

So You Want to Write about Perl!

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About me

- Wrote my first Perl article for TPJ #9
- Then my next for TPJ #11 (Got into The Best of The Perl Journal)
- Later a columnist for TPJ
- O'Reilly Weblogger, MacDevCenter, &c.
- Publisher of The Perl Review
- Lead author of Learning Perl, 4th Edition
- Lead author of Intermediate Perl
- Working on Mastering Perl

Reasons Not to Write

- Get rich
- Have more free time
- Quality time with your computer
- Free international travel

Reasons To Write

- Your story is Perl's best advocacy
- Learn more about Perl
- Become a better writer and communicator
- Let people know what you're doing
- Let people (Google) know who you are

Write now

- You can start right away
 - Blogs
 - use.perl.org
 - Perlmonks Meditations

Fancier Places

- Perl.com
- IBM Developer Works
- The Perl Review
- Dr. Dobbs, Linux Magazine, Unix Review

Getting the Gig

- It's who you know, mostly
- Or you have to have something really good
- Most places won't be encouraging
- Find the right people
- Have some samples

Publishers want

- Interesting content
- Good writing
- The least hassle
- Writers with whom they can work
- Something that sells

Wanting the Gig

- People need to see your work
- Your publisher should promote you
- Your writing should take center stage
- Be careful about writing for free
- Talk to other authors about contracts and publishers
- Published other things you like

Introducing yourself

- Most places have some sort of author or style guide with instructions
- When you propose something, be concise and to the point
- Realize that lots of other people are doing the same thing

Authors at YAPC

brian d foy, Randal Schwartz, Allison
Randal, chromatic, Andy Lester, Larry
Wall, Damian Conway, Tim Maher

Publishers at YAPC

brian d foy

Allison Randal

chromatic

Perl.com

- chromatic (chromatic@wgz.org)
- Online, magazine-style articles about Perl

Books

- Allison Randal (allison@oreilly.com) O'Reilly Media, Onyx Neon Press
- Apress
- Pragmatic Bookshelf

Magazines

- brian d foy (brian.d.foy@gmail.com), The Perl Review
- Kevin Carlson (kcarlson@ddj.com)
“Lightweight Languages” in DDJ.com
 - Formerly published The Perl Journal

Actually Writing

- Come up with a good story
- Talk about more than just Perl
- Learn more than you already know
- Show how much you learned
- Describe code in prose
- Show your work to trusted friends

Your writing

SUX

Technical reviewers

- Develop a core set of people you trust
 - Not a single person
- Let them see your story
- Find a publisher who will care enough to check
- Realize they won't care as much as you
- It's still your job to make it right

If a publisher makes a lot of changes...

- They like your story enough to spend time on it
- They are making you look better to the world
- They'll hardly ever take credit
- It's a normal part of technical publishing

Tips for getting along

- Technical writing isn't literature
- You aren't an artist
- If you want more work, accept changes
- Don't get emotionally attached to sentences
- Don't read it after it's published

Summary

- Personal stories are good advocacy
- Getting the gig is about personal relationships
- You get better the more you do it
- You develop a reputation and a resumé
- You don't do it to make money directly

References

- "So you want to write a book" - [http://
www.oreilly.com/oreilly/author/](http://www.oreilly.com/oreilly/author/)
- TPR Author Guidelines - [http://
www.theperlreview.com/Authors/](http://www.theperlreview.com/Authors/)

Q & A