

# Patti M Hall

**Writer. Professional Ghostwriter.**

**Writing and Memoir Coach. Academic Writing Educator.**

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## Ghostwriting Explained

I'm here to tell you ghosts are real, some ghosts anyway!

Publishers Weekly estimates that 60 % of today's published authors employ ghostwriters in some stage of their writing process.

Ghosts are the people behind the writing, and not always the only person doing the writing. You may hand over draft pages, notes, journals and interviews to a ghostwriter and ask them to turn it into a book. You might spend 200 hours talking with the ghostwriter, who collaborates with you to turn what you speak about into a book-length project. The degree to which readers know that a ghostwriter was involved is entirely up to you. Let me explain how many different ways collaborating with a ghostwriter can work. Then send me your questions at [patti@pattimhall.com](mailto:patti@pattimhall.com).

**How it all works is up to what you need.** Ghostwriting, simply put, is you and I working together on a story that is told in your voice. Ghosts like me often remain unseen, unless we decide that you want to include my name on the cover. Ghostwriters are most commonly just thanked in the opening acknowledgements of a book. Some ghosts remain invisible and are only known to the publisher, the agent and the author. I have worked on fantastic manuscripts in all of these formats.

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**Improve the writing.** A lot of people who hire ghostwriters are terrific writers on their own. But hiring a ghostwriter is more cost-effective. Many experts in their own fields do not have the time to write the book they dream of to promote their business, because are too busy being an expert and growing their brand. It makes sense to work with a ghostwriter to get a high quality result in an efficient amount of time while clients continue to work on their businesses.

**Efficiency is something everyone wants.** Ghostwriters are able to work on a project full time, using material from their clients, and interview transcripts and research material to build a book. There's another benefit of hiring a professional ghostwriter...they don't get stuck, or find themselves unable to write. We simply cannot allow that to happen. It is our business to steadily and professionally craft a story for our clients. Ghostwriters draft pages, receive your input, massage another draft, unite disparate parts into cohesive tables of contents, edit and polish. You will get professionally prepared, completed work that can be handed off immediately to clients, publishers and agents.

**Opportunities can be improved.** An experienced ghostwriter improves the prospects for publication. You know your story, or understand your expertise, but writing is quite likely not your forte. A ghostwrite produces a well-written product that will garner more opportunities in traditional publishing and alternative publishing models. Nevertheless, they want the book to be well-written. Proposals that tell future publishers and editors offer guarantees to these over-burdened professionals, that the written product will be done quickly and efficiently once contracts are signed. Knowing you've hired a professional reassures them that you'll deliver an acceptable manuscript on schedule. Though you might be a first-time author, publishers are relieved to know they won't be dealing with a first time writer.

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**Sound the way you want to on paper.** A ghostwriter can often make you sound the way you hoped to, on paper. Being able to talk your story is one thing, but being satisfied with how you sound on paper, might require a collaborator like a ghostwriter.

**Ghostwriters are ideally great listeners.** Ghostwriters are wordsmiths, experts in listening to you in a way you are not accustomed to. We are all about the language; how the message translates to the page, in book form. You will find that your story is drawn out; memories and information will be gleaned from work with a ghostwriter that you were not expecting to include. This kind of close collaboration produces deeply woven non-fiction. You have the benefit of not just the ghostwriter's writing experience, but their practiced approach to developing ideas fully and in a compelling way.

**Be proud of the product.** Clients inevitably enjoy the writing process more because they have had a guide, champion and companion when a ghostwriter is on the project. Sitting alone for hours waiting for words to come, can feel like a terribly vulnerable and unsettling experience. In contrast, work with a collaborator changes the dynamic, the very relationship you have with the story. You meet for a few hours, on a regular basis and the sections, chapters and outlines begin to flow into your hands. You'll meet your deadline or target date and you will be proud of the written work, not asking for extensions or time to rewrite. You'll have that book you always dreamed of, and all the material that goes with it including a proposal, biography, overview and marketing plan, if you need that.

**Other services are offered as well.** Ghostwriting is just one of the services that a collaborator can provide. For authors who prefer to do the

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writing themselves, a collaborator serves as a coach or consultant. A good collaborator can guide you through every step of the writing and publishing process.

**Materials that I prefer to work on.** I specialize in book-length non-fiction, most often memoir and sometimes with a medical slant of some kind. But I like to work on books about ideas and our relationship to the world. These include business, self-help, personal growth, holistic health, politics and personal philosophy.

