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**WRITING**  
**TO GET BUSINESS**  
with Pat Iyer



C-SUITE  
Radio

## How to Avoid Writing Potholes

### Mike Skrypnek

Jay Conrad Levinson said that his book, *Guerilla Marketing*, earned him \$35,000 in direct sales and \$9.9 million-plus through selling his coaching, training, and more. Today's businessperson or entrepreneur wants to aim for that kind of impact. Mike Skrypnek, financial service professional, who has written six books, has hit the peaks and valleys in his publishing history. Learn from what he did wrong and what he did right.

- The biggest author's challenge is getting from zero books published to one published.
  - If you learn all you can from experienced authors, you can avoid a lot of potholes.
  - As in all areas of life, you can best succeed if you solicit guidance.
  - A good coach or editor can tease out of you what you want to say.
  - "Done" is better than "Perfect."
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**Pat:** Hi. This is Pat Iyer with Writing to Get Business, and I have with me today, Mike Skrypnek, who is joining me from outside Vancouver. I'm sitting here in New Jersey. We are an international show today.

Mike and I met each other through being involved as C-Suite Network contributors. The C-Suite Network hosts this podcast and is the largest business podcast platform in the world. And when I found out what Mike did and the fact that he has written several books, I thought he would be great to come onto the show to give you some inspiration on how your book fits within your business platform. -- Mike, welcome to the show.

**Mike:** Hi, Pat. Nice to see you from across the continent. It's great to be on the show.

**Pat:** Tell our listener a little bit about your background and what you have brought to the show today.

**Mike:** Well Pat, I'm a business coach who helps mid-career entrepreneurs who are impact-minded make that impact. Often, we're seeking that impact, and we're just stuck in our mid-careers, not being able to

figure out why we're not doing what we hope to do. It's kind of where I was a dozen years ago.

In the meantime, I have a wonderful family -- a beautiful, wonderful wife who keeps me in line and two amazing 16- and 19-year old children whose enquiring minds happen to keep me in line as well. My background is financial services and I've been coaching entrepreneurs for quite a number of years now.

**Pat:** I think the parents who have teenagers or who have ever had teenagers can appreciate the value of that statement -- that they keep you on your toes, for sure.

**Mike:** Yeah. They ask smart questions, and sometimes dad just doesn't have the answers anymore. You can't fool them anymore, so you got to know your stuff. [Laughter]

**Pat:** It makes me think of the people who are sitting in the audience's, when professional speakers make a statement that isn't true, and the audience has their cell phones in their hands and they're fact-checking. "No, excuse me. It's not 70%. It's 65.3%."

**Mike:** You can't throw stats around willy-nilly anymore unless you disclaim them upfront.

**Pat:** Absolutely not. You mentioned you are a coach for people who are in mid-career. So, presumably, they've got some years of experience behind them, and they are looking for ways to move forward for the duration of the time that they want to work. What kinds of challenges do you see them experiencing, and how does publishing a book fit in with those challenges?

**Mike:** Oh Pat, great, deep question and it takes me right back to a dozen years ago when I was struggling at a time with my business, mid-career, as a financial service professional when there was a financial crisis going on and everybody thought that the financial markets in the planet were just going to zero.

And I had been serving people for quite[a number of years. I was 13 years into my career at that time. And when times of crisis happen, it reveals a lot about the quality of your business. And I wasn't happy. I didn't enjoy the day-to-day 50 hours I was putting in at the office

because it wasn't consistent with what I was doing in my evenings and weekends in the community and with my family. And I kind of made a point of just saying that doesn't happen anymore going forward. But how do I do it?

And so, I wanted to live my passion seven days a week, and it started with... I have been helping an endowment through the crisis and it just started with a goal [that may be] (to) help redirect a million dollars to charity every year. And so, I drew that onto my whiteboard, and I said, "That's my goal. Let's build a business in this marketplace that supports that."

It was a rather auspicious and audacious kind of goal. My peer groups didn't really understand it. And the people I wanted to serve, which were charities and high-net-worth donors or investors, certainly, didn't trust the financial service industry very much at that time.

So, one of the most important things I did to overcome that "fox in a henhouse" feeling where they were barring the doors and grabbing their shotguns to try to keep me at bay... I just wanted to serve. And the most important part of getting through that moment, getting into that conversation on the other side of the table with them was writing a book.

