

Overview of the Edit:

[AUTHOR], you have the makings of a really well-written, thoughtful, and helpful book here. In fact, I definitely learned a thing or three while making my edits. You had said in your author notes that you were hoping to hit a heartfelt tone that was coming from a voice of experience and you certainly have, as there was no point where I didn't feel like you were imparting this information because you genuinely wanted people to learn from it and better themselves.

On the other hand, you had also asked that I be on the lookout for duplicated words or phrases, which was probably the biggest issue I saw throughout the manuscript. I did my best to mark those I felt were egregious and fix them as I was able; others I simply marked for you to review and rewrite yourself. Additionally, while the tone was that of a helpful voice of experience, it did come across as a bit clinical, which could make the book read more like a textbook rather than a typical self-help book. But that can be fixed very easily by introducing contractions into the writing and making the sentences less clipped and repetitive, and that should make the tone much softer and more approachable.

While any specific suggestions and edits I had are in the manuscript itself, I'll hit some of the broader points here in this letter.

Structure:

You have set up the book very well, and the parts and chapters do flow very well into one another. That said, I'm not sure what benefit readers would get from just reading the sections that they feel are relevant to them, as you suggest in the introduction. You may want to instead suggest that readers read through the whole book at least once, and then refer back to specific sections as they discover lapses or missteps in their roads to improvement.

One big note that I had that kind of fits into this section is how you use multiple forms of emphasis—italics, bold, underlining, or a combination of the three—throughout the manuscript. This is rather difficult to follow because there doesn't seem to be a hierarchy to these different forms of emphasis. Is underlining more important than italics? Or vice-versa? And where does bold fall? This can be fixed by starting out by using the “level one” form of emphasis from the start of the book, then escalating to “level two” with the first more important thing. Then “level three” can be a combination of levels one and two. That should make it clear to the readers what points are more important than others. And as I mention in the manuscript, I would suggest you drop the bolding entirely. Depending on the font and the final form the manuscript will take, bolding doesn't always look that different from the surrounding text.

Pacing:

I think you've set a good length for each of the parts and their individual chapters. At no point did I feel like something was going on too long, or that it was cut short.

The only thing that did affect the pacing was the clipped sentences I was mentioning earlier. They do make the reading a bit more staccato and only draw attention to any word or phrase duplication. And finding that duplication or repetition did make the reading experience drag a bit, as it felt like you were belaboring a particular point.

Characters:

While your book doesn't have any characters per se, I did want to point out that the book seems to have a gender bias toward women: most of the examples feature women and the gender section focuses primarily on the issues faced by women (what about the men who want to be nurses or nannies?). If your primary target audience is women, then you should be okay; but if you want to draw as many men to your book, then I think the balance needs to be tipped a bit.

Also, while I applaud your desire to have your readers set goals that ultimately change the world, I wonder if having them shoot that high right out of the box may be asking too much. I'm not saying that the bar should be lowered, but rather that readers be encouraged to stage their goals, first setting goals that better themselves and their immediate families, then ramp up to trying to have that change affect a larger group like their company, and finally work their way up to having an impact on the world at large. I'm just thinking about the reader who tries for a lofty goal, succeeds on a number of levels but isn't able to have that success expand outside of their particular sphere of influence, and ends up considering the goal a failure because he or she wasn't able to make that change have the intended global impact.

Tone:

Most of what I want to discuss falls into this section. As mentioned at the outset, the manuscript does suffer from a lot of repeated words and phrases. The biggest "offenders" were "for example," "such as," "and/or," and "e.g." While I know that this kind of writing makes it hard to not use these words and phrases over and over again, I did point out some options in the manuscript. One trick may be to allow yourself to only use these phrases once or twice per chapter (I do something similar in my writing, as I tend to overuse em dashes and ellipses, so I can only use those once per page). I would also suggest taking "and/or" out of the book entirely. It only contributes to the textbook tone I was mentioning, and makes the book sound less like a friendly voice trying to help.

As for the other moments of repetition I found in the manuscript, they could often be fixed by combining sentences or the use of pronouns. This was another thing I tried to fix

as I was doing my edit, but there were some that I could only point out, as taking out the repetition would lose the sense of the given sentence.

There were a few points where you tended to speak in absolutes rather than possibilities. This kind of speaks to what I was mentioning before about stepping the loftiness of the goals, as readers will probably respond better to “better” rather than “best,” particularly if they are making positive progress, albeit not complete turnarounds.

Grammar:

For the most part, your grammar was pretty impeccable. The only notes I would call to your attention to are the inconsistent use of the serial comma (I applied it consistently throughout), “every day” (noun) vs. “everyday” (adjective), and that percentages should be expressed as digits unless they come at the start of a sentence (again, fixed throughout).

Other:

As you’ve set the manuscript as a finished book, I did want to speak a bit to some possible production issues that could come from some of your formatting choices.

Not using paragraph indents did make it a little tricky to understand whether each paragraph was its own section or if one was supposed to play into the next. Also the justified text without any word hyphenation made for some loose lines, which are generally avoided in final text.

Many of the diagrams, charts, and forms in the book were simply part of the Word document, which could lead to some odd breaks in those elements. That could have been how my computer interpreted the font you used, but that is a fairly common issue that comes up in book production. My suggestion would be to build all of these elements outside of Word and import them in as images. That way, they won’t be cut by a page break, and if this ever becomes an ebook, those elements would remain just as intact.

As I said at the start, [AUTHOR], you really have done a lot of good work with this manuscript, and it shows. Your message is very clear, you present your points well with solid examples, and the exercises provide the necessary support. I genuinely think that a polish to address the issues I’ve mentioned is all that’s needed before it’s ready to move on to the next steps.