

Publishing in Top Journals

*A guide for the
perplexed*

Martin Kilduff

University of Texas at Austin

My Background

Editing, Reviewing, Authoring

SOURCES

- Bem, "How to..."
<http://dbem.ws/WritingArticle.pdf>
- Frost & Stablein (1992), *Exemplary research...*
- Cummings & Frost (1995), *Publishing...*

Constructing the "A" Journal Article: From intuition to publication

Recommendations

- *Ideas*
- *Structuring*
- *Revision*
- *Targeting*

Cautions

Editorial Responses

1. Important and original ideas

- What is your idea?
 - *Research program*
- What important question do you address?
- How does it connect, develop theory?

Defining the contribution

(letter to the editor)

- What will people know that they didn't know before?
 - *New phenomena; new perspective; new answer; new extension*
- Why should anyone care?
 - *Explain in one sentence?*
- Your strong motivation and interest?

Origin of new ideas?

- “An intellectual love of the objects of experience” – *Einstein*
- Engagement with problems in the world – *Coase; Hambrick; Van de Ven*
- *Gap in the literature??*

Choosing the Right Question

(Campion, PPsych, 1993)

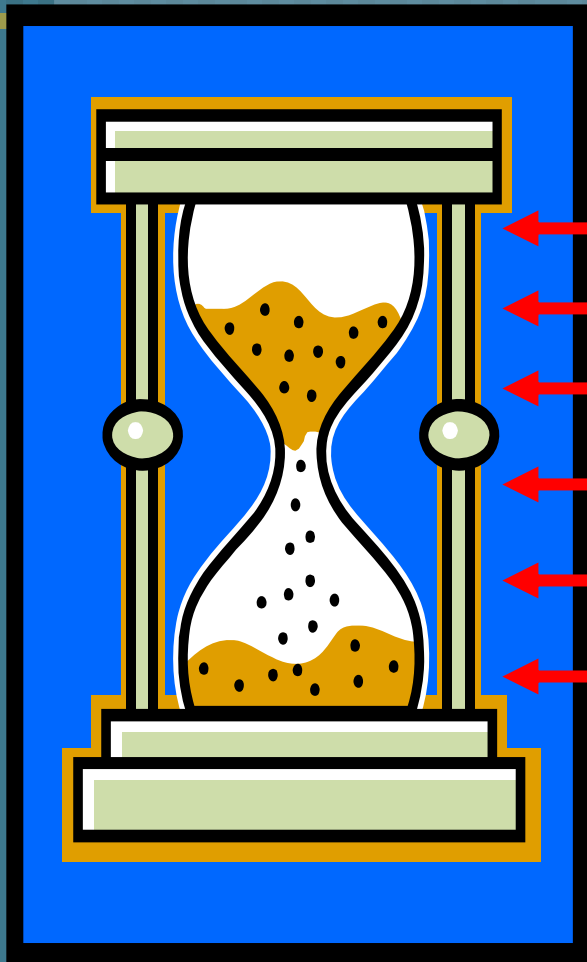
- Theoretical importance
 - *Change future research, take field in new direction?*
- Practical importance
 - *Coffee house test*
- Appropriateness
 - *New or emerging topic, underresearched, timely*
 - *Appropriate to journal: special issue? Style?*
 - *DATA: sample, setting, context*
 - *Method, measures, analysis...*

2. Give your ideas structure

- Begin and end strong?
- Contributes to theory and research?
- Relevant to organizations?
- Seamless?

Hourglass Shape

(The Outline)



Introduction (2 pages)

Theory (9 pages)

Methods (5 pages)

Results (4 pages)

Discussion (9 pages)

Conclusion (1 page)

2. Give your ideas structure

- Begin and end strong?
- Contributes to theory and research?
- Relevant to organizations?
- Seamless?

3. Write to be published

- Revise, revise, revise
 - *Clarity, logic, vividness, precision, succinctness, surprise*
- Expert opinions
 - *Conferences, colleagues, acquaintances*
- Take it on the road

4. Target *specific journal*

- Information for contributors, style guide, past issues, special issue
- Editorial board
 - Editors? Reviewers?
- Pay attention to the abstract
 - See Bem again
- Letter to the editor

Five Cautions

- Copying
- Lengthening
- Recipes
- Critiquing
- Audience

1. Don't copy

- Don't plagiarize others
- Don't plagiarize yourself
- Don't write summaries for the uninformed
- Don't include extensive quotations

2. Don't lengthen

- Don't provide an encyclopedia
- Don't include the literature review from your dissertation
- Don't add more and more pages to address every possible problem

3. Don't follow a recipe

- Don't include propositions or hypotheses unless they are integral
- Don't include figures or tables unless they add value

4. Don't personalize your critique

- Don't mount personal attacks on specific people
- Don't critique without offering alternative
- Don't ignore the philosophy of science

5. Don't mistake your audience

- Don't send papers aimed at practitioners or educators
- Don't expect the review process to solve problems you can't figure out
 - E.g., how to make this a theory contribution
- Don't send papers aimed at no discernible group whatsoever

Typical 1st Responses

- Desk decline
 - 40%
- Reject
 - *Improve, send it to next "A" journal*
- Reject & resubmit
- Revise and resubmit
 - *"High risk"...*
 - *Get it back*
 - *Pay attention to ed's letter*

Revision Process

- Major changes?
- Get expert opinions before resubmission
- Timeliness
- Put major revision effort into paper

Conclusion

- The evolutionary process of paper development
- The competitive market for ideas
- Questions?