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How To Write A Good Article

Abstract

There are ample areas to get article/paper published but it is also growing harder to get one's noticed, which needs getting published in reputed one. However, getting noticed for one's article is not only way to gain success. It also requires holding readers' interest with high quality content. It is an arduous process right from picking a subject, selecting title, deciding suitable methodology of research (if applicable) to being able to target the right/correct publication and finally to adopt one's article/paper to the requirements of the editors and reviewers. This article is intended to support young and un-experienced researchers/writers for getting their article/paper published in top notch journals/magazines. This article will also show the key essentials of writing a triumphant article/research paper. As well, this will be useful to the research scholars in designing and writing their Ph.D. thesis or dissertation.

Introduction

Those days have gone when it was considered to be sufficient enough to be successful and respectful in teaching fraternity just be a good teacher with some values and sound subject knowledge. To be successful in the academia, there are four challenges in front of the academic professional- knowledge acquisition/acquire, knowledge dissemination, knowledge implementation and knowledge creation.

We acquire subject knowledge through our formal education and updating recent trends. This is the prerequisite before entering in to the teaching fraternity. There is an old saying 'teachers teach as they were taught'.

Knowledge dissemination is the prime job and we attain it through teaching and grooming to the youngsters.

Implementation plays a very important role to develop our confidence in the professional academics. What the theoretical knowledge we have, we test ourselves in practical field with first hand experience through

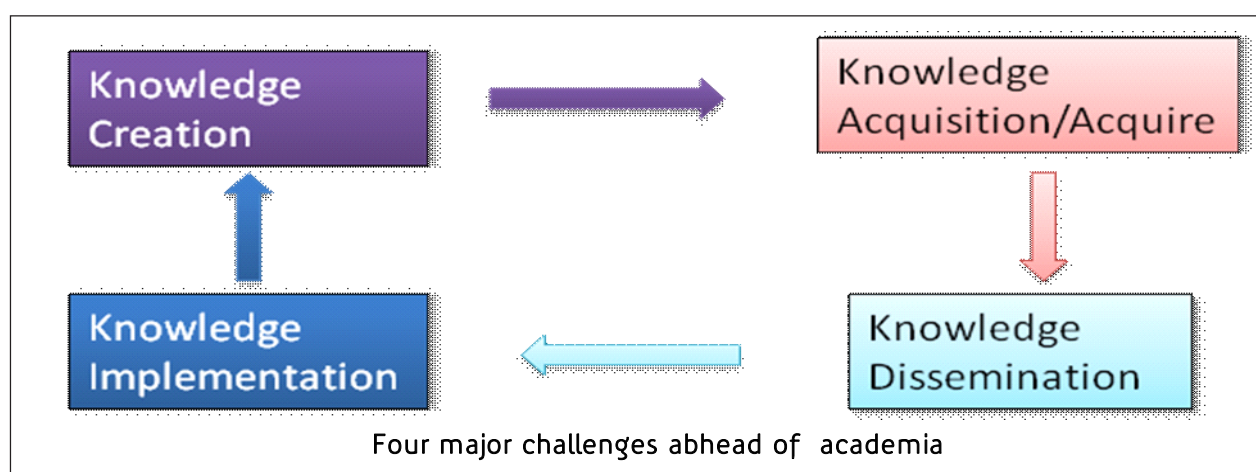
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consulting activities; in higher professional education. Also, through implementation and experimentation we can create some new vista.

Once the new knowledge is created it becomes mandate to disseminate that information among the learned professionals through publication, for the value addition to the fraternity and the ultimate society. A sound record of publication in reputed journals or magazine does not only brings tremendous personal satisfaction but it also opens doors to well established portals of academic learning and helps to build our own credibility as an industry veteran.

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one's noticed, which needs getting published in reputed one. However, getting noticed for one's article is not only way to gain success. It also requires holding readers' interest with high quality content. It is an arduous process right from picking a subject, selecting title, deciding suitable methodology of research (if applicable) to being able to target the right/correct publication and finally to adopt one's article/paper to the requirements of the editors and reviewers. This article is intended to support young and un-experienced researchers/writers for getting their article/paper published in top notch journals/magazines. This article will also show the key essentials of writing a triumphant article/research paper. As well, this will be useful to the research scholars in designing and writing their Ph.D. thesis or dissertation.



Tips

Following are the few tips which can be taken into consideration to be victorious in article/research paper writing.

A. Explore before picking a subject

Exactly what we should write will depend on whom we are writing for. The writer has to figure out who his audience are. The writers should have the answer of this question- are they writing for a beginner, an intermediate or an advanced audience? The most effectual way to write an article/paper

is to write on a topic in which the mass is interested. In selecting a topic almost every writer faces a dilemma is- should I select the topic that I know very well or should the topic be current that has good demand in the market? The suitable answer is that we should make a balance about this matter. If we don't have sufficient knowledge on that topic which has good market demand, we should acquire plenty of knowledge through research, before writing on that topic.