When I decided to write a book, I wanted to become an expert in the field. I wanted to serve the people who were the decision-makers, and I wanted to basically provide a real clear sign that I was one of them -- that I was there to serve. And I did all of those things and it was, actually, magical.

It was hard. My first book wasn't a very pleasant process for me. It was very expensive, and it was a difficult endeavor. I didn't make a lot of good choices through there. I didn't have a lot of good guidance. But at the end, it was well worth the price of admission if I helped someone.

**Pat:** What was the topic about?

**Mike:** Philanthropy. You know, if I had a million-dollar-a-year goal to charity, how could I inspire the people who needed to be persuaded that I was there to help, right? And those people were board of directors of charities that I was hoping to serve.

Before, they basically had no interest in dealing with a financial service professional. And I was a big governance guy, and I didn't enjoy the whole, "You donate a large amount of money; then you get to work." I didn't like that. I thought that was pretty conflicted.

Ultimately, what I did was publish this book to show and demonstrate that I was an expert in the market. And I wanted to just teach them how they could give to charity. That was going to be like philanthropy for dummies. You know, it was for the CEO philanthropy for dummies. And it ended up being more about the journey that great philanthropists of modern day like Oprah and Bill Gates and Buffett, what their journey was. And I just reflected it as a story for the people I was hoping to serve.

**Pat:** And we know that people love stories and respond to stories and learn from stories.

**Mike:** They do. You know, I help people, coach them through their book writing process as well, and one of the things I tell them about storytelling is book writing and book reading is just basic rote learning, like you're reading and learning. Once you bring stories into it, it brings the element of experience -- you know, that familiarity -- and that helps people get the message, drive the message home or create a colorful image of what you're doing.

**Pat:** You said a few minutes ago that it was a difficult process, and it was an expensive process. The first-time author or person writing a book listening to this is going to be intensely curious. What did you learn from the experience about the potholes that they need to guide themselves around so that they don't step into them?

**Mike:** Well, for me, it was a lot of who I teamed up with. Their model was a retainer. -- They basically took a publisher role and a pseudo coach role. Well it was exciting because I thought this person really knew what they were doing. They had just written a book and gotten someone else to do it, which I found out later. So, they really didn't know everything. They just had it done for them. So that wasn't helpful. -- An expensive retainer combined with things that I thought were black box items, mysterious things. Like your packaging and all of the surroundings about publishing a book seemed like a mystery to me.

And I, basically, fell for the line that it's a very expensive thing to do when it really isn't. That's actually probably the least expensive. Editor -- sure, we invested in an editor to help me get that over the line. Some writing that needed to be supplemented, that was helpful as well. But really, this whole black box mentality that sometimes publishers will tell you was really about \$10,000 I should have invested in marketing. I thought I was getting a little more of a publicist than a publisher, and I didn't know the difference.

So, I would highly recommend people learn what they're expecting and what they get what they invest in. I think it was over a \$30,000 investment for me for my first book. My most recent one was published for less than a thousand dollars and it's 10 times the book.

**Pat:** It sounds like there's a "Buyer beware" lesson here in your first experience. And it's a very popular model. I mean there are a number of companies that offer a package deal, and it sounds appealing.

One of the people who went through my Book Authoring Mastery course hired a publisher -- more of a vanity press publisher -- and spent \$14,000 to get the cover done, to get the book edited, for them to launch it. She's so early in this process that I don't know that she's seen returns yet from that experience. But you must sell a hell of a lot of books to pay back 14 much less \$30,000. And most people will never. The odds are very high against you ever making enough in book sales to pay that back. What are your thoughts on that?

**Mike:** Well, everybody has a reason for writing a book. First, everybody's got a book in them. As you know, Pat, most people don't get a book out of them and even fewer get a book done.

I think the first battle is understanding a process or being involved with somebody who will help you get it done. There are a lot of demystifying things about editing, formatting, publishing that need to be tackled. With the right guidance, you can navigate those waters and you can do it affordably.

There is the other part. There is an investment for people who need to add professionals. In one case, I wrote a book sitting by a pool. It took me three hours and basically wrote the entire book. Within five months, it was published. And that was a \$300 endeavor.

