Transcription for Module 7 Unit 2

Offer Etiquette
Welcome to Unit 2 of Module 7: Offer Etiquette - How to Conduct Yourself Once You Have an Offer.

An offer of representation from an agent is thrilling and you may be tempted to open that bottle champagne and start celebrating. But, resist the temptation to say yes right away, even if you think this is your dream agent.

Ask the questions in Unit 1. Request some time to think it over. Remember, a bad agent or a bad fit can be worse than no agent at all.

Follow up with other agents you've submitted to with a polite email letting them know that you've received an offer. Ask if they too are interested in your work and use this subject line "Offer of representation received." In this way, you give the other agencies to which you've submitted your work, a chance to respond and perhaps to counter or give you a better offer.

Give those other agents a reasonable amount of time to respond, but no more than a week. Other agents will usually respond quickly with either a request for a bit more time to consider your manuscript or a request for a call to discuss representation or this isn't for me, but congratulations.

What if you receive multiple offers from multiple agents or agencies?

Well, in this embarrassment of riches situation, you can consider each offer and each agent carefully. Review your notes and your research, ask for follow up calls or emails if necessary.

Then ask yourself this, "Who is most passionate about my work? With whom do I feel the greatest degree of trust?" And ultimately once again, trust your instincts.

When you've made your decision, send a polite, professional message or a phone call to each agent you did not select to represent you. Thank them for their offer if they made one, for their time and their interest. There is no need to say why other than that you felt X agent would be a better fit for you and your work.

When should you mention if you've parted ways with your previous agents? Well, definitely not in the initial query. The time to discuss that is during a phone call or a follow up meeting.
And there is no need to go into great detail. A simple, "It wasn't a good fit for me" will suffice. Be honest, but don't be disparaging of your previous agent. Again, with the turnover of this industry, you never know when and where you're going to bump into someone again or who might be someone's best friend.

If an agent offers to represent only one book, but you are looking for representation for your entire writing career, ask if he or she will consider representing your body of work if the first book sells. If you are not satisfied with the response, you can keep querying.

You can also choose to have an agent represent that one book and to query other agents with respect to your other books. But do ask the agent if it is okay for you to do so before you do. They may offer to represent your career. And remember, whatever you and the agent agree to, make sure it is put in writing in your contract of representation. Congratulations, you are now ready to move on to Unit 3.