

# **Reviewing a Manuscript for a Professional Journal**

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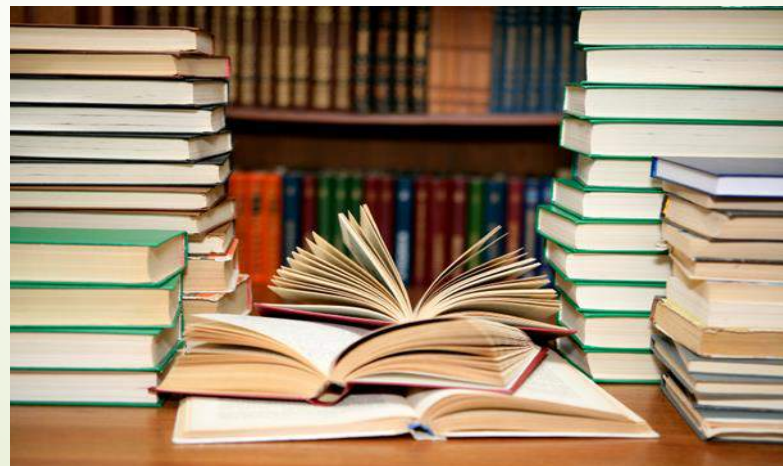
Dean and Professor  
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# Greetings from the University of Utah



# Objectives

- Explain the purpose of manuscript reviews.
- Describe criteria and ways to become a manuscript reviewer.
- Delineate the steps when responding to a manuscript review invitation.



# Objectives

- Compare and contrast blinded versus non-blinded reviews.
- Examine the criteria to use when evaluating a manuscript and making the final recommendation.



# Purpose of Manuscript Reviews

- Serve as the quality assurance system for the discipline's body of literature.
- Ensure the quality, relevance, and readability of articles for a discipline.
- Assist authors to improve their writing.
- Help the editor publish only the best articles.

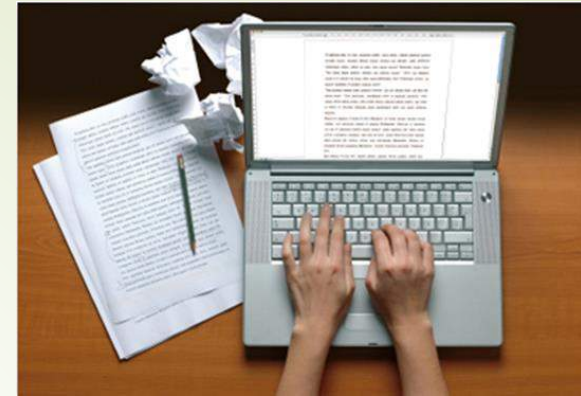
# Criteria to Become a Reviewer

*Some editors require one of the following:*

- Previous publishing experience.
- Previous publications in the journal requesting the review.
- Content expertise rather than publishing experience.
- That you represent the journal's target audience.

The number and types of degrees held are usually not a requirement.

# Steps to Become a Manuscript Reviewer



- Journal editors are always searching for reviewers.
- Contact an editor and volunteer for a journal that matches your expertise.
- Reviewing for a journal is usually a volunteer activity, you will not be paid.

# Responding to a Manuscript Review Invitation

- Editors aim to have two to three reviewers per manuscript.
- You will be contacted electronically to be invited to review.
- Do not ignore the invitation. Respond either yes or no in a timely way.







# Responding to a Manuscript Review Invitation

- Do not say yes if you cannot review the manuscript in the timeframe requested.
- If you decline, try and suggest another reviewer.
- If you accept, you will be guided through an electronic system to retrieve the manuscript and the reviewer rating form.



# Responding to a Manuscript Review Invitation

- If you accept and later realize you cannot meet the deadline, contact the editor immediately.
- If you develop a pattern of accepting the invitation and then not completing the review in a timely way, you will be eliminated from the reviewer database for the journal.

# Blinded versus Non-blinded Reviews

- **Blinded:** the reviewer does not know the name of the author and the author will never know the names of the reviewers.
  - No risk of bias on the reviewers' part.
  - Reviewers may hide behind anonymity and write unprofessional comments to the author.
  - Most nursing journals use a blinded review process.



# Blinded versus Non-blinded Reviews

- **Non-blinded:** the reviewer knows the names of the authors and the authors know the names of the reviewers.
  - Reviewers may be hesitant to be honest since their names are revealed to the author.
  - If the reviewer does not like the authors, the reviewer may send a biased review.
  - Some medical journals use a non-blinded review process.





# Criteria for Evaluating a Manuscript

- The editor may provide a checklist to complete.
- There will be a section for comments to the authors. **Do not** focus on correcting spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Editors will handle those issues.
- Comment on the content and flow of ideas based on your expertise and experience.



# Criteria for Evaluating a Manuscript

- Cite page number and paragraph for specific comments to the authors.
- Offer ideas of how to improve the manuscript.
- The reviewer does not have to fix or rewrite any aspects of the manuscript.
- Suggest a new order of topics if needed.
- If information is too superficial, suggest what to add.

# Criteria for Evaluating a Manuscript

- Do not make vague generalizations such as “this is a poor manuscript.”
- Instead, provide specific suggestions in a professional tone.
- Spot check references and point out when references are needed to support content.



# Criteria for Evaluating a Manuscript



- Alert the editor if you think any part of the manuscript is plagiarized.
- Alert the editor if the data in the manuscript have been published previously.



# Criteria for Evaluating a Manuscript

- Confidential comments to the editor:
  - Author will not see these comments.
  - Alert editor to any specific concerns.
  - Be frank in your comments.
  - Do not only complete this section of the review and leave the Comments to the Author section blank.



# Make a Final Recommendation

► Choices are often:

- Reject.
- Revise with major revisions needed.
- Revise with minor revisions needed.
- Accept (Rarely is a manuscript accepted with no revisions needed).
- There may be a place to indicate if you are willing to review a revised version of the manuscript.



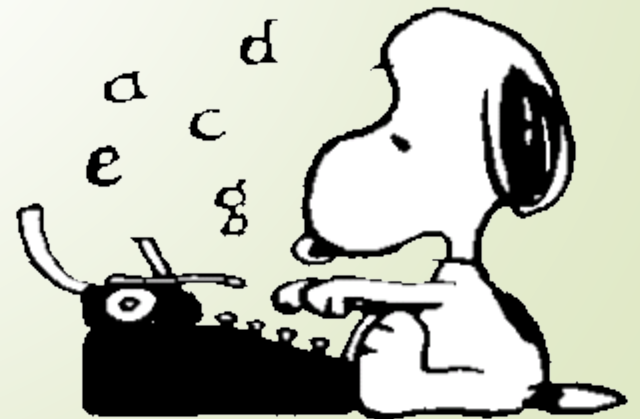
# Make a Final Recommendation

- Some journal editors will send you copies of the reviews done by other reviewers so you can compare your comments to theirs.
- All materials must remain confidential. Do not duplicate, distribute, or use any part of the manuscript.



# Citing Reviewer Experience

- ▶ List in your resume or curriculum vitae the name of the journal for which you provided a review and the year.
- ▶ For blinded reviews, never include the title and/or authors of the manuscript in your resume or curriculum vitae.



# Action Alert

- Contact at least one editor of a journal in your area of expertise and volunteer to be a reviewer!!!!
- A list of journals and contact information for editors can be found on the website of the International Academy of Nursing Editors. Click journal directory.



# Questions