While searching and refereing, two things come in mind: should we only read about

our own field of writing? Or should we read a lot about other related fields also? Ofcourse, to know about our field of writing is very important but reading about other related field also can enrich our articles. We can make our article multidimensional.

B. Main points

Once the topic is finalised, we have to develop our theme step by step like building a wall brick by brick. We have to plan what we are going to say and how we are going to explain it. We have to make a list of our main points of discussion which will be elaborated logically, naturally, progressively and smoothly from one to another, so that they lead to a fertile conclusion.

C. A catchy title

Selecting the title of the article is the most significant judgement the writer has to make. The title of the article is as important as the packaging of a product which attracts its customers. The ability to make a catchy title is like winning half the battle. However, this ability can be acquired only after long time of effort by reading daily newspapers and regular other readings where very attractive titles are originate.

D. Abstract

Abstract is an introductory paragraph that indicates what is covered in the article. It should be of 100- 200 words containing the summary of subject matter included the content, findings and conclusion. An abstract is similar to packing of a product which tells brief information about the product. The writer should make sure that the article contains some information that is useful to his targeted group, and this information should be clearly stated in the abstract as the readers first read abstract and if find it is worthwhile for them then only they refer the entire article. Abstract should be followed by the keywords used in the article/paper which helps readers in finding easily what they are looking for.

E. Length of the article

How long should our article be? Should it be too short or too long? Though it is very difficult to determine whether an article is too short or too long some authors suggest 400- 500 words for internet, 500- 1000 words for news paper or magazine article and 2000- 3000 words for reputed magazine or journal articles. Some journals prefer to get research paper/article within the limit of 3000- 6000 words. So, the length varies with the target publisher/publication. Generally, people prefer to read a short and sweet article/paper which gives information that would help them, than a breezy 3000 or 6000 words article of waffle that doesn't say much at all. If the article is too long the reader can easily lose concentration and give up.

F. Content

Mainly there are three main parts of any article i.e. introduction, main body and final deduction or conclusion.

Introduction introduces the reader to the subject. Here brief information of the problem to be discussed in the article is to be introduced or short story of writer experience with the problem is to be discussed. Also, the key words used in the article should be defined clearly. There are different ways to define something. Something can be defined using words and concepts that already known or something can be defined by giving a name to something which can be pointed to or described. Or some times, it can be defined indirectly by giving examples of telling stories. A definition involves two parts: the word or concept being defined and the set of sentences or proposition that do the defining. Whatever the way is, it should be structured while defining something.

Main body comprises most of an article/ research paper. Here the following points to be maintained:

- ◆ Objectives of the article/paper

- ◆ Rationale of the article/paper
- ◆ Literature review (gives the information about findings revealed by previous other researchers)
- ◆ Research methodology (it is applicable if it is a research paper)
- ◆ Data collection (sources of data- primary or secondary, time of data collection, etc.)
- ◆ Sample size (more the samples better the result is)
- ◆ Hypothesis (it is a proposition that is empirically testable)
- ◆ Statistical analysis and interpretation: To test the hypothesis various statistical techniques and tools are used. The selected tools should be the most suitable to interpret the result rightly/ correctly. Objectives, hypothesis, implemented tools for data collection and statistical tools implemented for data analysis should be correlated with each other.

Deduction/conclusion is essentially a summary of all the main points discussed in the main body. The summary of our article/paper is our last chance to convey the message we are trying to send. If we are trying to call our reader to action, it is the last chance to convince them to that first step. If we are writing an informative article, it is our opportunity to sum up all our main points. Writing a good summary is key to leaving the readers with a lasting impression of our article. In the research paper, the following mentioned points may be taken into consideration under this head.

- ◆ Findings and conclusions
- ◆ Suggestions
- ◆ Limitations of the study and
- ◆ Areas for further research.

G. Polish up grammar, spelling and punctuation

Many would be writer have the notion that to show that they are extraordinary people they must write in very difficult language or else they would earn their deserved respect and fame in the eyes of the readers. Many writers have a tendency to look down upon those writers who write in everyday plain and easy language. They may be right in poetry where there is a need to play with words, but I personally feel they are wrong in article or research paper writing.

Language used in the article/paper is to be lucid. The words are to be common and easy. Too many difficult words to be avoided to use. More words than necessary should not be used. It is highly superfluous. Exaggeration is a billion times worse than understatement. Word processors like Microsoft Word, Dictionary etc., should be used for correcting spelling, grammar and typographical errors. If needed, the paper/article should be reviewed by one literature professional to ensure us communicate effectively and keep the value high.

