



### Tips For Making A Book Signing Successful

#### Develop A One-liner

##### Summary For Your Book

A potential customer wants to know about your book and they want to know about it fast. If they are interested, then they will query you farther on the details of your book. A one-liner is best. It's pretty easy to come up with a one-liner for your book. Just write, My book (name of book) helps people WHO, WANT, GET. For example, I could say about my book, "One Last Cast helps people who want to learn more about Alaska outdoor activities get the information they desire in an enjoyable, entertaining way."

#### Be On Time

In fact, be early. Arrive at least fifteen minutes prior to the start time. Make it a point to meet the staff. These are the people who can potentially direct customers to you and your book.

#### Be Inviting

A warm smile and a heartfelt hello do much to bring a buyer to your table. Engage a potential customer in conversation. Many people think that because you are a published author, you are unapproachable. Prove them wrong!

#### Be Professional

You are a published author. This is your passion and your career. Dress professionally. That is what your fans will expect. That is what will make people take you seriously.

#### Have Copies of Reviews Available

Keep copies of three or four of your best reviews on the table. It's a great way to start a conversation. Say something like, "here's what others who have read my book(s) are saying." Reviews add credibility to your book AND to you as an author.

#### Keep a List For Emails

Ask customers for their email address so you can send them news of a new release or what's happening with your current book.

#### Walk Around

You are not bound to the signing table. So, when it is slow, walk around the store or walk outside for a breath of fresh air. It is another opportunity to meet people.

#### Before You Leave

Ask the store manager if you may leave signed copies. If they agree, ask them how many they would like you to sign.

#### Have Fun

Let people know you are there to have fun. It's contagious. The old saying, "You can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar," really applies here. Enjoy your signing. Enjoy those you get to meet at the signing.

#### Be Grateful

Always send a handwritten note of thanks to the store manager. This will work to your benefit. The store manager will remember you and be inclined to accept you back for another signing.

#### Frequently Asked Questions About Book Signings

Q: If a store cannot find my books, can I give them my personal copies to sell?

A: No. You cannot sell any of your personal copies at book signings we arrange. If you do, the store will make money, but you won't because the stores cannot pay you directly. All transactions must go through the distributor and/or Publication Consultants.

Q: What happens if I get to the signing and the store can't find my books?

A: In most instances, the books are at the store and the contact is not aware of it. After making sure the store has checked with the person responsible for receiving the books, call Publication Consultants at 349-2424 and we will make the necessary calls to confirm the status of delivery. In the rare instance a store has not received the books, you will need to reschedule with the Author Events Coordinator for a different signing date.

Q: When do I sign my books—before or after the customer has purchased it?

A: Sign your books before the customer takes it to the cash register.

Q: What items should I expect the store to provide for my signing?

A: Although most of the stores have a table and chair available for the signing, some do not. We suggest you keep a folding table and chair in your car, along with your banner, a tablecloth, and any items you use to personalize your table.

#### And Finally

Returns are a book signing's worst enemy. Here's why: Returns are costly. Everyone loses when books are ordered, shipped, and displayed for a book signing and not all books are sold and must be returned to the wholesaler. In addition to the expense, and

probably more important, if books are unsold at the conclusion of a signing, decision makers, giving approval for future signings, take a dim view of approving additional requests for signings by that author.

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##### Ways to Help Avoid Returns

**First:** It falls with Publication Consultants and with the bookseller to not order too many copies. It's a real balancing act to have ample copies at a signing, but not too many. We, and the bookseller, use our experienced judgment when determining the number of books to order for a signing. Occasionally, we miss and the author runs out of books too early, or there are unsold books remaining when the signing's end time arrives. By and large selling out early is a good thing. It makes the author feel satisfied and almost always ensures an invitation to return for a repeat signing.

**Second:** Almost all bookseller decision makers are ultra conservative in approving signing hours. However, once the signing is in progress and getting close to the end time, they see merit in allowing the author to spend additional time in an attempt to sell remaining copies. When it becomes obvious that all books will not be sold in the allotted time, market savvy authors ask store management if they can remain for additional time in order to sell remaining inventory. **The author plans for this eventuality when making their own personal schedule for the day of the signing. Once you're there, and set up, it just makes for a good use of time to stay and sell the remaining copies.** However, if extending the time is not an option on the day of signing, ask store management if you can return on another day in the near future. Almost always store management will approve. Taking one of these routes, staying on or returning another day, will increase sales and invite future signing approval.

This is particularly true with Costco. It's important that all or most of your books are sold at a Costco signing to avoid costly returns and to ensure that Costco will approve future signing. **Costco's policy is to schedule signings from 11 AM to 1 PM; however, when signing at Costco plan to remain until all books are sold or until 6 PM.** It's just a good feeling to walk away for an empty table and know that you'll always be welcomed back. It comes to this—you will be remembered by store personnel as having unsold inventory on the table or an empty table to put away. We encourage you to do all you can to have an empty table. Empty table signings are good for everyone.