



COPY EDITING

What Is copy Editing/editing?

Good writing is key to communicating effectively and connecting with readers. However, even experienced writers sometimes find it difficult to put their thoughts eloquently onto paper and this is where the copy editor can help. The purist will tell you that there are two different types of editing, and that doesn't include Developmental Editing. Confused? It's not surprising. Here's the basic differences between the two 'pure' types of editing.

1. **Line Editing**

A line editor edits lines - that is, they will concentrate on your word choice, the sentences and paragraphs and words on the page. A line editor will make sure that the words in each sentence clearly communicate your ideas. The goal is to make your writing as smooth and polished as possible while maintaining your unique style and 'voice'. It's a tricky line to walk, but the best line editors will polish your writing while ensuring it is always *your* writing. The line editor will use some method of communicating changes or recommendations to you, either track changes in MS Word, or notes in Adobe, or by handwriting their comments on the printed page. For longer works, a novel for example, many editors prefer to work with the printed page. You then review what they have marked up and you can accept or reject each change.

2. **Copy Editing**

A copy editor does not focus on ideas or on rewriting lines. Instead, a copy editor corrects typos, including errors in grammar and punctuation. They may also check information like names, dates, and other notable facts. Like a line editor, a copy editor will track their changes throughout your manuscript, which you'll then accept or reject. If you have one, a style sheet is very useful: a guide to all the style choices you make throughout your book: Oxford comma, or no Oxford comma? Color or colour? If you don't have one, your editor will soon get used to your style. A copy editor will also make sure your writing is consistent, so you don't accidentally spell your character's name or a location differently in alternate chapters. The copy edit happens before the book is formatted for publication; more likely either at the end of the first draft, or sometimes throughout the work, particularly if the editor is working with you on a developmental basis.

Proofreading

In case you are wondering how this differs from the proofread, that is the final detailed check of the finished and formatted work before is published, to pick up

any final errors. By the end of the editing process, substantial changes in meaning and content may have occurred, based on input from the editor. However, some further errors may have been introduced, especially spelling or typing errors, punctuation mistakes, formatting issues and inconsistencies. In addition, proofreading ensures that other pre-publication factors, like page formatting, line spacing, and typography are accurate. Proofreading is the very last stage of the writing process, when the editing and re-writes are completely finished.

Hybrid Editors

Some editors, and this is what is offered by Dieudonne Editorial Services, will do copy editing and line editing all in one. It is ideally a collaborative process, where the editor suggests changes in language and overall structure, and the author agrees to those changes or asks for alternative suggestions. So with this type of editor, you get two editing services for the price of one. In some cases, this can include proofreading too, although if all three are done at one and the same time, the submitted text would have to be of a high standard; that is, not needing many re-writes. If quite a lot of changes are recommended, a final 'clean copy' proofread after the editing is safer.

How does a 'hybrid' editor work?

Editing focuses on the meaning of your content as well as its technical quality. An editor has the expertise needed to find and correct errors in spelling, clarity, punctuation, grammar and continuity; but will also refine the tone and vocabulary, ensure the ideas and arguments are effective or rework sentences and sections so the entire document flows cohesively. They also check that subject-specific terminology is correct and information contained within the manuscript, e.g. names of equipment and institutions, dates of events, telephone numbers, and other factual data is accurate. They will focus on keeping a publication's style preference consistent throughout. Some editors will also give feedback that will help you to develop and grow as a writer.

Question: have you noticed that the titles in this piece are not uniform? Some of them have capitalisation through the title and some don't. Did you spot it? You got that one? Well done. Did you get the inconsistent font size? Some of the headings are the same size as their paragraph and some are bigger. I hardly like to mention the third thing – this paragraph's header isn't on its own line. If you got all three, well done you!