What Editors Expect

James L. Morrison
Editor-in-Chief

Innovate

http://innovateonline.info

`

I am delighted to be here today, not only because we are in Hawaii, but because this is a presentation that I really like to do. It is based upon my being an author/editor of eight books or so and author or coauthor of over 200 articles. I have also founded and edited three online journals and have spent the last eight years where my primary responsibility was editing first The Technology Source and now Innovate.
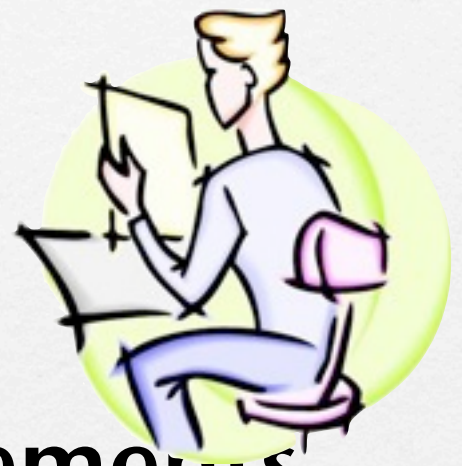
I will first review what editors expect and then suggest strategies/techniques that you can use to meet these expectations and enhance your chances of getting an "accepted" or "accepted with revisions" or even "rejected, but please resubmit" letters from editors and lessen your chances of getting outright "reject" letters.

I will close with a list of references (open access online references and print) that will also be of most helpful to you. Don't bother writing them down. The URL of this

Manuscript Expectations

- ☐ **Appropriate**
- ☐ **Complies with house style**
- ☐ **Follows submission requirements**
- ☐ **Polished**

Appropriate: Clearly appropriate for the journal (e.g., tone, subject)

Complies with House style (e.g., length, structure, reference and in-text citations, figures)

Follows submission requirements (e.g., how many copies, sent to whom, file formats)

Polished (e.g., no awkward sentences, unclear modifiers, improper word usage)

Suggestions

- ☐ **Citations**
- ☐ **No errors**
- ☐ **Stake your claim**
- ☐ **Focus**
- ☐ **Follow guidelines**

Citations: No misquoted or incorrectly cited sources

No grammatical or proofreading errors; spell check and proofread

Stake your claim explicitly in the first couple of paragraphs. Answer the "Why should I read this article?" question in this claim.

Have a clear focus, making sure that you have sufficient material to support the focus.

Make sure that your article conforms to submission guidelines (e.g., word length, citations, references, tone).

Suggestions

- ☐ **Prose**
- ☐ **Concrete**
- ☐ **Citations**
- ☐ **Literature**
- ☐ **Come full circle**

1. Prose: Pay attention to your prose. Use direct, concrete language; avoid jargon or opaque technical language. Note that the definition of "jargon" may depend on the journal's audience.

2. Concrete: Make your points directly and illustrate them with concrete examples. Use only one example per point to avoid redundancy.

3. Citations: Be selective in citing sources,

4. but make sure that you have connected your work to the major literature in the field (and to articles in that journal on the same topic).

5. Come full circle in the conclusion, making sure that you connect your findings/argument to the literature review and the big picture.

Suggestions

- ☐ **Writing center**
- ☐ **Colleagues**
- ☐ **Read several articles**
- ☐ **No multiple journal submissions**
- ☐ **Handling rejection**

Writing center: If you have access to a writing center, use it.

Colleagues: Ask a colleague to read the manuscript carefully for prose and to comment on the appropriateness of the article for the journal.

Do not send the article out to multiple journals at the same time. Send your manuscript to one journal at a time, writing the editor after several weeks for an update on its status.a If you get no response, notify editor that you are withdrawing it.

Develop a healthy attitude toward rejection. Read the reviews and editor's comments carefully and determine if it is worth your time and energy to substantially revise the manuscript before submitting it elsewhere.

Writing Resources Available Online

- *The Online English Grammar* at http://tinyurl.com/lzj4lv

- *The Elements of Style*, William Strunk, Jr. http://tinyurl.com/5ex96a

- The UNC Writing Center Handouts http://tinyurl.com/8ajlug

- The Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) http://tinyurl.com/ryb63

- APA Online at http://www.apastyle.org/elecref.html

Writing Resources Available in Print

- **Review style guide the journal specifies (which may be an online house style)**

- *The Chicago Manual of Style*

- *The APA Publication Manual, 5th Edition*

Publication Resources

- **Janette K. Klingner, David Scanlon, and Michael Pressley, "How to Publish in Scholarly Journals" at http://tinyurl.com/72eyrl**

- **Kay Uchiyama & Genet Simone, "Publishing Educational Research: Tips and Guidelines" at http://tinyurl.com/68manj**

The full version of slides with speaker notes are available at http:// horizon.unc.edu/ conferences (linked in the description of the ED Media 2009 conference)