



John B. McHugh, Publishing Consultant
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FAQs about John B. "Jack" McHugh

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This FAQ is intended to provide information about what is available at my website, my professional writing and papers available free and for-sale, and services I offer to clients.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q What is your background?

A I am a 40-year veteran of the publishing business and a long-time publishing consultant. I write and publish the McHugh Publishing Guide Series, containing more than 92 practical papers covering all aspects of publication management that can be ordered at my website. Additionally, I publish the McHugh Expert Interview Series, containing 16 interviews with publishing leaders covering a variety of publishing specialties that are available free at www.johnbmchugh.com.

You will find detailed information about my background at the end of the FAQ.

Q What are your specialties?

A My specialties include: association/nonprofit publishing; book publishing; journal publishing; publication marketing; rights and permissions; executive recruiting; organizational design and optimization; underperforming publications and startups

Q What will I find at your website?

A At www.johnbmchugh.com you'll find an information-rich site with a minimum of glitz and clutter. Every page is one click away from the home page. Available is information on the services I provide. You can also order any of the 50 McHugh Publishing Guides as PDFs that are for sale. Additionally you can print out any of 27 free McHugh Publishing Guides or any of the 16 free McHugh Expert Interviews.

Q Can the McHugh Publishing Guides you offer for sale be licensed and used for educating staff and our volunteer members on the publishing business?

A Yes, information about licensing is a the website. You can also email McHugh at jack@johnbmchugh.com or call 414-351-3056.

Q What are the McHugh Expert Interviews and what topics are covered?

A The McHugh Expert Interviews are 16 interviews with practicing publishing managers and subject matter experts with an emphasis on practical solutions. Topics include: association publishing; advertising sales; book publishing (acquisitions, independent and trade); copyright and ebooks; copyright and social media; executive recruiting; innovative content distribution; innovations in STM publishing; library marketplace; management consulting; request for proposal preparation; rights and permissions; and social media.

Q Who has been interviewed?

A Interviewees include: Richard Barwis, Cornerstone Media; Pam Boiros, Books 24x7; David Beacom, NSTA; Judy Galbraith, Free Spirit Publishing; David Koehser, Attorney-at-Law; Mark Mandelbaum, American Society of Agronomy; Claire Reinburg, NSTA Press; Jeremy Soldevilla, Christopher Mathews Publishing; Katina Strauch, Against the Grain; and John B. "Jack" McHugh (me).

Q What is the LinkedIn™ Group, Association and Nonprofit Publishing??

Association and Nonprofit Publishing is a closed group open only to practicing publishing managers and editors. Our intent is to educate and inform our members on the publishing business without blatant sales pitches. Our group has over 600 members in the commercial and nonprofit publishing sectors. Topics include: association/nonprofit publishing; book publishing; copyright;

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executive recruiting; marketing; product development; periodicals; RFPs; social media; and new ventures.  
[http://www.linkedin.com/groups?mostPopular=&gid=2949807&trk=myg\\_ugrp\\_ovr](http://www.linkedin.com/groups?mostPopular=&gid=2949807&trk=myg_ugrp_ovr)

Members are welcome to contact me, as the group manager, with any questions: email [jack@johnbmchugh.com](mailto:jack@johnbmchugh.com) or call 414-351-3056. Website: [www.johnbmchugh.com](http://www.johnbmchugh.com).

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**Q** What motivates you to write about the publishing business?

**A** I enjoy the process of writing and it helps to clarify my thinking. Following each client assignment I ask myself, "What have I learned?" "What information (nonproprietary) am I able to share with readers that will help them do their jobs better?" I characterize my writing as practical and applicable. And as clients engage my services I have a repository of papers that serve to enlighten them on important publishing subjects.

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**Q** What distinguishes you from other publishing consultants?

**A** Experience and knowledge. Clients will not be working with a neophyte, needing on-the-job training. I have proven processes, templates, and a bank of carefully designed and tested management audit questions. At the front-end of a relationship, I invest time discovering needs and determine whether or not I can serve the client.