The same time, I was writing a book that was half the size and was a little more challenging. I couldn't sort the thoughts out, so I had to hire a writer. And when I hired a writer, I invested in her expertise to help connect my thoughts, put my words into sensible chronological or continuity -- continuous meaning, right? So, when you need to bring in experts, you must invest in them.

But there's so much of the process that has been held back as the black box process that has a premium to it, that is merely... That's just a market rate. And when people tell me that's just how it is, I often want to dig in and find out that it's not.

Now I'm not saying it's not an investment because you could... If you add a coach to it like me, it'd be between 2 and \$5000, all-in. But it's not going to be 10 and it's not going to be 15.

There are some people, though, that need and want it done for them. So, if you want to write a book, and you don't want to write a book, now you're investing, right? And you're investing for both speed and the freedom not to do it.

Lastly, of course -- and you know this as well, Pat -- there's a big difference between "Self-publishing" and "Publishing." If you use a typical self-publishing platform, you are definitely not looking to be on the shelves of every airport bookstore, every bookstore down the street. There is a difference about distribution. And publishers can bring that. That's where a publisher can truly add value if they're into the distribution of your book on major bookstores and major bookshelves. And that's worth investing for some people.

**Pat:** I just did a podcast not even an hour ago with Jennifer Fondrevay who has a book that she wrote on mergers and acquisitions. And she approached through book agents and directly, several publishers and many of them were interested in the book. But they wanted her to invest in them, to pay them money to publish her book. And they were traditional mainstream publishers. So, all of the rules for what you pay for, how much you should pay, it's all changing.

**Mike:** It is. You know, the democratization of many businesses is happening right in front of our eyes and it's accelerating with technology -- you

know, that the solutions are becoming more and more available and they're better.

I used to be in the advisory world -- so for 22 years as a high-net-worth advisor for families -- and there's a real value in that trusted role and the role of good advice. And the role of good advice, often, is less about the investment you make in it and the potential return and more about the potential for not making mistakes that cost you thousands and thousands of dollars or an incredible amount of time.

So often, a good coach or advisor in the process is the most crucial part of getting you to where you need to go without taking a lot of potholes along the way.

I often want to learn with people why they even wanted to write a book in the first place. And it's kind of paramount to understanding the self-published or published role.

I think you and I were talking briefly about the idea of... My business is to help people become well-known authors and not necessarily the greatest writers. JK Rowling, Mark Twain, Gladwell, they're not... That's not our goal. Our goal is to help a person position themselves in a marketplace that allows them to maximize the credibility that a book gives you, to understand how that works for you and opens doors for you and puts you at--

What I needed, at one time, was to be on the same side of the table as the people I was hoping to serve. When you can use a book in that way, it's magical.

Jay Conrad Levinson wrote *Guerilla Marketing*, and for me, in the '90s, that was a huge... I think for a lot of people, that was a big bible of marketing. He was asked one time how many books he sold, just like my mom asked me. My mom was like, "Oh you wrote another book. How many have you sold?" I'm like, "Well not that much, mom, but that wasn't the point."

You know, he was asked how many he sold and he kind of deflected and said, "Well I guess \$10 million is what I made from the book." And the person was blown away by that answer. He said, "I sold probably about \$35,000 worth of the book and I made \$9.9 million-

plus through selling my coaching, my training, my business, my other stuff.”

So that's the power of a book in the relationship I have with entrepreneurs and owners who are looking to write their book -- quite frankly, in my opinion, who need to write their book. Now there's nothing more powerful than, I think, to put someone at what I call, the “top of their mountain of credibility” than a book.

**Pat:** You know, that was exactly what I was talking about with Jennifer an hour ago because she lived through three painful mergers and acquisitions and realized that there was a lot of pain in the business world associated with that phenomena.

She had life experiences that would be valuable to people who've been caught up in the turmoil associated with M&A and now has, as part of her coaching and speaking business, helping companies who are struggling with merging different cultures, dealing with the people issues associated with it. That book gave her credibility and a way to help other people.

And I suspect your books... and I know we haven't talked about all of them. But you've told me, before we started, you've got six books. Each one of those, including that first one that got you from the critical zero books to the first book, each one of them added to your experiences and your credibility and your knowledge about the space.

