

Lesson 1: Introduction

Your Instructors



Steve Alcorn

Steve is the author of many novels and non-fiction books. His publications include mysteries, young adult novels, a romance novel, children's books, history and non-fiction about theme park design, and the writer's guide *How to Fix Your Novel*.

Steve is also the CEO of Alcorn McBride Inc, the company that provides the audio and video systems used in nearly all of the world's theme parks. In his spare time he enjoys world travel, sculpture and music composition.

During the past decade he has helped more than 30,000 aspiring authors structure their novels. Many of his students are now published authors.



Dani Alcorn

Dani is a Chicago-based screenwriter and communication designer. She is the author of the Young Adult novel *The Last Telepath*, and three screenplays:

- *A Quintessence of Dust*, a science fiction riff on what would happen if Hamlet met Bladerunner
- *How to Catch an Englishman*, a romantic comedy about moving overseas in search of an eligible bachelor
- *Do No Harm*, a drama that explores the ethical choices facing a heart surgeon when her personal and professional lives collide

Dani graduated Summa Cum Laude from Northwestern University, where she majored in Psychology and Radio, Television, & Film.

Why Write non-fiction?

- Less than 10% of published titles are fiction
- Non-Fiction has a very long shelf-life (backlist)
- amazon searches are much more likely to be for non-fiction topics
- People need non-fiction books
- Non-fiction books tend to sell themselves (niche)
- You can gauge non-fiction interest with nothing more than a query letter
- Non-fiction sells to publishers on the basis of three chapters + proposal

Course organization

- Stepwise lessons at your own pace
- Hands on

Course structure

- Planning
- Writing
- Publishing

Lesson Highlights

- Writing without getting stuck
- No such thing as writer's block
- The advantage of a plan
- Outlining has a bad name, but it can be liberating, creatively
- Discussion Areas, Lesson Outlines and Supplemental Resources