

Copy editing at [company]

The function of a copy editor is different at different publishers. At some publishers, copy editing might include developmental editor tasks, such as improving flow and structure by moving sections and chapters. At other publishers, the copy editor might also do proofreading.

This document will explain how copy editing works at [company]. But first, let's talk about how we serve the author.

The Author is Always Right

At some publishers, editors are empowered to make changes as they see fit to make the best possible book. At [company], the author has paid us to produce a book that is exactly the way THEY want it. We also need to get the book out quickly. We often say, "We're not making a \$100K book, we're making a \$25K book." The author isn't paying for endless rounds of edits and revisions.

We obviously won't let a book go out with egregious errors, but there will be times when you'll see books come through that you think could be better. For example, the book you're editing might have way too many sports analogies. Maybe an author likes the look of really short sentences. Even though we know as editors that sentence length variation is important for "musicality" and readability, we may leave it be. Some authors don't like to use contractions (I'll vs I will) because they think it sounds unprofessional. (Whenever possible, we'll capture an author's wishes such as these in our project management app, Teamwork.)

At the end of the day, our job is to get the book out quickly and make the author happy.

Multiple Copyediting Levels

At [company], manuscript editing is split between four positions:

- Ghostwriter (GW): Does the bulk of writing, editing, and polishing of manuscript
- Editor: Advises GW on developmental edits, writing mechanics and content flow
- Copy editor: Ensures final manuscript meets CMOS standards and follows [company] style guide, fixes grammatical errors
- Proofreader: Final check for error, typos and formatting issues before printing

Ghostwriter (GW)

The GW takes the first crack at editing. The GW takes the rough manuscript (cleaned up interview transcripts) and turns it into a document that feels like a book, while preserving the author's voice. The GW at [company] does a lot of the work of a developmental editor, like keeping the material in line with the outline, ensuring the document has proper flow, moving sections where needed, and adding the right headings. (However, at [company] the DE tasks like author handholding and project management are done by the Book Publisher position.)

The GW also edits the manuscript at the sentence level for clarity.

Òäâc [!Á

CE-c^!Ác@^ÁÖYÁ@æ.Á.â@æ] ^âÁc@^Á { æ } ~ •&!â] cÉÁcÁ * [^•Ác [Ác@^ÁÖäâc [!ÉÁV@^ÁÖäâc [!Á , á||Á { æ!\Á~] Áæ } ^c@â } * Ác@^Á•^ÁÁc@æcÁ } ^Áâ•Áâ { ! ; [Ç^ { ^ } cÉÁ|ä\^Á|æ } * ~ æ*^Áâ••^Á•ÉÁ , !âcâ } * Á { ^&@æ } ä&•ÉÁ [!Á& [] ~ •â } * Á-| [, Á [!Á•c! ~ &c~!^ÉÁV@^Á~âç^Ác@^ÁÖYÁ c@^Á { æ!\^âÉ~] Á { æ } ~ •&!â] cÁæ| [] * Á , äc@Á*| [àæ|Á& [{ { ^ } c•ÉÁV@^ÁÖYÁ!^çâ•^Ác@^Áâ!æ-cÁ~ } cä|ÁcÁ { ^c•Ác@^Á!ÁÖäâc [!q•Á •cæ } äæ!â•ÉÁV@^Á { æ } ~ •&!â] cÁc@^Á * [^•Ác [Ác@^Áæ~c@ [!ÉÁ , @ [Á , á||Á , [!\Ác@! [~ @Á!^çâ•â [] •Á , äc@Ác@^ÁÖYÉÁQcq•Á] [••âä|Á c@^Áæ~c@ [!Á { æ^Áç^c [Ác@^ÁÖäâc [!q•Á•~**^•cä [] •Áç [!Á&@æ } *^Á• [{ ^Á [-Ác@^ÁÖYc•Á , [!\DÉÁY@^Á } Ác@^Áæ~c@ [!Áâ•Á•æcä•â^ÁÁ , äc@Ác@^Á { æ } ~ •&!â] cÉÁcÁ * [^•Ác [Ác@^Á& [] ^Á^ââc [!ÉÁ

Ô [] ^ÁÖäâc [!