**Mike:** Yeah. As hard as that book was, I earned multiples of six figures because I had become an author. There's no question that its publication had a direct impact in my future earnings. For years to come, until I wrote my next books, that book was responsible for the opportunities that I had earned. So, there's no question that it helped my business.

Then writing other books became a thing. I kind of swore it off for a while because it wasn't a great experience. But in retrospect, I look back and I went, “Well it was the kind of thing that really impacted my business in a way that was so positive that I should probably do it again.”

So, I began writing my second and third books, and they did exactly what I was hoping they would do. They helped me position in another

market. They helped me expand a new market which was my entrance into the coaching world back in 2014.

And then it becomes one of those things. Now you know the process and you know how to get it done in a reasonable time and what you need to do. Suddenly, it becomes something that you aren't aghast about. You just say, "Okay, well, I guess, it's time to write another book. I need to enter this market" or "I need to take this initiative. A book would be a great way to lead into that market so I can get opportunities to share what I know and how I'll serve."

I just wrote this book, *Entrepreneur Secrets to a Grow Get Give Life*. That was my fifth book.

You know, you're funny about the "first versus the last." Well, you're a heck of a lot better writer at the end than you were in the beginning. I always tell people, "You'll never finish a book if you scrutinize it too much because you're better at the end than you were at the beginning." And you take that into multiples of books, and you're still a better writer at the end than you were at the beginning, so you have to be able to finish it.

But following that, I was trying to get a book writing... You know, this whole online shift for all of us, attracting people to your courses isn't the same as bringing them in person to your workshop. And so how do you do that? Well one of my funnel builders said, "You need an eBook," and I said, "Well I don't have an eBook." He goes, "Well there's this whole resource you can get. You just pick up. You can download other people's stuff" -- you know, private label it. And I looked at that and I thought, "Geez, that's really not authentic. It's not me. I don't really want to do that."

I woke up the next day after having this conversation and I wrote an eBook that was 10 chapters long and I did it in two hours, fully published it. And that afternoon, it was on Amazon.

So, my 6th book, to think about how you could do that basically for no money other than two and a half hours of investment of time writing it... and it was done. And understand that you can be published that quickly. And it's a good piece of helpful literature that if you do understand that you can get through that process then books

become such a magical tool that you can actually produce almost at will.

**Pat:** There's a huge difference between being able to get a book online in that speed versus going to a traditional publisher and waiting a year from the time you submit the manuscript or actually from the time you start to the point that you see it in print. It could be at least a year. It could be 18 months.

Many of my earlier books were published by Lawyers & Judges Publishing Company, and it would be a labor of months and months and going back and forth between the page proof and the edited work and making sure that the copy editor didn't distort any changes on the process of editing. They were also books with multiple contributors.

And it may not surprise you at all, Mike, to know there are people who like the idea of being published more than they actually like the idea of writing. So, we had, in every book, one or two people who said, "Absolutely, I will meet your deadlines" and then they didn't.

**Mike:** No.

**Pat:** And that's another whole challenge of putting together people, teaching them how to turn in their work -- What are the deadlines? Here are the implications? Here's the format. No, you can't change your format. You must follow the format we're giving you. Yes, you must meet the deadlines. No, I'm sorry that you're in Iraq with a satellite phone, and you can't get your work done.

One book, we waited six months for one of the authors to come back from overseas so that she could finish her two chapters. And everybody else was done on time, and she held up the entire book. But anyway, I digress -- a little bit of trauma.

**Mike:** It is a challenge with compilation. My fourth book was really the expert author in a compilation project. I know the sensitivity of this. And I hit every deadline. You'd be a professional, right? You deliver exactly what you're supposed to when you're supposed to.

You know that project got delayed by two months because everybody else is dragging their feet because they just wanted to be published.

You know, I wasn't participating in the sales in the same way. I wasn't doing any of that. What am I doing? A feather in my cap? I mean four books in, you go, "Okay, well, what was it? How am I serving people?" And to be of service, to help the author or the compiler, the publisher, that was more my agenda. I thought I wanted to do something good, help people and serve our community. And I took that seriously. But some people, you know, they don't understand it.

You mentioned a publishing company kind of drags the process out. You know, coaching collapses time for people. That's kind of number one. And the publishers come in and they extend it.