Additionally, I bring in-depth knowledge of rights and permissions to every assignment. I'm able to provide suggestions on how to improve rights management, review licenses, identify potential legal exposure and most important, suggest when it is prudent to consult with a qualified copyright attorney. Copyright and licensing issues pervade many aspects of today's publishing, and successful publishing executives understand the importance of this fact.

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**Q** What is important in your relationship with clients? How do you ensure that you provide the best possible service to your clients?

**A** Every assignment focuses on what the client wants to accomplish and his/her needs. A big part of working with clients is effective communications. Therefore, from the very first contact I pay close attention and listen to the client. I ask questions to clarify and increase understanding.

As an outsider, it is important to understand the client's organizational culture, have a sense of the political dynamics and understand where the power resides. An organization's culture can be a powerful determinant of its performance

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**Q** What is your typical process for working with a new client?

**A** My process begins with a careful listening to needs. My modus operandi is participative: the more the client and the staff participate, the better the chance that I will succeed in meeting the needs. Then my process is generally the following: preparing a draft consulting proposal containing project scope, deliverables, schedule, and fees. The client reviews and approves the proposal, authorizes the agreement, and we go to work.

The next step is data gathering. This consists of a combination of interviews and written responses to a carefully designed questionnaire. Depending on the situation, I may visit the client's facility.

I prepare a draft of the report and discuss my findings with the client, revisions are incorporated, and the final report is submitted. We then discuss the report and a possible implementation plan. The client and their staff can call me on an unlimited basis to discuss anything related to the assignment.

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**Q** What is most important when you start an assignment for a client?

**A** There are three items that should be clearly established between the client and myself.

- What is to be accomplished?
- What are the client's expectations?
- What is the scope of the project?

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**Q** Earlier in your career you were the Director of Programs and Membership at the American Society for Quality (ASQ). How has that experience affected your thinking on the subject of quality?

**A** Profoundly. Being in charge of all the Society's businesses and membership, I had 10 managers reporting to me. My responsibilities at ASQ made me focus on the customer and his/her requirements for satisfaction. I learned the importance of well-documented processes, metrics, and cycle time. What was hammered into my head was the need to always listen to the customer (including internal customers). As a result of my ASQ experience, Total Quality Management and focus on the customer permeate all my work.

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**Q** You have written extensively about product development. Why is that?

**A** Much of my work is for associations and nonprofits. Frequently, associations and nonprofits have multiple product lines. Each unit—certification, education, standards, and publishing divisions—is closely related to the others, in part because of their involvement in information products. They are in the knowledge business and, therefore, share commonalities. Yet my experience has found that, because of the "silo" effect, some organizations fail to fully exploit their strengths in the product development arena. I advise all clients, "Think about product development on an integrated basis by planning together as both a deterrent and antidote to siloing."

**Q** What do you see in the future for the publishing industry?

**A** Our industry is certain to see more and more digitization of copyrighted content. Copyright protection will become even more vital as content aggregators seek more free content. Therefore, it's critical to learn all you can about copyright and licensing. And finally, since new ideas and products have to come from somewhere—namely publishers—solid product development processes will always be contemporary.

## JOHN B. MCHUGH BACKGROUND

**John B. "Jack" McHugh** has worked as an executive for Houghton Mifflin, Wadsworth, and Saint Mary's Press. McHugh is also an experienced association publishing executive. For seven years, he was Publisher and Director of Programs at the American Society for Quality. For a two-year period, McHugh served as the Interim Publisher at the Project Management Institute.

McHugh has advised a variety of association publishers including: AASHTO, Alliance for Children and Families, ASCD, ASM International, ASTM, AWHONN, Boy Scouts of America, International Employee Benefit Foundation, NSTA, Police Executive Research Foundation, SAE, SMACNA and SNAME. McHugh has also worked for commercial publishers such as Butterworth Heinemann, Cardiotext, Kendall Hunt, and Llewellyn Worldwide.

McHugh grew up in Evanston, IL, is a graduate of Xavier University, married, a U.S. Army Veteran (Military Police Corps), and resides in a suburb of Milwaukee, WI. McHugh has lived in Boston and Columbus, Ohio. His favorite sports teams are the Green Bay Packers and Ohio State (football).

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