



FAQ Speed Pitching Top Tips

We've gathered together some top pitching tips from Hachette UK editors to help you prepare for your 1-1 sessions:

'If it's non-fiction take care to say what qualifies you to write it, as in "My years as a zookeeper have taught me so much about pet keeping and now it's time for me to share my knowledge". With non-fiction you must show you're aware of other books in the area and have done your research, as in "Amazon has 69 books on pet keeping but none by a zookeeper".'

**RUPERT LANCASTER – PUBLISHER, NON-FICTION
AND AUDIO (HODDER & STOUGHTON)**

'Which authors do you admire and is your book similar to anything that has been published recently? What makes your book different? Is there a unique angle, a "hook", traditional topics told in a new way, or themes that haven't been explored before?'

LAURA HORSLEY – EDITORIAL DIRECTOR (WREN AND ROOK)

'My tip would be to come prepared with a one-sentence summary of your book that will get editors – and others – excited!'

FRANCES ELKS – EDITORIAL DIRECTOR, PICTURE & GIFT BOOKS (ORCHARD)

'Think about how you tell your friends about books, films or TV they would love – and do the same thing for your book. First get the pitch as short as possible: thirty seconds or less. That will force you to focus on the most important things (plot, character, setting) and you can expand from there if you have time.'

RUTH TROSS – PUBLISHING DIRECTOR (BOOKOUTURE)

'Emphasise the most relatable part of your main character(s) and put that across – are they in pursuit of love? A new start? Are they running from something? Help us understand them and empathise with them.'

KATIE PACKER – ASSISTANT EDITOR, NON-FICTION (HEADLINE)

‘Include some personality – what is it that made you the right writer for your work? Agents and publishers will need to sell you as the author as well as the book itself.’

SERENA ARTHUR – EDITORIAL ASSISTANT (HEADLINE)

‘It’s worth prepping a few one-liners to share immediately: the concept in a nutshell – a brief overview of the content, structure or treatment – and **the** thing that makes this idea or approach distinctive relative to other books in this area. If you can also explain who your readers might be, and your activity, platform or exposure within that world, that will really help us understand the opportunity. Most importantly, be brave, be bold and know that we are looking forward to meeting you.’

STEPHANIE JACKSON – PUBLISHER (OCTOPUS)

‘Find your niche: don’t just compare your book to the next bestseller, find what really resonates. Have a hook! What’s the one thing that makes your story stand out, and that your audience will remember?’

**MOLLY POWELL – SENIOR COMMISSIONING EDITOR,
FICTION (HODDER & STOUGHTON)**

‘For non-fiction make sure that you have a really strong sense of who your reader is. Just like with any product, it’s important to know who your core ‘buyer’ (reader, in this case) will be. Once you know that, pitching in a focused way becomes a lot easier.’

IZZY EVERINGTON – EDITOR (HODDER STUDIO)

‘Start with the hook: what is enticing about this book? The characters, the setting, a murder, the themes/topics? Name some comparative works/authors, and think about movements (political or cultural) that are evoked or discussed. Think about the ideal reader of this book – what are they likely to want to know from you?’

JASMINE PALMER – ASSISTANT EDITOR (RIVERRUN)

**Good luck with
your pitch!**