

# **The Instant Confidence Cheat Sheet to Write Your Book in Five Steps**

Remove 95% of the hesitation and doubt  
of writing your book!

By Leigh Shulman



**Thank you for downloading my Instant Confidence Cheat Sheet!** It means you have a story bumping around your brain that you're just dying to tell. You're ready to write your book, but it's daunting to sit there staring at that blank sheet of paper when you want to start.

This Cheat Sheet will help you break down the process into five easy steps so you can simplify the writing process and outline the most important parts of your story faster than you imagined possible.

**I'm Leigh Shulman, a writer, teacher and book coach** with two decades of experience working

with writers to help them break through blocks, gain confidence and finally write the books they've always wanted to write.

My work has been featured in The New York Times, The Huffington Post, The Guardian, The Establishment, Guernica, Mashable and many other publications. I've published 2 books that make me incredibly proud and have taught at at Barnard College, CUNY, Yeshiva University, the Brooklyn Academy of Music plus countless other programs.

And now, I spend my time coaching women 1:1 and also run fabulous writing retreats because I want to help more women feel confident with their writing, finish their masterpieces and build professional careers!

You have an amazing story to tell! But here's a hard truth. If you sit around waiting for the 'perfect' time to start writing, it's never going to happen. Just. Simple. Science.

But now you have a plan to put to that blank sheet of paper plus the desire to write. So let's get started!

*Leigh Shulman*

## **I know we're not supposed to say this, but yes, writing is pain.**

You know what I mean. You have an absolutely gorgeous idea for a story in your head. You know what you want to say, and if you could just get it down on paper, it would be perfect.

***Therein lies the rub. You have to write it down.***

That's when things get messy. Your sentences don't flow as easily as they do when you're thinking. Your ideas contradict and the clear vision you created dissipates. Then you start wondering if maybe you just weren't meant to write at all.

Whether you're writing a novel or a how-to book or an exposition of the food industry, these straightforward steps will guide you from a blank page to a mapped out version of your book that will allow you to easily find holes and set your pacing before sitting down to write.

This five-step cheat sheet will guide you as you figure out exactly what your book is about, develop an outline and know become more confident as you write.

### **1. Write a one sentence summary of what your book is about.**

Not the plot. Not your elevator pitch. **I want you to think about the overarching themes and ideas of what you want readers to take away when they've finished reading.**

So... Love in the Time of Cholera... is about the nature of love and how it's not pretty or young or a fairytale. But what it means to truly love someone.

The last episode of Six Feet Under ties the entire series together and shows that life is an inevitable pull toward the future. We cannot escape death. We cannot escape the pain of life (except by death). But it is the string of events in our lives that brings us joy.

**What do you want people to feel and understand when they're finished reading your book?**

### **2. Describe your book in no more than five sentences**

**Now start thinking about what your book will include.** Where does your book begin? What happens along the way? And how will you take your readers from the beginning to the end?

Don't worry if you don't have all the answers now. Enjoy the process of writing and really have fun with what could be and what you can create. This world belongs entirely to you. You control everything. You make all the decisions. Enjoy it!

### **3. Get to know your players.**

*If you're not writing a character driven book? Move onto step four.*

**Who are the people of your book and what do your readers need to know about these people in order to understand your message?**

For a novel or creative non-fiction book, you'll sketch your characters.

**Write a list of the main players.**

Then ask yourself the following questions:

*What do they want?*

*Why do they want it?*

*And what gets in their way of getting it?*

*What are their biggest flaws?*

*What are the best things about your character?*

*What will your character learn by the end of the book.*

The more you know about your characters, the more they'll lead the action of your book while you just follow along.

**Bonus character questions:**

*What does your character look like?*

*What do they love to wear?*

*What would he order at McDonalds?*

*Is she the sort who wears sweatpants or prefers heels?*

*What's his favorite food?*

*What makes her angry? Sad?*

*What does each character want more than anything in the world.*

### **4. Get your ideas on paper.**

Take just ten minutes and brainstorm all the ideas and points you know need to be in your book. Jot down all the things that need to happen, all the information your readers need to know, the sections and scenes that you know you need to include, and even the things that you think should be there or would like to have there but aren't quite sure how they'll play out yet.

Don't worry about it being perfect. *There's no such thing as perfect anyway.* Just get everything out of your head and onto paper.

Once you have them all down, take a look and see where your ideas connect. You can even draw lines between the thoughts you wrote down and literally connect them in a map of ideas.

## 5. Organize, Organize, Organize

Take that list you just wrote down and start putting it into the order that they need to be.

There are many ways to do this, from outlining apps for your computer or phone. Or you can go analog and write down your ideas on post its or note cards and move them around until they make the most sense to you.

That's it! You now have a basic outline of your book. You know what it's about. You know what it needs to include and what your characters will do from the beginning of the book to the end.

Congratulations! You now have that book from your head down on paper. How does it feel?

Now that's that's done, would you like a place you can go to find resources, words of support and to create accountability for your writing so you can keep moving forward until you FINISH THAT BOOK?!?!?

**[Join me now](#) in my free Facebook group  
for women writing books.**