**Project length and process.** Everything depends on your goals. A book of 50,000 words or more can take eight to eighteen months depending on your availability for interview and the amount of draft material you provide. The average is a year but conditions vary for every client. A book that has twelve chapters or 50,000 words will require five to ten hours of interviews to glean material, adjust voice, develop tone and outline content.

**It takes time to get the sound right.** So what are the interviews for, people ask? You'll understand when you see that the first draft does not sound like you yet. But this tone will be adjusted through the latter chapters and in the final editing process. It is an organic process I have experienced multiple times that the material has a sound that is closer to what you are hoping for by the latter chapters.

**How much you reveal about a ghostwriter is up to you.** It is important to tell your agent, if you have one, and your publisher needs to know. In fact, when it comes to landing a publisher, working with a ghostwriter is regarded as a plus. A professionally written manuscript is a lot less work and risk for them. Apart from that, no else need ever know. I don't disclose the names of my clients without their permission. Letters

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of agreement between us bind confidentiality unless a client waives their desire for it. In special cases, I'm proud to have my name on the book cover as a "with" or an "and" and sometimes the relationship between me and my client warrants this, because it is fair.

**Maybe you only need a coach.** I also offer coaching on an hourly and project basis. I can help you plan and organize the project and stay on track with it, give you feedback, troubleshoot specific problems, answer your questions about the publishing business and be your unwavering cheerleader. Coaching also has the advantage of getting comments and edits on pages. I'm happy to read about a dozen pages of text for each hour we spend together. If you want your writing evaluated, that is, if you've written something that doesn't quite satisfy you--or that you're having trouble getting published--I will review the manuscript and give you detailed advice on what it needs.

**References are available.** I cannot reveal everything about the clients I have, books or projects I've worked on or titles, names and covers. But I do provide serious prospective clients with references and work samples.

**Prices and fees.** Generally accepted pricing is about \$1 per word but I consider that a maximum and quote my projects on a flat fee, and work out an instalment schedule that is appropriate for both of us. You may pay a non-refundable deposit and then a lump sum with each completed chapter. If you already have a publisher then a flat fee can be worked out. Let's talk more about this when you and I both know more about your book.

**Why not start with a proposal?** Most commercial publishers of non-fiction would rather see a proposal than a finished book. When they

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decide to sign you, they give you an advance on royalties, which should cover part, if not all, of what you'd pay your collaborator. This reduces your risks as well as your up-front costs.

A proposal usually runs about 15,000 words, and takes really keen eyes and ears. Even if you plan to write your own book, you should consider having your proposal written professionally. Proposals are a flat fee, starting at \$ 10,000 Canadian for a book-length non-fiction project. This includes Overview, detailed Table of Contents and sample chapters, and my coaching fees are \$ 150 Canadian per hour.

A ghostwriter is for you if you have no professional writing experience but you really want to see your story in a published format. If your dream involves seeing your name on the spine of a book then a ghostwriter can improve the odds.

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## Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How do we work together?

A. You give me your notes, journals, and anything you've written. You continue to write what you can while we are working together. We meet on a regular basis so that I can revise, edit and craft pages that are in a literary voice that you feel comfortable with. These will be brainstorming, interviews, reviews and memory-tugging times. Content generation will be the result.

Q. How much time will spend together?

A. I suggest weekly meetings of at least two hours of recording time and when face-to-face meetings are not possible I like to use Skype video conferencing. If this is not acceptable then speaker-phone calls can be used. The purpose of the interviews is to produce material sufficient to prepare an outline and begin writing as quickly as possible, usually within two or three months.

Q. How long until there is a book?

A. I estimate, based on my experience that it takes 12 months to complete a draft manuscript of about 50,000 words.

Q. How much does this cost?

A. The only fair answer is that it varies based on how much you've written, whether you will help with the writing, if research needs to be done, and if outside interviews are required. Project fees based upon monthly billing or lump sum payments are both options. I am always very transparent about costs. I contract an entertainment contract solicitor for all ghostwriting arrangements.

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## About Patti M Hall

I am a professional writer, ghostwriter, writing coach and writing educator. I am the author of two memoirs, and six ghostwritten book-length projects, numerous e-books and book proposals. I am the creator of an [online memoir writing school](#), and a writing inspiration brand that helps people who dream of writing book, get their pens on the page.



