



Five Tips for the Developmental Editing Process

Edwina Perkins

1. **Find a good editor.** Your DE should have a few years of experience in the book publishing industry, as well as book editing experience with the genre you're writing.
2. **Be open-minded.** Sometimes an editor's critique will involve you cutting out moments within your story that you don't necessarily want to lose. Your editor isn't going to force you to take their advice, but if you're paying a fee for their expertise, being open-minded to their ideas can be helpful. Your editor might not be the right fit for you if you find yourself constantly at odds over your work.
3. **Be prepared to rewrite and to commit a considerable amount of time to rework.** A DE may ask you to reconsider certain plot elements, characters, settings, or conversations that aren't telling your story the way you think. They could advise you to add, take away, or change several chapters all for the purpose of helping you to have a stronger manuscript.
4. **Focus on the big picture.** When it comes to developmental editing, the focus should be more about the bigger ideas, and how all the main pieces of the story work together first.
5. **Practice patience.** Addressing one round of notes from a developmental editor doesn't mean you're done. This editing process is the most involved, and oftentimes changing one part of a manuscript can result in a necessary change elsewhere—but be patient.

Prepare for Encouragement & Support

Your developmental editor wants to see you grow as a writer. They're there to cheerlead you on and they're in your corner. Your editor isn't there to criticize you, but to give you the tools to be a stronger writer.

Just like you, your DE wants your manuscript to be the best it can.