

## Publishing Webinar Notes from 06.12.2013 Webinar

### Perceived Barriers to Publishing

We believe a new author's biggest challenge is to overcome the fear of the unknown --- such as what to expect, how the process works, what to write about, and actually getting started. Usually perceived barriers are just "excuses." Don't make excuses.

- Challenge yourself to do something you wouldn't normally do; you will learn a lot!
- Finding a mentor or someone who has published before is a key help to overcoming barriers you may perceive.
- Collaboration with others that have publishing experience can help you over some of the hurdles and common mistakes. Start off small; try publishing an abstract for a conference or even articles in a newsletter. You will gain confidence as you learn.
- Each agency has its own take and standards on what an officer can publish so Agency approval should be sought early and is not an absolute barrier to publishing unless you accept it as one.

### Why You Should Publish

In our opinion, publishing is a professional obligation. Share with others what you are doing even if you don't believe what you are doing is innovative --- a literature search will disprove that 95% of the time.

- Publishing documents what the profession is doing at this point in history.
- As pharmacists, we are clinicians always seeking to engage in lifelong learning to better serve our patients. Writing is another aspect of learning through continuous professional development (CPD).
- As pharmacists, we are also scientists and need to document what we observe
- Publishing can be a great way of doing outreach and allowing an avenue to share your experiences and best practices.
- Writing for publication especially with colleagues enhances your stature and professional network
- Publications help all of our careers and show leadership.
- As mentors, we should "pull others up into writing and publishing."
- Writing to publish enhances your career in the Corps for promotions and awards
- Start simple
- Don't be afraid to fail. Per Don Berwick, founder of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, "Failure is a part of learning."
- "I've failed over and over and over again in my life, and that is why I succeed."  
[Michael Jordan](#)

## Different Types of Publishing Avenues

It is also important to consider your audience, in terms of looking for the right publication and in how & what you write. You can do a Pubmed search to get a sense of what has been published, which journals might be most appropriate or receptive and how to add to the literature overall. Don't be afraid to call an editor of a particular journal to inquire if they may be interested in the submission of a particular manuscript. By defining and writing a purpose statement, you should have a guide as to the types of journals that you want to seek publication in.

- Anything you write to be posted on a website makes you an author---this is web publishing.
- Newsletters are an option and often easier way to achieve initial success in getting published. E.g. <http://multibriefs.com/> is a leading publisher of association-branded e-mail publications providing comprehensive news briefing of the week's top industry stories to association members and trade professionals.
- You want to be just as careful when writing for the web as you are when writing for a newsletter, journal, book chapter, or book.
- Elsevier is an example of one publishing company with multiple journals to which you can submit articles.
- Most new authors don't start out writing a book, yet it is not totally unheard of so if you are invited to write one, don't back down! Books are much more time consuming, often involve collaborating with multiple authors and professionals and by nature require more program management skills. However, a book allows more fully developing a broader area or set of topics whereas journal articles and book chapter are generally more focused on one angle of a subject.
- No matter what the format, PROOF your work and have a colleague PROOF your work. The value of this review from a detail oriented, sharp-eyed and insightful colleague cannot be understated. It will avoid subsequent re-work and delays when dealing with the editors.

## Different Types of Articles

Defining each category of journal article is somewhat arbitrary primarily because each journal has their definition. The point to drive home is that once you do all your prep work - define your subject matter, determine how much you do and don't know about it, research it and see what is out there - talk to the journal to which you want to submit. THEN pick the category and write to that. Ultimately, it is the journal editors who will determine where your manuscript fits within their pages. Once you submit your draft, don't be surprised if the category changes. Briefly, there are some pros and cons highlighted for each.

### a. Editorial

- Pros: opine on one's take on an issue, event, concept. Seeks to justify a position or stance, possibly sway.

- Cons: Once it's out there, it's out there.
- b. Commentary – usually more objective than editorial, based on an article that appeared in that volume of the journal
- Pros: Often written with a colleague
  - Cons: Once it's out there, it's out there
- c. News letter – easy to achieve your first success
- Pros: [e.g. http://multibriefs.com/](http://multibriefs.com/) MultiBriefs is a leading publisher of association-branded e-mail publications, providing comprehensive news briefing of the week's top industry stories to association members and trade professionals.
  - Cons: Not all newsletters are created equal – some you may want to avoid, not worth the association
- d. Special Report
- Pros: it may take the form of research in progress, a topic that editorial staff feel is unique in some way that may not fit their existing columns
  - Cons: May have a somewhat of a “miscellaneous” feel, but entry into the publication
- e. Review
- Pros: It is your take on what is important for others interested colleagues to know
  - Cons: It is your take on what is important for others interested colleagues to know
- f. Columns specific to the journal
- Pros: Once you find that niche in a journal, you can write to that requirement
  - Pros: Follow up articles to keep writing to that requirement (e.g. search articles written by CAPT (retired) Janette Wick)

### Reviewer and Editorial Review Board

Becoming a reviewer is one of the BEST ways to get involved in the publishing process without committing to writing an article. Being a reviewer is as time-consuming as you want to make it. So, find a journal that you read on a regular basis and find out what it takes to be a reviewer. This information can usually be found on the journal website. You will learn a lot about the publishing process and the requirements of a reviewer very quickly. In addition, if you plan to publish with the same journal, then you will have the inside information on what the reviewers are looking for and critiquing.

Becoming an Editorial Review Board member is a bigger commitment (sometimes multi-year) and requires a certain amount of work (depends on the journal). Again, look at the journal website to see the requirements. After having done the requisite research, then call one of the current editorial board members (listed in the front of the journal near the table of contents) to get a firsthand account of the time and work involved. This is

another great opportunity to learn about the publishing process and network with other reviewers, authors, and board members.

### General Advice

It is a synergistic process, once you start publishing in a certain field you will receive offers to act as a reviewer and sometimes request to publish.

A few simple tips to implement:

1. It is fine to start off small, i.e. you don't have to shoot for the most prestigious journal on your first publication.
2. Collaborate with your colleagues and/or those with more experience.
3. Don't be afraid to fail. The editing process can improve your document so it will likely receive publication in another journal.
4. Don't give up --- persistence pays! Don't get discouraged if you are "rejected" your first time or any time. Look at your writing and publishing efforts as an opportunity to learn and grow professionally and personally. Remember, Michael Jordan didn't make his high school basketball team until he worked hard and showed he could do it. We think that paid off for him.