And you know as well as anybody, it's hard to be an author in the first place. You're going to have a month or six weeks or... you know. You're going to have a period where you just can't write. Nothing makes sense. You're disgusted with the whole... Like all those emotions happen especially if you're the one doing the bulk of, if not all, the writing. And that just adds to the delay and adds to the stress of the whole process.

You guide people so well. You're experienced on both sides of publishing and self-publishing. I mean that's incredible wisdom that you share through your business with your clients.

People just don't understand it. The journey of an author isn't a really pleasant one but it's a really rewarding one. And while you're in flow, it's great. When you're stuck, it's tough. To have someone like you and even me on a person side in that process is priceless.

**Pat:** It is a lonely and twisted path, I think, to become an author. And it's so easy to lose objectivity and to feel like you're wandering around in a black cloud.

One of the things that Jennifer said to me not long ago, and I'll mention her for the third time, is that she had a book proposal that she wanted to have critiqued. And I was with Jeffrey Hayzlett and was teaching on a panel on book writing for the National Speakers Association. And Jeffrey loves to put people's cards in a hat and then pull it out and then they win prizes. So, Jennifer won a prize of having me critique her book proposal.

And she said to me just a few minutes ago, “It was so helpful to have another person read that book proposal and tell me there was value in what I was proposing to write” -- this book on mergers and acquisition -- “because up to that point, it was just me and my thoughts and not knowing whether it would appeal to anyone else besides me.”

That's what a book coach or a trusted friend or an advisor can give you when you're sitting there stumped or you're lost up and you're caught up in your own world and you don't know what other people are thinking of your idea... what they will think of your idea.

When I did some research with some people about a year ago to find out what their biggest fears and frustrations and challenges related to writing a book, one of the themes was, “What if I write this book and it's no good and nobody's interested?” What a tragedy that would be.

**Mike:** And there's the sense, when an author is going through their journey, no matter how accomplished they are... I mean you get celebrities, heads of State, heads of companies who write books because they feel... and they understand the value of it. But through that, that impostor syndrome or the feeling of lack of worth or you know, you... That is one of the moments. Even though people--

People will be... they'll put the craziest thing on social media. They'll write about a topic that they're an expert in and put it in a book, and they feel that that is more revealing and more exposing than anything else they do anywhere else. Like how they'll behave in so many different ways and so many different platforms, you stick it in a book. There's something so permanent about it, even though the Internet is very permanent, that people feel extremely vulnerable and exposed. And it's usually about pure approval. It's about the people you're hoping to impress that you impress them.

And I often give people some reassurance because... There are rare books where I read every single page, every single word, like there is a rare book where it's got me so glued, that that's exactly what I'll do or in other books, I'll read every word but it might take me months and so that's not really a great book, right? It didn't capture me for me.

And most people don't read your book, end-to-end, word-for-word, quite frankly. I think a lot of people are just so worried that they'll be

under such scrutiny that they can't be less than perfect. But there's admiration in it.

You mentioned the National Speakers Association. There's so much admiration for a speaker. No one in the audience wants the speaker to fail because it's a terrible experience for everybody. They're all rooting for you. And so, the people that matter in your network with your book, the people you're most worried about judging your book, they want you to succeed. And they're happy you did it and they wish they could have done it, right? So, I think people just--

Yeah, it's a funny thing, you know, what we'll allow to be out there in public and how worried we are about what gets written. It's kind of an interesting... It might be a longer topic than we have time for.

[Laughter]

**Pat:** And I know it's horrifying for many authors to realize that people are not going to be reading their books from cover to cover. I think the statistic is something like only one out of five readers gets to the end of the book. This came up when I was working with an author as a ghostwriter and editor for him and he didn't feel that the last two chapters were perfect. It's now been a year and a half. He has not finished that book and let it out to the world because he is sitting there saying his last two chapters, they're not good enough. "This book has to be perfect." It's such a sad, sad situation for him.

**Mike:** I talk about books and becoming an author... You know, I talk about this thing called "mountain of credibility." And the reason I call that, it's like climbing Everest. And people who have climbed Everest, there's only 4000 people out of all recorded history who have reached the peak since Sir Edmund Hillary, and 300 people have died trying, and 7 billion people have never even gotten near the mountain.

