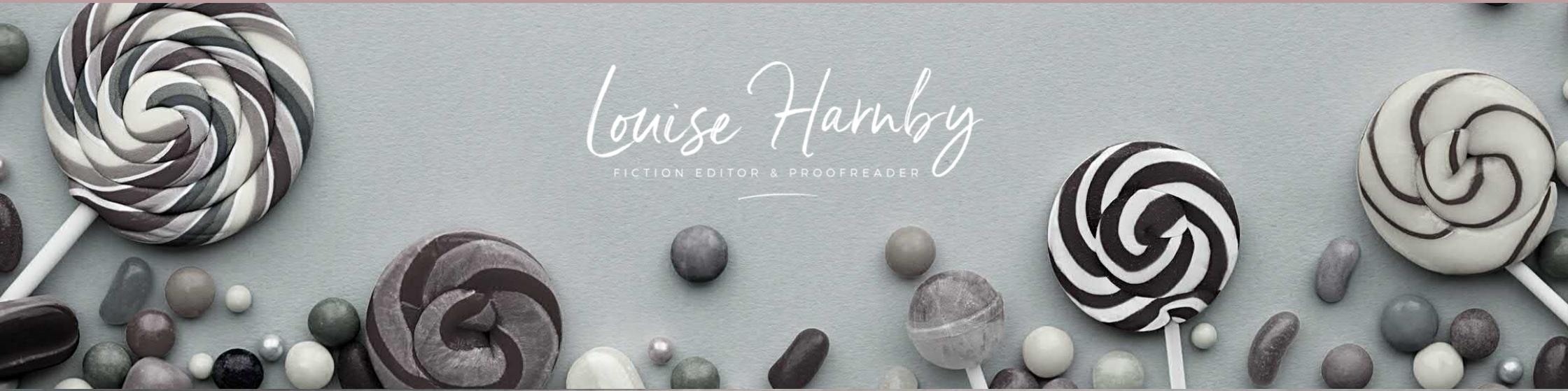




60 TOOLS AND TIPS

LOUISE'S TOP 3'S



Louise Harnby
FICTION EDITOR & PROOFREADER

TOP 3 TIPS FOR NEW EDITORS



Be discoverable: No one will hire us if they don't know we exist. A marketing strategy is essential.



Show, don't tell, how interesting you are: Shopping lists of qualifications are boring. To stand out, we must show our brilliance by proving it. Create useful resources that solve clients' problems.



Be consistent: There are two aspects to running a business – the work we do, and the work we do to get the work we do. Making time for both gives us choice and more power over what we charge and whom we work for.

TOP 3 TIME-MANAGEMENT TIPS



Track with Toggl: Toggl is a sweet little tool that lets us track time with a mouse click. Use the dashboard or add a permanent Chrome extension to your browser's ribbon.



Change things up: When we're flagging but the to-do list is nagging, shifting to a different task can be as effective as a break. Swap editing jobs with invoicing, social media catch-up, responding to emails, or a marketing half-hour.



Break things down: If a complex editing job seems daunting, break it down into distinct tasks or smaller chunks.

TOP 3 TOOLS FOR IMAGE CREATION



Canva: The free version is a must-have for creating visuals for websites and marketing.



MoShow: Just about the easiest way to create a beautiful promo video that I know of! It's an app so you'll need a smartphone or tablet.



3D Book Cover Creator: This nifty little free tool does exactly what it says on the tin. Upload cover art and it'll create mockups of books and ebooks on tablets and phones (diybookcovers.com/3Dmockups).

TOP 3 TOOLS FOR WORD NERDS



Microsoft Word (in Office 365): The best word-processing software on the planet. Works with a huge number of plugins and macros and has loads of fabulous onboard tools.



PerfectIt: The ultimate consistency-checker and style-enforcer for editors and authors.



