

So what do you need to do to create your planning process? Some items should be year-round planning activities while you can focus on others during one-, two-, or six-month timeframes. For instance, at all points in the schedule, you'll want to record your thoughts and observations regarding new book projects, whether they're based on conversations, articles in newspapers and magazines, or any other source. a mu

To make materials accessible when you need them, oSetting up file folders is arganize them in file folders with headings such asit isit:

- Articles from newspapers, magazines, and websitesonline
- Author pProspects
- Project files for each book that you are working ons.
- Trends and statistics.

Step 2: Create a Planning Routine

Establish a routine that works for you. It probably makes sense to review publishing prospects, ideas, and plansplans formally as follows:

- Weekly or bi-weekly
- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Annually

In addition, it's a good idea to have brainstorming sessions with the entire staff once a year to generate new lists of book ideas. And, of course, it's wise to pay attention to—and keep track of—book ideas that come from sales calls and sales reps.

Step 3: Create a Publishing Plan

Once you have both a planning process and a planning routine, focus on elements of the bigger picture, specifically:

- **Vision and mission.** Do you have a mission statement for your company? Do you have a mission statement for your book-publishing program? You need both and they should be consistent.

In fact, it's a good idea to review and revise your publishing plan as often as necessary as you gather feedback, as the market shifts, and as your own thinking changes. Enjoy the journey!

Kathleen A. Welton is a 25-year veteran of the publishing industry who has been involved in all aspects of the business, from building publishing programs and working with acquisition teams to sales, marketing, and licensing. She has helped create publishing plans and best-selling books for at Dearborn Trade, John Wiley & Sons, Adams Media Corporation, and Random House.