

Copies of real query letters that resulted in writing assignments worth \$2K and much more!

QUERY LETTERS THAT WORKED! Real Queries That Landed \$2K+ Writing Assignments

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Introduction

Every day at WritersWeekly.com, we receive emails from writers requesting advice on how to write better query letters. While we're always happy to give free advice, there's a much better way to learn - by studying and emulating real, successful query letters!

In these pages, you'll find copies of real query letters that landed lucrative writing assignments for their authors worth \$2,000 or more. Above each query, you'll read about and receive advice from the authors of these queries. And, while you can't copy these query letters word-for-word (they're copyrighted) and submit them to publications, you can emulate their style and use the advice contained herein to improve your own query letters.

After the section on query letters and proposals, you'll find a section featuring real pitch letters that resulted in writing assignments worth \$2,000 or more. Rather than querying a specific article idea, each "pitch" letter was submitted by the writer in an attempt to secure future, ongoing assignments from that publication (be added to their stable of freelancers!). If you're looking for steady freelance writing work (like all of us!), don't miss the general pitch letters section!

At WritersWeekly.com, we publish more than 100 articles each year. Since 1997, I have, personally, read and evaluated all queries received by WritersWeekly.com and reviewed thousands of book proposals submitted to our publishing company, Booklocker.com. Above each query and pitch letter appearing in this book, I have added my opinion on what items in each make it a "hit."

Since editors often jump around from publication to publication, we have removed their names from the queries. And, since publications move as well, we have removed addresses and other contact information. If you wish to contact a publication featured in this book, please find their current contact information at their website. We have included information on how each editor was addressed in each query letter (i.e. first name only, full name, etc.).

We reformatted the queries to fit this book's page format but, other than that, they appear as they did during submission. You may even find the occasional typo or grammatical error in a query! Sometimes, query letters are so enticing that editors overlook the errors. Any errors appearing in the queries here were ignored or not noticed by the publication's editors.

As with any book that offers hints from numerous professionals, you're going to read conflicting advice. However, each method mentioned works for each writer.

I encourage you to click on each author's website, where provided, to see how they present their professional writing businesses to editors online. You'll find examples of résumés, writing samples, online clips, and more to help you create and/or improve your own website, resume, and presentation of clips. And, you are welcome to contact the

writers with questions through the contact information provided on their websites. They'll be very happy to hear from you!

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## Sample Chapter Introduction and Query Analysis

Woman's Day - \$2,100

Judy Gruen is the author of *Till We Eat Again: Confessions of a Diet Dropout* (Champion Press, 2003) and *Carpool Tunnel Syndrome: Motherhood as Shuttle Diplomacy* (Champion Press, 2002). She also writes the popular "Off My Noodle" humor column, available by subscribing at <http://www.judygruen.com>. Her columns frequently appear on [SanityCentral.com](http://SanityCentral.com), [Homebodies.org](http://Homebodies.org), and other sites. Before writing books, Judy wrote features and essays on a variety of topics, including health care subjects. She also worked as an editor for [Accepted.com](http://Accepted.com), an editorial advisory service for prospective graduate students. Judy has written essays and features for *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Woman's Day*, *First for Women* and *Family Circle*. She attributes her success in finally breaking into the major magazines to having published her books. Read more about Judy at: <http://www.judygruen.com>

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Judy Gruen has worked on many projects that brought in more than \$2,000, but the only one resulting from an actual query letter was a story she wrote for *Woman's Day* about the importance of family rituals.

Judy used a topic she found in a recognized professional trade journal, and put a family spin on it. Not only was the topic unique and interesting, but she also pitched interviews with medical professionals, which added validity to her query claims.

After backing up her editorial with data from a medical publication, Judy tied the topic to all families, making it of obvious interest to readers of *Woman's Day*. Judy then explains exactly what she will provide in the article, including a list of specific examples.

She offers a sidebar (this is not only attractive to readers, but also increases the word count, which means higher pay in most cases). And, Judy provides a list of possibilities on getting celebrities involved in the article. Agents are often happy to obtain statements from their celebrity clients for large magazines such as *Woman's Day*. And, readers love to read about celebrities' personal lives.

What makes Judy's query a hit:

1. Uses information from a professional journal to prove legitimacy of idea.
2. Ties professional article to topic appealing to all families.
3. Offers interviews with medical professionals.

4. Offers sidebar.
5. Offers celebrity tie-in.

The query was sent on Judy's personal letterhead by mail. While Judy already had a relationship with this editor, she was still required to pitch her story idea using a query letter...

(Judy's \$2100 query appears in its entirety in the book.)

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### Sample Chapter Introduction and Query Analysis

Lifetime Magazine - \$3,000

Melissa Walker is a writer and magazine editor living in Brooklyn.

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Melissa Walker's short, informal email query, along with a subsequent, more detailed query letter, appear below. Melissa's tone is informal and enthusiastic in her introduction, yet her information is professional and succinctly detailed in the informal query paragraph. And, as stated earlier, any query that mentions celebrities is usually a big hit with editors!

Her formal query below reads like an article and you are quickly drawn into the subject's plight. With this outstanding talent for keeping the reader (in this case, the editor) in suspense, the editor knew Melissa will offer the same tasty morsel for their readers.

What makes Melissa's query a hit:

1. Offers four possible article titles.
2. Great suspense!
3. Query reads like an article, not like a query letter.
4. Mentions celebrities.

Lifetime Magazine paid Melissa \$3,000 for her article. Both queries appearing below were sent via email.

(Melissa's \$3000 query appears in its entirety in the book.)

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To read Judy and Melissa's queries, along with queries that landed the contracts below, please order your own copy of Query Letters That Worked! At:  
<http://www.writersweekly.com/books/1409.html>

Woman's Day - \$2,800  
Redbook - \$3,500  
Ladies Home Journal - \$3,000  
DiscoveryHealth.com - \$2,000  
Lifetime Magazine - \$3,000  
Life Extension magazine - \$6,480  
SmartMoney - \$5,000  
Chemical Innovation - \$2,200  
Jugglezine.com - \$2,000  
Unique Opportunities: The Physician's Resource - \$2,550  
Health Magazine - \$2,000  
ThirdAge.com - \$2,000  
Xephon / Insight IS - \$ 2,150  
Oracle - \$2,500  
Family Fun Magazine - \$2,000  
Natural Remedies - \$11,300  
National Lawyers' Magazine - \$6,000  
National Public Radio - \$2,000  
Canadian Broadcasting Corp. - \$2,000  
IBM developer website - \$15,000

AND MORE!

Also includes:

\* Abbi Perrets' form letter that brings in \$30,000-\$45,000 annually

\* Sample phone query from Christine Greeley

\* The Six Golden Rules of Queries and Submissions...and How I Broke Them! by Bob Freiday

\*Your Rights As a "Freelancer"

\* and ANGELA HOY'S SECRET for finding ongoing freelance work from companies that have a stable of freelancers, yet never run ads for them!

**BONUS:** Includes a collection of successful pitch letters used by writers seeking ongoing freelance assignments from select publications!

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