CE|c@ [~ * @Ác@^Á& [] ^Á^ââc [!Á { æ^Áâ [Ác@^Áæ•\•Á [-Ác@^ÁÖäâc [!Áæ } äÁÖYÁæcÁ • [{ ^Á& [{] æ } ä^Á•ÉÁæcÁZ& [{] æ } ^âc@^Á & [] ^Á^ââc [!q•Á! [!^Áâ•Á• [!^Á&|æ } ~] Áæ } äÁ! : [!Á& [! : ^&cä [] Áç|ä * @cÁ^ââcä } * DÉÁÁ

Ó^Ác@^Ácä { ^Ác@^Á& [] ^Á^ââc [!Á^Ác@^Á { æ } ~ •&!â] cÉÁcÁ@æ.Áæ|!^æâ^Á * [] ^Ác@! [~ * @Á { æ } ^Á! [~ } ä•Á [-Á!^çâ•â [] •ÉÁV@^ÁÖYÁ Áæ } äÁc@^ÁÖäâc [!Á@æç^Á , [!\^âÁ , äc@Ác@^ÁÖYÁc [Áâ { ! ; [Ç^ |æ } * ~ æ*^ÉÁ•c! ~ &c~!^Áæ } äÁ-| [, LÁc@^ÁÖYÁ , [!\^âÁ , äc@Ác@^Á æ~c@ [!Ác [Á^Ác^Áç^!~c@â } * ÁexactlyÁc@^Á , æ^Ác@^Áæ~c@ [!Á , æ } c•ÁcÉÁV@^Á!^Á@æç^Áà^Á } Áæ~c@ [!•Á , @ [Á@æç^Áâ [] ^Áæá-â] ^É c [[c@^Áâ& [{ à!^çâ•â [] Á [-Ác@^Á { æ } ~ •&!â] cÁæ } äÁ@æç^Áç^Á } Ác [!Ác@^ÁÖYÁexactlyÁ , @!^Ác@^Á] ^!â [ä•Á- [!Á^æ&@Á •^ } c^ } &^Á } ^Á^âc [Á * [ÉÁ

Ú! [~!^æâ^!

CE-c^!Ác@^Áæ~c@ [!Á@æ•Áâ [] ^Ác@^Á!Á-â } æ|Á!^çâ^ , Áæ-c^!Áæ||Ác@^Á& [] ^Á^ââc•ÉÁc@^Á { æ } ~ •&!â] cÁ * [^•Ác [Á] ! [-!^æââ } * ÉÁc@^Á-â } æ|Á •c^] Áâ^~ [!Á] !â } cä } * ÉÁÁ

A [company] Copy Editor SHOULD:

- Ensure the document conforms to the Chicago Manual of Style and the [company] Style Guide. This is the bulk of the work of the copy editor.
- Check that the document has proper formatting according to [company] style guide
- Ensure consistency in formatting and structure
- Fix errors in punctuation and grammar

NOTE: This is a high-level description. You'll receive the **Copy Editor's Checklist** with all the details of what you should do.

A [company] Copy Editor Should NOT:

- Perform a line edit on the manuscript. Caveat: If you encounter an especially badly constructed sentence that's hard to parse, leave a comment with the suggested fix.
- Add/remove headings
- Change heading titles
- Move sections and/or paragraphs to other locations in the document

- Change the structure or formatting of content in a section. For example, maybe you think the paragraph content in a section would work better in a bulleted list.
- Combine repeated information within a section
- Fact check (caveat: if you happen to be familiar with the subject matter and see something that's horribly wrong, leave a comment for the GW)

The bottom line is: **consider the manuscript FINISHED by the time it gets to copy edit.**

Questions?

Hopefully that will give you a better sense of the copy edit process at [company]. If you have any questions, contact [Head of Editing].