



How to prepare for an AGENT CALL:

Advice from Shifa Saltagi Safadi

Congratulations!!! You got the email that said it: an agent wants to hop on a call with you.

You are probably wondering if this is it, and after months and months (maybe even years like in my case) of being in the querying trenches, you are ecstatic (and a little fearful) to be here. Could this be your chance to be published?

First off- yes, most likely the call is industry standard and the agent would like to speak with you and likely offer representation. SO CELEBRATE!

But also, get ready! There are things you can, and should do, to make sure the call goes well and benefits your career as much as possible.

First off, before you prepare for you call, please make sure to do this one thing: **email all and every agent you are also querying**, and let them know you have a call coming up with an agent. Most agents will understand that means you are about to get an offer of rep, and it will give them a good heads-up in order to read your query and decide quickly if they want to also offer. This puts you at the top of their list, and you will quickly hear back from them on if it is a no or yes.

If it is a no...then you still have your agent call.

And if they emails also wanting a call, then you have multiple agents interested, and you can use the following guideline to figure out who exactly is the right fit for you!

Okay, now for the actual call.

Following, are the questions you want to be asking...

1. Will the agent represent all your work or just one manuscript?
2. Will the agent drop you if a manuscript takes time to sell? What if the manuscript does not sell? Will they keep sending out manuscripts after that to try and sell the new ones?
3. How many editors does an agent sub to at once? What is their schedule like for nudging? When do they consider a submission "dead"?



4. How many clients does the agent have? (Ask for a few client numbers/emails and ask these clients about the agent. See how they feel about working with them)
5. How long has this agent worked in the industry?
6. Does this agent represent the genre you are writing in and sell many books in it successfully?
7. Does the agent navigate foreign rights? Are they able to sell your books outside of the US?
8. Are you able to leave the agent if you decide to? What is the contract like?
9. Does the agent give editorial feedback? If you decide not to take edits, will the agent still sub out your work?
10. Does the agent provide you with a sub list on request?
11. Does the agent provide communication from editors and send you the editor replies to see them yourself?
12. Will your agent advocate for you if you have a problem or concern with your editor?
13. What is your agent's communication like?
14. How long does it take them to get back to an email? How long to go on sub, or get edits back?
15. Are they planning on leaving agenting any time soon?

What are the right answers?

Well, the good news is that this industry is not one size fits all- which means, before you ask an agent these questions, you should know for yourself what the answer should be- because it really depends on how you want your agent and author partnership to be like.

That being said, keep in mind the biggest priorities (AGENTS NEVER ASK FOR MONEY TO REPRESENT YOU) and also (COMMUNICATION IS KEY). If an agent does something you might not understand, but communicates why- then it is up to you on navigating it together. But if they ghost you and gaslight you and make you feel small...I would definitely be wary.

Honesty and communication are the key in establishing a strong partnership.

And remember, the most important thing is to advocate for yourself. YOU are your biggest advocate in this industry, and trust yourself to know what your heart tells you. Many authors have changed agents in their careers before, but the one thing that stays the same is your own belief in the value of your craft in the world.