Editing macros: Paul Beverley's suite of editing macros are massive time-savers and completely free. There are hundreds to choose from and many come with complementary videos for new users (www.archivepub.co.uk/macros).

TOP 3 MARKETING CHANNELS



Blogging: A great foundation for a visibility strategy. It requires commitment and is a slow-burn in terms of delivering results; but sticking at it helps us rank on Google.



Podcasting: Audio is on the increase and loved by those who are time poor but eager to learn because they can listen while doing something else.



Social media: The ultimate content-delivery and networking tool. Use it to solve problems for the audience rather than venting about work ... what goes online stays online.

TOP 3 LIFE/WORK BALANCE RULES



Give yourself permission to say no to anyone who wants your time for their business but isn't prepared to pay for it.



Get on with it rather than waiting for validation from all your colleagues. Procrastination is a time-sucker; we end up working instead of focusing on family, friends and ourselves.



Invest in complementary business and learning tools that save time. Doing things the long way is another time-sucker.

TOP 3 REFERENCE TOOLS



Chicago Manual of Style Online: CMOS is perfect for those wanting extraordinarily comprehensive keyword-searchable content. Non-US editors might have to tweak some of the guidance to suit different punctuation and spelling conventions but CMOS is always quick to acknowledge that its style is not THE style.



Lexico: A free online US/UK dictionary, thesaurus, and grammar guide from Oxford University Press.



New Hart's Rules: There's a huge amount of content packed into Oxford University's pocket-sized style guide. Great for UK editors.

TOP 3 BOUNDARY-MANAGEMENT TIPS



Recognize when the fit's not good: The client insists on working in way X. We insist on working in way Y. Neither is wrong. We're just not a good match.



Be prepared to walk away or change: We can't always have things the way we want them. That could mean saying no to work we'd like, or changing the way we operate. We do have a choice, but so does the client.



Discuss parameters upfront: Agree to the boundaries before the gig starts, not after the fact. Fewer tears!

TOP 3 WAYS TO HANDLE MISTAKES



Don't assume you're right: There's more than one way to do lots of things on a page ... including spelling. Check before you change.



Don't assume you're wrong: Professional editors are good at their jobs. If a client says we've messed up, we should ask for the opportunity to review the problem.



Take ownership of mistakes: We're human. We're imperfect. That's okay. When we make a mistake, we need to hold up our hand and apologize. Then we should offer to fix the problem.

TOP 3 MARKETING TIPS



Talk like a specialist: "I can edit anything" is a weak message. Clients want to work with an expert, not a jack of all trades.



Target and test: Target marketing activities at specific clients. The message will be tighter. Review further down the line, then repeat, tweak or ditch depending on the results.



Think in ones: Marketing can feel overwhelming. Break it down and do one thing, then another, then another. A strategy needn't erupt; it can evolve.

TOP 3 TIPS FOR EDITORS' WEBSITES



Make the site about the client: Our websites should be about our clients' problems and our solutions. Including shareable resources makes us stand out, demonstrates our experience, and helps us rank in the search engines.



Include calls to action: Effective websites are easy to navigate. Use tabs and buttons to tell the client what to do and where to go ... but in the nicest possible way!



Show your face: The client is hiring a person. They deserve to know who we are. If they don't hire because they don't like that face, they're a poor-fit client.

TOP 3 TIPS FOR THINKING ABOUT MONEY



Don't moan about client rates: We're entitled to charge what we want. The client's entitled to pay what they want. If there isn't a sweet spot that satisfies both, we're not a good fit. Moaning solves nothing. We can accept their budget if we wish, negotiate if we can, or walk away with grace.



Forget the "race to the bottom" adage: Worrying about what others charge is a waste of time. Use that energy for marketing that attracts good-fit clients.



Sample edits don't have to be free: They can be, but we can charge if we want. Or we can charge but deduct from a final invoice.

TOP 3 BUSINESS-HEALTH TIPS



Track data: Logging data for every project helps us build a view on the health of our business, meaning we can charge and schedule more accurately. In addition to income and outgoings, record months, client location, and how the client found you.