I specialize in biography, autobiography and memoir and I have extensive experience work in medically-focused subject areas. I have experience working with authors who are interested in the traditional publishing process as well as self-publishing and can advise on that as well.

I hold a Bachelor and Masters Degree and have worked as a professional writer for fifteen years. As an educator I have created courses geared to writers who are pursuing work in personal narrative, fiction, non-fiction, self-help and memoir and I have supported students in the class room, online and in my one-on-one coaching practice for over a decade.

I am a featured blogger at **Huffington Post**, a contributor to the **TheMighty.com** and at a monthly feature columnist at **Kind Over Matter**.

My essays have been published in Mamalode Magazine and selected for online e-zines that are feared to the writing world. I have collaborated with numerous memoir, business and non-fiction writers.

Praise from clients is provided below and on my web site at <http://pattimhall.com/praise/>. One of the highlights is a quote from Harper Collins author Steph Jagger, the author of [Unbound: Finding Myself On Top of the World](#) (2017) who writes, “My book would not be a

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book without Patti M Hall. It would be a beautiful collection of words but it would not be a book.”

I was educated at the University of Toronto and obtained a graduate degree from York University. I have taught writing privately, at events hosted by schools and libraries and developed and taught writing programs for a large public school district north of Toronto in their Continuing Education programs.

I am a sought-after editor and proposal development coach, currently working with incredibly talented writers who are also seeking agents and publishers in New York, Sacramento, San Francisco and Toronto.

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## Endorsements and Praise

**Betsy Rapoport**, former non-fiction acquisitions editor for one of the Big Five New York City publishers, professional editor, writer, and ghostwriter has this to say about me: *“Patti Hall understands the intimate, tender, often heart-breaking process of diving deep into the psyche so necessary for memoir writing. Let her lead you through this difficult yet rewarding journey as you find your voice and tell your story.”*

*“My book would not be a book without Patti M Hall. It would be a beautiful collection of words but it would not be a book. I’ve worked with Patti for four months now and it’s been an honor and delight. She’s completely qualified to show you exactly what trenches to dig through and how to dig through them in order to tell your story but more than that, she will be in those trenches with you shovel in hand. What a rare combination to find a person who is as caring as they are provocatively challenging, a person who will help you rise to your own occasion.”*

Steph Jagger, author of forthcoming memoir from Harper Wave, (2017) and creative coaching genius at [www.stephjagger.com](http://www.stephjagger.com)

*“Writing life stories is a vulnerable process and takes courage every single day. Having Patti M Hall by my side throughout this process has been game changing for me. She is someone who has held my story in her hands with such fierce love and momma-bear protection, that I not only believe that I can do this, but know that it will be a piece of writing that touches the lives of those reading my words. She*

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*is passionate and creative and absolutely in her element with words and stories. Thank you, Patti, for modeling the way these stories get told."*

Carly Butler, writer and creator of [www.lifesletter.com](http://www.lifesletter.com).

*"I have to say this, about working with Patti: she is beyond genius! Her writing, wordsmithing, editing and general brilliance in helping my book idea turn into something that actually makes sense on the page is breathtaking. Literally. She takes my breath away. I'm so grateful I chose to take the leap and get her help with my book. Beyond blessed, is how I feel."*

Erica Golden, author and collaborator on the forthcoming *Here to Help – 3 Steps for Finding Good Work Fast & Mastering the Art of Employability Now*. [www.ericagolden.com](http://www.ericagolden.com)

*"Patti has made her giant sons into truly gentle men; taken on medics and written about it with intelligence and humour. She helps other people gain confidence and inspires us to face down inner and outer demons. She is a warrior. We met in Iceland and she struck me from the first as a fireball of determination who can also listen attentively."*

Suzie Wilde, author of *Book of Bera*, [Unbound Books](http://UnboundBooks.com). [www.suziewilde.co.uk](http://www.suziewilde.co.uk)

*"Patti is an inspiration and a joy to work with. Patti took me from "I want to write a book" to "I am writing a book". Her wisdom, enthusiasm and honest know-how are invaluable. She is helping me make my dreams a reality."*

Lara Heacock, Certified Life Coach, the brilliance behind [www.kindovermatter.com](http://www.kindovermatter.com) and author of *365 Days Of Kind* (forthcoming)

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