There's something really magical about that person. They come into any room and they're immediately recognized as a credible expert. But what they never wonder is whether they crawled on the very top, they stood up at the top, they were like... you know, whatever. They were emaciated. No one really cares about how they got that last hundred feet to the peak, just that they got to the peak.

The same as with writing. You know, getting hung up on your last chapter or getting the intro just right are details that might be right in your head for a type of personality that's writing the book but at the end of the day matter so much less than becoming a completed and published author.

So, getting it done matters so much more. You know, "Done" is better than "Perfection." But let's just say, becoming a published author just like about the size of a book. It doesn't matter if you have a thick book or a little tiny book. The published book is better than the one that your competitor didn't publish, right? So just having it out there is really critical. It's not going to necessarily be a seminal work.

**Pat:** Your message is striking fear into the heart of all the perfectionists who are listening to this saying, "But Mike, it has to be perfect. It's my reputation. It's my name on it. It's my credibility. I can't have a single typo in it. It's got to be as best as I can make it."

**Mike:** I love that because Pat, I'm on your podcast just because I happen to have written a few books, and maybe because we got to know each other. We have a mutual network. But I'm on here, and I am pretty sure, most, if not all your listeners, haven't read my book. So, what matters more?

I have an opportunity to share a little bit of wisdom, maybe some ideas, maybe get people laughing and get to know them this way where they never would have picked up my book in the first place.

So, I think it's more important. The book gave me an opportunity to have a wonderful discussion with someone I met like you who now is part of my network, and I can share ideas and secrets and interesting stories with along the way.

**Pat:** And I'll bet, Mike, you have a lot of ideas and interesting stories and secrets from all of the years that you spend working as a business coach, working in financial services, working with nonprofits and the process of working with people who have got knowledge and it needs to be teased out of them so that they can become published authors.

**Mike:** Yeah. That's probably a bottle of wine, long evening, good food, good conversation.

Yeah, I would say that you hit on something that I don't think about very often but that is “teasing the information out of people” that are experts, that have real insights. And I don't think of it much because it's just our role, right? Our role is to help people find that, get that “wow” moment and move forward.

But really, how much gratitude I have for being a part of seeing that happen, seeing it bubble up to the surface where someone is being able to realize their future impact because they got this done. And they didn't do it in a way that they felt it was rushed or hurried or no one was listening, but they got an objective observer who helped them position it in a way that they hope it would go. And I think it puts us in a really wonderful position, and I'm pretty grateful for it.

**Pat:** Well, you are the catalyst that helps the author help people. So you're part of the chain of events that leads to the people who need to hear that message from the author and need to read that message so that they, in turn, can change their lives. You're the facilitator to help the author bring that information out.

**Mike:** Yeah, that's a big part of my give. So, my first books were on philanthropy and giving, so most of it was around financial charitable giving and planning for that. And then my books became about business and entrepreneurship, but there's always a blend of giving. And over time, my giving became very personal. It was not just focused on what you could do financially but how you can help others and how you can help yourself.

So, I started to really investigate how people were in their own health and wealth and then how they could help their families, communities and causes that matter most to them.

So, when I consider what I can give back... I made a goal to give a million dollars back. I don't have a million dollars. I didn't know how to do that, and I learned. After six years, we gave away \$12.5 million to charity. We redirected \$12.5 million. It was just powerful.

And now I look at the leverage. Well maybe there's a financial reward of all the entrepreneurs I work with make more money and redirect more money to charity. But the leverage you just mentioned, about having the impact into hundreds or tens or thousands or whatever the

number is, with multiple authors being part of their process to serve a wider community is just... It's an amazing leverage that is... It will be generational which is really exciting. You know, books will last long after we've passed.

**Pat:** They will, and that's one of the wonderful things about being part of a legacy. Let me summarize, Mike. I'd like to end the show with pulling out the key points and what I've learned from this.

We've talked a lot about getting into the process of becoming an author, doing some lessons learned, research, so that you are clear on what your choices are, what the costs are going to be. Sometimes, the cost can be much greater than we realize. And we learn from the positions that we take or the paths that we follow.

You have a \$30,000 investment and then a \$300 investment. And somewhere in there, there's an average. It is the hardest thing to get from zero to one, meaning, from not being an author to the first book.

