

## TAYLOR'S TIPS for a productive writing career...



Dear Fellow Writer,

Which came first, the chicken or the egg?

Ah, that age-old question. For a writer—which comes first, attendance at conferences, which gives writers the tools needed to garner success, or success first, and then attendance at conferences?

Before I tell you the answer, let's look at both sides.

Let's consider a writer like a barnyard chicken. She walks around and around the farmyard, constantly pecking at the ground. She finds a nibble here, a larger kernel there. Sometimes her belly is full, but more often she clucks around the yard, searching, searching, searching for something more to eat. She's doing a darn good job of feeding herself, but wonders if the grain is more plentiful on the other side (so to speak). Why is it, she wonders, that some chickens know where to find the biggest nuggets of grain? Why are they the fatter chickens, and how can she be like them?



Let's consider a conference like an egg. It holds a wealth of information inside: valuable facts from knowledgeable speakers, the ability to network with other writers, meet with agents, discuss book projects, hold one-on-one appointments with editors, garner possible assignments, attend instructional workshops, revitalize a writing career. It's a golden egg, full of possibilities for all who attend.



“But these eggs don’t come cheap,” you say. “And I haven’t made any money off my writing for quite a while.”

I hear you. It’s hard to spend money on our writing career when we aren’t making any.

So here we have a dilemma. Should the chicken scratch up enough dough to make it to the land of the golden egg? She could learn many new techniques for finding more food for herself and her family, and possibly make a good connection with a farmer who has a better type of grain that is more plentiful. That would be sweet.

Or should the chicken wait until she is successful and has lots of grain stored in her silo in the barnyard? She thinks that all grain will be plentiful in a year or two and then things will be easier. Then she can attend all the golden eggs she wants to. In the meantime, she’ll continue to scratch and scratch and eek out a living in the farmyard.

So which way is the right way? I told you I’d give you an answer and here it is.

Both ways are the right way. You must decide what is right for you. If at all possible, try to scratch up enough money to attend a writers conference in your area, even if it is only for a day. You could gather enough information to put you right over the top in the articles you submit. You just might find acceptances flowing in to your farmyard in no time. But if things are really tight, and there isn’t any extra feed around the barn, then tighten your belt and plan it for next year.

Times are tough, we all know that. But you *are* important, and your goals are important too. If you can put away \$10 here or \$20 there, stick the bills in an envelope marked “Chicken Feed” and keep your beedy eyes peeled for a conference that you can afford. Then cluck your way on down to the golden egg near you and soak up all the information that you can. Take it back to your own barnyard and begin to reap the rewards. Do that as often as you can in your writing career. After all, you’re worth it.

Happy writing and blessings on your work.

## ***What’s Happening...***

**October 24 & 25, 2008** – I’m clucking my way on down to a golden egg for a day. American Christian Writers ([www.acwriters.com](http://www.acwriters.com)) holds numerous two-day conferences around the United States. I’ll be attending one day, Friday only, at a cost of \$109. That one day egg will supply me with a boost to my writing career in the form of four workshops on nonfiction writing (or I could

have chosen the four fiction workshops), breaks to mingle with other writers (I don't get enough of that working in solitude at my computer keyboard), nuggets of information on new trends in the industry (I always have my beak to the ground hard at work and don't hear this information), and the opportunity to have lunch with other like-minded chickens who share the passion that this chickie has for the written word. I saved for a while to get the "scratch" together for the golden egg fee, but I know it will be well worth it. ☺ Check out the website for details of a golden egg coming near you (click on the "conferences" tab).

*Follow your dreams...*

**B.J.**

**Author of :**

**"The Complete Guide to Writers Groups That Work"**

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