Centralize data: Holding data in one place means easier cross-referencing and year-on-year comparisons.



Understand where the true value is: Tracking income is essential. But so is understanding the proportion of our income each client is responsible for. Our lowest payer might give us the most work!

TOP 3 CLIENT-COMMUNICATION TIPS



Explain the "why": Changing (or suggesting changes to) text is only one of our jobs. Creating reports that explain the "why" of our edits builds trust and reduces questions from the client.



Be mindful: Hiring us cost the client money. It might have taken courage too. Our edits, reports, emails and queries should respect the client's journey.



Thank the client: We mustn't forget that they chose us, not another editor. Saying thank you costs nothing, takes only a little time, but means a lot.

TOP 3 PROOFREADING TIPS



If in doubt, query: Better to ask than assume that something's off. We won't be thanked for making lots of changes that run against a deliberate stylistic decision made at an earlier stage.



Learn when to leave well enough alone: Prepublication amendments can be expensive. Follow the client's brief so the work doesn't end up costing more than they budgeted for.



Acknowledge knock-on effects: Every change we make could affect pagination, layout, the index, the contents list and cross-references. Mark up, then flag up if necessary.

TOP 3 QUOTING TACTICS



Give more than a price: We needn't write an essay but showing that we're engaged with and excited about the editing project can give us an edge.



Up the ante: Include a couple of free resources that demonstrate your engagement and help the writer move forward, regardless of whether they work with you.



Ask for a sample: We can't quote effectively without a sample from a first-time indie author client, whatever the subject or genre. Ask to see one, but confirm confidentiality.

TOP 3 TIPS FOR SMART SOCIAL MEDIA



Give more than you take: When it comes to business growth, engagement comes first. Gifting comes next. Social media is the best free content sharing and delivery tool available.



Complement the message: Use pictures, links, emojis and calls to action so that readers know what's expected of them.



Focus on metrics that count: Likes, shares, follows and comments are superb signals to the algorithms that we're interesting. But unless we're networking, the ultimate aim is the sale of a service or product. Be mindful of that when reviewing stats.

TOP 3 TREATMENTS FOR IMPOSTOR SYNDROME



Know you're in good company: There are more editors with impostor syndrome than without it ... I'm sure of it! Think of it as just one more thing that makes you part of the tribe.



Do it anyway: Whatever you're thinking you can't or shouldn't or couldn't possibly do, do it anyway. No one else knows you have impostor syndrome ... except all your editor friends, but they have it too so they don't care.



Tell just one person: Share your idea/goal/thing with just one trusted person. When they don't laugh their ass off, tell two more. When they don't laugh their asses off ... You get the picture. Before you know it, you'll have gone public with your idea/goal/thing.

TOP 3 WAYS TO MANAGE NERVES AND ANXIETY



Bring a friend onboard: Collaborating with someone else is much less scary than going it alone (there's a good reason why The Editing Podcast has two hosts, not one!). And it means we only have to do half the work.



Schedule time for prep and practice: Being nervous is natural. Being unprepared is foolish. People will forgive our nerves; they won't forgive sloppiness and poor-quality content. Preparation and practice are essential.



Practise mindful breathing: Can be done almost anywhere and at any time, and doesn't cost a penny.

TOP 3 NETWORKING OPPS



The CIEP: The Chartered Institute of Editing and Proofreading forums, local groups, cloud clubs and annual conferences are wonderfully educational and fabulously friendly.



Facebook: The Facebook editorial community is vibrant, huge and global. Check out the Editors Association of Earth and its specialist sister groups for starters.



Your national editorial association: There's a list here if you don't know where yours is: <https://harnby.co/editing-societies>.

There's no need to be alone if you're a pro editor. Find us and join us!

Louise Harnby

FICTION EDITOR & PROOFREADER

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