

Manuscript Preparation Suggestions for New Researchers

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This newsletter article is written as a companion piece to the article titled “Writing Quality Manuscripts for the *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*,” published in volume 36, issue 1, 2018, *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*. The purpose is to offer advice to those ITAA members who are young researchers beginning to publish their research findings. While we encourage you to submit your work to *CTRJ*, the advice given here will be helpful in writing manuscripts for a variety of research journals.

Consider which journal(s) would be appropriate for your work when planning your research study or during the process of collecting data. To determine a good fit with your research purpose look at the home web page of various journals; study what is said about each journal. Read several of the journal articles, and notice what type of research has been published. Examine the content, overall article organization, depth and type of information presented in each section, and so forth. Use the information from your examination of articles to decide which journal would be most appropriate and how to develop and organize your manuscript for submission to that journal. Additionally, locate and study the journal’s submission guidelines which may be in the journal (e.g., on the inside back cover) and/or on the journal web site. Write specifically, the specific content, organization and style, for the identified journal.

Both the organization of your manuscript and following ALL of the submission guidelines will influence the review process. Submitting a manuscript that will be peer reviewed is like making a positive first impression on a job interview; you want to be at your best, or in this case, your work should be at its best. Do not in a rush to submit your work; it is very important that you take time to ensure the manuscript is ready to be submitted.

A manuscript that makes a positive first impression will include, but is not limited to, the following characteristics:

- The content adds something new or newly important to the literature.
- The manuscript is well written; it is well organized overall, both within sections and paragraphs; it is correctly written with proper sentence structure, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and so forth. If writing is not your strength, use a professional copy editor to make sure your work is well written, clear, and concise.
- The manuscript follows the writing style required by the journal. When you submit to *CTRJ* follow the American Psychological Association (APA) style – manuscript structure (chapter 2), clear and concise writing (chapter 3), specific style characteristics such as abbreviations, use of italics, and so forth (chapter 4), APA formatting for tables and figures, APA style citations, and APA style references.
- The manuscript follows ALL submission guidelines.
- The manuscript is carefully proof read to detect writing errors, style errors, and submission guideline errors.

Do not make assumptions about what will or will not be noticed. Do not assume you can address any errors or inadequacies later. Do not assume poor writing can be edited later. The reviewers and editors are experienced in academic publications; they will notice problems and errors.

As a new professional finding a mentor to help you with your first several manuscripts can make a large difference to your success. If you are publishing your graduate research, let

your graduate advisor/major professor know you are beginning to work on a publication and that you want to work with him/her as a co-author. It is not only professional courtesy to make this contact and request, but working with your advisor on this publication follows academic ethical expectations. You will also want to determine, prior to beginning the manuscript, who will be first author, second author, and so forth. For all manuscripts written by several authors or reporting research which was conducted by several individuals, it is important to determine author order before the writing commences.

Rejection may happen; use the reviewers' comments and revise and re-submit or submit elsewhere – but for every submission, write specifically for each journal. This may mean major revision, style revision, or submission guideline revision when you submit to a second or third journal. But do make those changes as you do not want a rejection because your style does not fit the journal's style. You also do not want a rejection because you have not carefully reviewed and proof read your manuscript.