And there's a lot of mystery. Many people who I interview talked about the anxiety associated with, "Am I any good? Do I have a message that is important to share? What is the process that I need to go through in order to become an author?"

We've also stressed that being an editor of a compilation book, which I have done several times and you've had some experience with as well, involves a different role -- of being a cheerleader, a coach, a taskmaster who keeps the writers to deadlines. And that there's always, in every book, without fail, at least in my experience, one person who either likes to be published more than write or has had a disaster in their life.

We haven't talked about the lightning strike that burned out the hard drive, the sister who fell off the horse and broke her arm, the husband who decided to walk out in the middle of a project, the disasters that makes the author unable to deliver, and how that can affect a project.

And you've shared the huge value associated with having the opportunity to help authors take their knowledge and become published authors so that they can share what they know to help other people and how you've been able to use that talent and then provide a vehicle for charitable donations that are, in turn, helping thousands of

people through the work and through the contributions of other people.

**Mike:** Mm-hmm. Yeah, like I said, I'm grateful for the positioning. I'm grateful to be a trusted advisor in that relationship and I'm happy that I've got the wisdom that will serve people well.

I hit a lot of those potholes. I took a lot of flak along the way so other people don't have to. I don't view the school of hard knocks as the necessary route. If you just listen to people who've gone before you who were willing to share and be open and transparent about it, that's a good path.

**Pat:** It is. We started off our talk, before we turned on the recording, about you can become very wise if you pay attention and you learn from your mistakes or your outcomes. Quite a while ago, when I got involved in multi-level marketing, one of the sales trainers said, "You never fail. You just have unintended outcomes."

**Mike:** It's like a scientific process. You're not always right. You just come to some kind of conclusion.

**Pat:** Exactly. And if you muck around long enough and you keep trying different things, you hit upon a formula that's successful. And if you surround yourself, which was another theme of your podcast, surround yourself with people who can give you guidance, who can help you when you are mired in your indecision or you feel like you've lost your objectivity and rely on them and their support... because you don't have to do this alone. It doesn't have to be a lonely, twisted path to becoming an author. You can have people along the way, at the next rest stop, ready to help you and encourage you to keep on going.

**Mike:** Yeah, you certainly can. And they're out there.

**Pat:** How can our listeners find out more about you, Mike, and the services that you offer?

**Mike:** Pat, my website is really simple. It's [www.growgetgive.com](http://www.growgetgive.com) or [mikeskrypnek.com](http://mikeskrypnek.com) -- same website, same place. They can find me on Facebook. They can find me on LinkedIn, Instagram. I'm there. If you're looking for me by name or by "Grow, Get, Give," you'll find

me online within the first few search items you find. Just google me and you'll find me, yeah.

**Pat:** Perfect. All right. Well thank you so much, Mike. I appreciate you. And I appreciate the listener who is either listening to this on our audio platform or watching the video on YouTube channel at Pat Iyer.

Thank you so much for being part of the show and for listening to our authors sharing their experiences in writing books.

**Pat:** Hi. This is Pat Iyer with Writing to Get Business. And I have with me today, Julie Ann Sullivan, who is the author of six books. She will be sharing some tips in this podcast that will help you as you're thinking about writing a book. -- Julie Ann, what are the key takeaways that our listener is going to get from your podcast?

**Julie Ann:** I think, first and foremost, as you follow my journey, you will see how my writing style, what I chose to write about and how I went about writing the books, changes. Your first book may or may not be your best book. But it's all a learning experience.

And the idea is, as you go through your own personal changes and your own personal profession and what you do in your career, what you write is going to be different and that's okay. And I think one of the best takeaways I said, which is really at the end, "The best books are not written alone."

**Pat:** All right. Thank you so much, Julie Ann. -- Be sure to pick up Julie Ann Sullivan's podcast. You'll get a lot of great tips from a person who's written several books and shares in her journey how each of those books changed as she got experienced and added new elements to the process of writing those books.

**Julie Ann:** Absolutely.

**Pat:** Thanks so much.

**Julie Ann:** Oh I just want to say one more thing -- Get a coach!

**Pat:** [Laughter] Thank you. And if you need help, you can contact me.

