

Agent Savvy

by Chazda Albright -

<http://greatstorybook.com/agent-savvy/>

How to get an agent but also why to get one is what you'll find here. If you're considering the idea of getting an agent at all, you need to be agent savvy.

It is possible.

What Writers Want

If you're looking for an agent, there's a lot to know about the business of publishing and a lot of possible agent profiles that you'll need to scour *before sending a single query*. This is a tedious, time consuming and arduous task.

So I'd like to help you in any way I can. My own path to finding an agent, losing that agent (because he closed his firm) and returning to the market for one has been an interesting and bumpy education.

There's no need for anyone else to go through all that, not if all it takes is you knowing what I learned the hard way.

If you'd like an insider's perspective of the writer's world-with-agent, here are some great author interviews:

- [Interview with YA Novelist Patti Buff](#)
- [Special Interview with Author-Artist Lita Judge](#)
- [Interview with YA Novelist Shelley Tougas](#)

Are You Agent Savvy?

I'll be straight-up with you: if you aren't that familiar with what is on the book market today, if you don't know much about the publishing business and if you don't really know what it is a literary agent does, then you are not ready to get an agent. Not really.

You may wonder about this. You may disagree with it, even. You might be thinking, "But isn't it the *agent's job* to know about all that – so that I don't have to?"

Nope. The agent may well know more than you about the business, sure – and they most likely are more well read, or at least more savvy about what's being published these days. But if you as a writer don't read books like the ones you want to write, there isn't an agent on the planet who will want to represent you. They will know. They always do!

To learn more about the book market, start [HERE](#):

[How to Find Great Storybooks](#)

For my pick of the best storybooks coming out this year, go [HERE](#):

[My List of Top Storybooks to Read in 2016](#)

What Agents Want

I do my best to keep current on what it is that agents especially want. Here's what I discovered at the [2016 Bologna Book Fair](#) about writing for the world market:

[International Appeal: how to write for it](#)

Agent Responsibility

I've met many literary agents over the years, and only one of them was really a stinker. Most every agent you meet is going to have a decent set of social skills – because let's face it, it's easier to get publishers to sign a contract if you've got a winsome character.

So most agents are winsome, which is exactly what a writer needs. Many of us writers are a little bit grumpy, or shy, or uncomfortable with the idea of “selling our soul” because when we write we put part of who we are in there. So agents help us to get past the feeling that we're selling out.

Agents are professionals who are *highly networked* and have an understanding of *legalese*.

Agents protect the author, guide the author and champion the author.

For the critical basics on copyrights and what that really means to you, go [HERE](#):

[Types of Copyrights: what you need to know](#)

If you're unsure whether you need an agent or an attorney to take care of your legal matters, you'll want to read this:

[Literary Agent and Literary Attorney](#)

About the Hands-on Agent

Literary agents also, if they claim to be a “hands on” type of agent, act as editor – though not all do this. That's a distinction that an agent will either claim to or not – and whether you as a writer want that in an agent is entirely up to you. (I personally like that!)

You'll find that many agents were [editors at publishing houses](#) before they decided to become agents.

Agents will also guide a writer's career, providing insider information about what it is an author

might consider writing next.

About the Agent-Writer

You'll also find that some agents are themselves writers, a rare breed of person indeed. These are people who can write a story and then turn around and sell their own work – and if they represent you, your work as well.

What you need to be aware of here is the potential conflict of interest. You want to be sure that your own manuscripts are not in competition with those of your agent.

Where to Start: get agent savvy

You'll find several articles about agents here, but If you're thinking about looking for one now, start here:

[Find the RIGHT Agent for You!](#)

You'll find the 7 most important things to know about agents, how to track down quality agents, how to determine whether to pursue an agent or not, and a short list of top agencies currently looking for manuscripts. (I do update that list every so often, so if you find that an agency is currently closed to submissions, please let me know.)

Keep creating, no matter what.
