

Still Becoming Vendor Decision Scorecards

Use these scorecards when the GetCovers draft and editor quotes come back. The goal is to protect the \$500 overall budget while still prioritizing manuscript quality.

Cover Draft Review Scorecard

Score each item from 1 to 5.

Criterion	Weight	What A 5 Looks Like	Score
First-impression clarity	20%	The title reads immediately at Amazon thumbnail size and the promise is clear without explanation.	
Genre fit	15%	Looks like credible nonfiction/personal development/leadership, not memoir-only, fiction, or generic self-help.	
Brand alignment	15%	Fits Still Becoming: practical, grounded, optimistic, modern, and not overly sentimental.	
Subtitle readability	10%	Subtitle is readable, balanced, and does not crowd the cover.	
Author credibility	10%	John M. Lowe is visible and professional without overpowering the title.	
Back cover flow	10%	Bio, blurb, author photo, barcode/ISBN space, and website reference feel organized.	
Marketplace usability	10%	Works for Kindle, paperback, web, social posts, and ads without major redesign.	
Revision burden	10%	Needs only focused edits, not a complete creative restart.	

Cover Decision Rule

- 4.3 to 5.0: approve with minor edits.
- 3.6 to 4.2: request targeted revision.
- 3.0 to 3.5: request significant revision and provide examples.
- Below 3.0: reject direction and restart with a tighter brief.

Editor Quote Comparison Scorecard

Score each editor or proofreader from 1 to 5.

Criterion	Weight	What A 5 Looks Like	Score
Fit for nonfiction voice	20%	Understands conversational, vulnerable, practical, no-BS tone.	
Scope clarity	15%	Clearly states whether work is proofreading, copyediting, line editing, or developmental editing.	
Budget fit	20%	Fits within remaining budget without sacrificing essential proofing quality.	
Turnaround	15%	Can return review fast enough to protect launch sequence.	
Sample feedback quality	15%	Feedback improves clarity and credibility without sanding off John's voice.	
Citation/legal sensitivity	10%	Will flag quote, trademark, source, and claim-risk issues.	
Communication	5%	Clear, responsive, and specific about deliverables.	

Editor Decision Rule

- If budget is tight, choose strong proofread/copyedit over expensive developmental editing.
- Require a small sample edit or clear sample feedback before committing.
- Ask them to review the citation/credits audit working list as part of scope.

- Do not accept a quote that only promises "general feedback" unless it also includes typo, grammar, consistency, and citation-risk review.

Questions To Ask Before Approving

Cover Designer

1. Can you confirm the files will work for Kindle eBook and paperback wrap once trim size/page count is final?
2. Can you provide JPG/PNG for marketing plus editable source if included in the package?
3. Can you keep the cover credible for leadership/personal development rather than grief memoir?
4. Can the back cover include author photo, short bio, blurb, and stillbecomingtools.com?

Editor

5. What level of edit does your quote include?
6. Will you preserve a conversational author voice?
7. Will you flag grammar, spelling, repeated words, confusing transitions, citation/quote risk, and trademark/source issues?
8. Can you provide comments in Word with Track Changes?
9. What is the guaranteed turnaround?

Recommended Sunday Use

Use this as a 15-minute vendor decision aid. Score first, then decide. If the score conflicts with your gut, pause and identify what the scorecard is missing before approving spend.