Nothing destroys authority on a subject quicker than poor use of language. It doesn't indicate that we are stupid and information within holds no less value on the subject we are writing about but if we get the language wrong, the readers will lose faith in us. It devalues the content.

H. Logical sequence

In short article different important points should be discussed in separate paragraph. In a longer article, the points should be developed. Sub points can be used under each main point whenever needed, but all the points should be arranged logically and sequentially.

I. Font size, font and line spacing

Though there is no common format to be followed every where, but the most popular

font used is-Times Roman 12 points for running text matter. For the main heading 14 points bold and it is placed on centre. All other sub points under the main points are of 12 points bold with left alignment. Line spacing between two lines are expected to be two lines for Ph.D. thesis and other reputed publications, unless otherwise specified. Single spacing is not acceptable for manuscripts submitted to journals because it does not allow space for copy editing and printer's marks.

J. Abbreviations

We should use only standard abbreviation in the article/paper. If any uncommon

abbreviation is used the full form should be stated clearly prior to use that abbreviation. For the first time use of that abbreviation the full form should be written in running text and beside that, abbreviation should be put in bracket. For example, Supply Chain Management (SCM). The abbreviation of a single word requires a period (full stop) at the end. For example Mrs., pp., Inc., etc. Almost all small letter abbreviations made up of single initials require a period (full stop) after each initial but no space after each internal period. For example, a.m., i.e., p.m., etc.

Some acceptable abbreviation is as below:

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Abbreviations	Descriptions	Abbreviations	Descriptions
Chap.	Chapter	ed.	Edition
rev.ed	Revised edition	2 nd ed.	Second edition
Ed. (Eds.)	Editor (Editors)	Trans.	Translator (s)
Vol.	Volume	vols.	Volumes
Pt.	Part	Tech. Rep.	Technical Report
Suppl.	Supplement	p. (pp.)	Page (pages)

Source: Rajan, K. M. (1999). *A Treatise on Form and Style of Thesis and Dissertation*. St. Joseph's Training College, Mannanam, Kottayam. p.11

A few foreign expressions used in research are as below:

Expressions	Descriptions	Expressions	Descriptions
c. circa.	Circa, means 'approximately'	cf.	Confer, meaning 'compare'
e.g.	Exempli gratia, means 'for example'	et al.	Et alii, meaning 'and other people'
etc.	Et cetera, means 'and other things', 'and so forth'	ibid.	Ibidem, meaning 'in the same place'
idem	Meaning 'the same'	i.e.	Id est, meaning 'that is'
loc.cit.	Loco citato, meaning 'in the place cited'	N.B.	Nota bene, meaning 'note well'/'note below'
op.cit.	Opera citato, meaning 'in the work cited'	supra	Meaning 'above'
ult.	Ultima, meaning 'in the last month'	viz.	Videlicet meaning 'namely'

Source: Rajan (1999), p. 11

A. Paper size

A4 (8 1/2 X 11) good quality white paper are more acceptable paper. Printing should be on only one side with margin of 1 inch for all four sides (top, bottom, left and right). Every page should have separate page numbers. If the points, tables and figures are numbered, these should be in proper sequence and continuous. Also, all the paragraphs should be justified for alignment.

B. Copying

Plagiarism is using another person's words or ideas without giving due credit to the person. Copying or plagiarizing is very serious offence and if any article is copied from any sources improperly then it is a very bad offence for any writer. If any part of any copyright material is copied for more than 150 words, the writer should obtain the permission in writing from the publisher/author. If any other data, fact, opinion or other part is copied from

the original source directly or indirectly or derived from primary or secondary sources, the source should be properly acknowledged and stated clearly under reference. The purpose of listing reference is to enable readers to retrieve and use the sources. Therefore, the data must be correct and complete. Generally, reference section follows after the text and notes. The most common style and format for quoting reference which is suggested by American Psychological Association is as below:

Book: Anthony, R. N. and Reece, J. S. (2003). *Accounting Principle*. (sixth ed.). All India Traveler Bookseller, Delhi. p 23.

Surname first, leave one space after the period of initials in personal names. Commas are used to separate the authors and to separate surnames and initials. Before the last author ampersand (&) is used.

Particulars	Descriptions
Anthony	Surname
R. N.	Initials of personal name
(2003)	Is the year of publication
<i>Accounting Principle</i>	Is the name of the title
(sixth ed.)	Indicates sixth edition. Edition to be mentioned if the title got more than one edition.
All India Traveler Bookseller	Is the name of the publisher
Delhi	Indicates place of publication
p 23	States the referred page number. If there are more pages referred in continuation it is mentioned as pp 10-20 (10 is starting page and 20 is the ending page)

Edited Book: Rajput, J. S. (Ed.). (1979). *Reshaping Education*. Oxford and IBH Publishing Company; New Delhi. pp. 12-25.

