the types of editing, see [copyediting vs proofreading](#) for clear distinctions between each service. Recognize you might need to work on several issues one at a time in a sequence designed to maximize your efficiency.

A good editor interacts with you, discusses possibilities and options, pays attention to your style, highlights strengths, and gives honest, direct feedback to help your writing succeed. All the choices fundamentally belong to the author. Editors offer suggestions. They should **not** dictate what's "right."

## 2. Best Practices for Authors

Clarity is your best tool. When you first meet your editor, be clear about your goals and the stage your project is in. Share important deadlines, style guides, and any previous feedback that you've received.

Give your editor space to work but stay available to answer questions quickly. Prompt replies keep your project moving smoothly and help prevent last-minute stress for both you and your editor.

Collaboration helps your editor give you better, more personalized feedback. Your writing's success is a team effort.



### **3. Setting Realistic Expectations**

Good editing takes time. Expect a review of your entire document, thoughtful comments, and sometimes questions about your intention or your audience. Your editor will give you suggestions; some will be easy fixes, others may need a real re-think.

You won't always agree with every edit. It's important to discuss changes with your editor and concerns you may have. At the end of the day, you can reject the editor's advice.

For practical tips on how to clarify your vision and prepare before hiring an editor, check out [how to sharpen your vision before you hire an editor](#).

### **4. Building a Collaborative Relationship**

A strong editor-client partnership is built on open dialogue and trust. Share what's difficult for you as a writer and welcome your editor's suggestions, even if they push you out of your comfort zone.

Celebrate revisions that improve clarity and impact. And above all, know that even small improvements add up. Work as a team, not as opponents.

If you find your workflow getting stuck, a few [coaching questions to unlock writing](#) can help you stay motivated and open minded during revisions.

### **5. Recognizing Red Flags**

Watch for signs your editing relationship needs attention. Red flags include editors who:

- Miss deadlines or ignore your questions.
- Are vague or dismissive about your goals.
- Change your meaning without consulting you.
- Rely solely on software without offering personal feedback.

Your editor should make you feel heard and improve your writing, not bulldoze your style. If these red flags appear, it is definitely time for a conversation, or even a new editor.



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## **6. Extra Tips for a Smooth Process**

Use small tricks that make editing, and life, a little easier. Reading your work out loud, for example, catches awkward phrasing and typos. See more about [reading aloud editing benefits](#) to help your editing round go even more smoothly.

For an easy start, remember even seasoned writers begin with a draft they are unhappy with, sometimes with a helpful kitten nearby. Read about [getting started with writing despite mistakes](#) for extra encouragement.

## **Conclusion**

Working with your editor is absolutely not about correcting mistakes. Your editor should help you learn and build your confidence with every draft. Stay clear in your communication, set shared expectations, and be open to changes. Treat the process as a partnership, and your writing will speak with more clarity and power.

Whether you're seeking gentle edits, or honest feedback, remember: the editing process is about growth, not perfection. And when both you and your editor work together, your writing, and your message, only gets stronger.