



# How & When to Include A FOREWORD In Your Book



*A thoughtful guide to  
choosing, requesting,  
and using a foreword to  
strengthen your memoir  
or legacy book.*



*Every story  
leaves a legacy.  
Every legacy  
begins with  
an introduction.*



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## WHAT IS A BOOK FOREWORD?

Forewords, unlike prefaces, aren't intended to explain a book's purpose. Instead, they introduce the author and/or their subject matter through the eyes of the foreword's author—usually someone in the same or similar field.

Often, the foreword author is also **well-known**, which helps to attract readers to the book.

Forewords are typically written as an address to the reader. The foreword author explains why they're writing it (personal connection, professional interest, etc.) and why you should be interested in reading this book.

*A foreword opens  
the door and invites  
readers in.*



### WHY SOME BOOKS INCLUDE ONE

A foreword can provide credibility, connection, and endorsement. It offers a unique perspective from someone readers already respect.



### WHY MANY BOOKS DON'T NEED ONE

Forewords aren't required. They're more of a complimentary addition than an expected part of your book's front matter.



### DID YOU KNOW?

*I went through over sixty books on my bookshelves before  
I found one book with a foreword.*

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# WHEN TO INCLUDE A FOREWORD

*Forewords can serve two meaningful purposes—honor and promotion.  
When chosen thoughtfully, they can add depth, warmth,  
and authority to your book.*



## HONOR

Highlight someone very close to you, like a parent or dear friend, without whom your book would not exist. Their foreword would be from the heart, recalling how you became fascinated with the book's topic. It may also share a fond memory or two that may endear you to your readers.



## PROMOTION

Welcome a recognized name to speak well about your work and invite their own followers to read it. Personally, I've been drawn to several books because I recognized the foreword author and respected their opinion.



## PERSONAL CONNECTION

A foreword can reveal the human side of your story before your words even begin—helping readers feel connected, cared for, and invited in.



## PROFESSIONAL CREDIBILITY

An expert or respected voice in your field can lend authority and assurance to your book, increasing trust in your message.

*The right  
foreword  
welcomes readers  
into your story.*

“  
A foreword is an  
invitation—written by  
someone others already know  
and respect—encouraging them  
to walk alongside you  
through your story.  
”



## REFLECT & CONSIDER

- ✱ What would a foreword add to my book? \_\_\_\_\_
- ✱ Would a personal or professional foreword serve this project best? \_\_\_\_\_
- ✱ Who might be the right person to introduce my story? \_\_\_\_\_

# How to Write a Foreword



## TONE & STYLE

Forewords are most often written in the style of a letter to the reader, sharing why the author is excited about the book.



## LETTER TO THE READER

The foreword author explains why they are writing it and why you should be interested in reading this book. It's an invitation, not a summary.



## LENGTH RECOMMENDATIONS

Just as a Master of Ceremonies keeps their introduction short, so should a foreword. Most run 500–700 words. Keep it brief, to the point, and give the reader just enough to get them excited about what's to come.



## SAMPLE STRUCTURE

- A warm opening and personal connection
- Why the author is uniquely qualified to write it
- Why readers will benefit from this book
- A memorable closing invitation

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*“By his ingenuity and narrative skills, Gannow is able to transform some of the puzzling and obscure mysteries of this basic physics...into magical and enthralling stories for children.”*

— Sir Roger Penrose  
Foreword to  
*Mr. Tompkins in Paperback*

”

*“I have long advised new parents to keep several books on their reference shelf. ...But if they had to choose just one book to keep on hand, this should be the one.”*

— Dr. Mark Widome  
Foreword to  
*What to Expect: The First Year*

”



## FOREWORD CHEAT SHEET

- |                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| ✓ Welcoming and engaging | ✓ Credible and relevant    |
| ✓ Personal and genuine   | ✓ Concise and to the point |



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## IS A FOREWORD NECESSARY?

*No. A foreword is not required. Your story stands on its own. However, when the right person introduces your book, it can open hearts, build trust, and invite more readers in.*



### WHEN IT ADDS VALUE

A foreword can add depth, credibility, and connection—especially when the person has a meaningful relationship to you, your message, or your mission.



### A REFLECTION FOR YOU

Take a few moments to reflect on who might be the right person to introduce your story—and why their voice would be meaningful.



WHO ARE SOME POSSIBLE PEOPLE I COULD ASK TO WRITE THE FOREWORD, AND WHY?

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*“The right introduction doesn’t just open a book—  
it opens the heart of the reader.”*

— Unknown

# ASKING SOMEONE TO WRITE YOUR FOREWORD



## WHEN TO ASK

It's always better to ask sooner, rather than later. And it's no problem if the foreword author would prefer to read your full manuscript before writing. What's important is that they've promised to write one.



## HOW TO ASK

It depends on your relationship. If you know the person well, it can be as easy as a phone call. If you're asking someone you've never met, who is well known in your field, a letter is better.



## WHAT TO INCLUDE WHEN REQUESTING A FOREWORD

If you're writing to a Subject Matter Expert to request a foreword, consider including:

- A cover letter explaining why you're asking them, in particular, to write your foreword
- A copy of your table of contents and book plan, if you have one
- A copy of your first chapter, showing you can send the full manuscript on request.
- An offer to write their foreword based on a call, to make the process easier OR
- Samples of foreword content to make the writing easier for the contributor



## REMEMBER

*The goal is to make it easy, clear, and inviting for the person you respect to say "yes."*