Journal Article: Nandi, J. K.'Teacher Performance Appraisal'. *University News*. (40) {Volume No.} 25, {Issue No.} June

24-30 (2002), Association of Indian University, New Delhi.

Article or Chapter in an edited book:

Nair, A. N. (1993). "Retention Process" . Murthy, R. and Mitra, S. B. (Eds.). *Mental Models*. Excel Book, New Delhi. pp.15-25.

Unpublished Thesis or Dissertation:

Nandi, J. K. (2002). *Impact of achievement motivation on first-line managers*. Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis. Nagpur University.

Newspapers:

Nandi, J. K. 'Is retrenchment the only way to reduce the cost?' *The Hitavada [Nagpur]*. 6th September 2001. Section 2, p. 4.

(Name of the writer followed by the topic. Then name of the news paper followed by date, section and page number.)

World Wide Web/Internet:

Nandi, J. K. 'Leader vs. Manager'. Online. 10 October 2007. <<http://www.jkn.org/news/newsdesk/jk.htm>>

(Name of the author. Title the article. [online]. Date of access and the <website address> in brackets.)

Internet citation for an articles from an online database like Infotrac or Biography Resource:

Mitra, S. K. 'Customer Satisfaction.' *Consumer Reports*, January 2007.p.8. Infotrac. Gale Group Databases. Downers Grove Public Library. 20 October 2007.

<<http://webz.infotrac.galegroup.com>>

[First Author's name. Then the title of the article, followed by the title of the magazine or newspaper, the date of publication, and then the page number(s). Name of the database, name of the service (the company that provides the site), the name of the library that provides the service, date of access, and the network address].

Lecture:

Nandi, J. K. 'How achievement oriented the Indian first-line managers are?'. *Managing Global Organizations: Challenges,*

Opportunities and Strategies. Fourth AIMS International Conference on Management. AIMS International. IIM Indore, December 28-31, 2006.

[Name of speaker, title of lecture in quotes, conference, convention or sponsoring organization if known, location, date.]

Film, Movie:

Title, director, distributor, and year of release. May add other information as deemed relevant between the title and the distributor. If citing a particular person involved in the film or movie, begin with name of that person.

Government publication (if no author is stated):

Government, Agency, *Title of publication*, underlined, Place of publication, Publisher, Date.

Radio, television:

Title of episode, in quotes. Title of program, in Italic. Title of series. Name of network. Radio station or TV channel call letters, City of local station or channel. Broadcast time and date.

A. Bibliography

Bibliography is a list of book and other readings in alphabetical order by the author's last name which we read as part of our research, but are not actually used. Means, from these readings we don't copy any data, sentences etc., in our article/ research paper. This list is included as the last pages of our works.

G. Bharadwaj (ed.) *The Future of India's Debt Market*. Tata McGraw Hill, 1998.

B. Be honest

We should be very honest in all aspect in writing article/ research paper. The limitations of the study (if any) should be clearly stated. Conclusions and suggestions

should be derived out of the original analysis and interpretation of data. Data should not be manipulated to prove the hypothesis as per our pre assumption/ connotation. Otherwise, findings of our work may not be substantial and sustainable.

C. Take a break

After writing an article/research paper always it is better to reread/recheck it after several days to find out whether any thing is missed out, there is proper sequence of various points, all the paragraphs have been written logically, there is any grammatical/syntax error etc. Once we feel every thing is OK, it can be given for review to our peer to get the feed back. After getting the feedback, we have to make the necessary changes before sending it for publication.

2. Conclusion

I am sure that the above stated discussions/points can help to the writer who get their papers bog down because of they are not effective opener, they cannot catch the reader's interest and they can not give the momentum to keep writing. This article can help them in organizing their presentation, writing first draft and refining the manuscript into its final form. Some of these points address specific problems in research paper writing, other apply to professional article in general. Writing a good article/paper is very tedious job, but we are rewarded by a wide distribution and greater understanding of our ideas within the fraternity. A good article/paper always brings tremendous satisfaction to the writer through the recognition of others. I personally believe that writing good articles always depend on good planning, collecting required materials and thinking clearly. We should think and plan properly before starting writing. To hold reader's interest,

the article/paper should be entertaining as well as informative too. We should not be too impersonal, but should put little story about ourselves. Also, we should not be afraid in expressing our personal opinions on any issue. To be successful in writing article/research paper we should be very much confident and creative too. I am confident enough that shortly I will see few articles/papers printed by our readers who will put step in writing.
