

WOMEN AND RESEARCH

MAY 2013

Mission statement: To foster an active and inclusive research environment in order to enhance high quality research output.

FROM THE PEN OF ANGELA

Dear Researchers,
Welcome to our May newsletter!

The overall theme of this newsletter is research. RMIT University Academic Expectations and Development red book highlights the changing requirements for research and innovation. The document outlines expected and aspiration research performances, comprising three key categories, ERA outputs, income and HDR completions.

With the first, ERA outputs, we bring you a three part series on the review process by Associate Professor Ekant Veer, from the University of Canterbury. In the first series Ekant looks at how to respond to reviewers and how to review a manuscript.

Ekant's insightful and helpful articles are on pages 1, 3 and 4.

Ever tried to explain the academic peer review process to someone not familiar with it? Try Justin Holman's summary, located at <http://bit.ly/H223s0> for a funny yet truthful

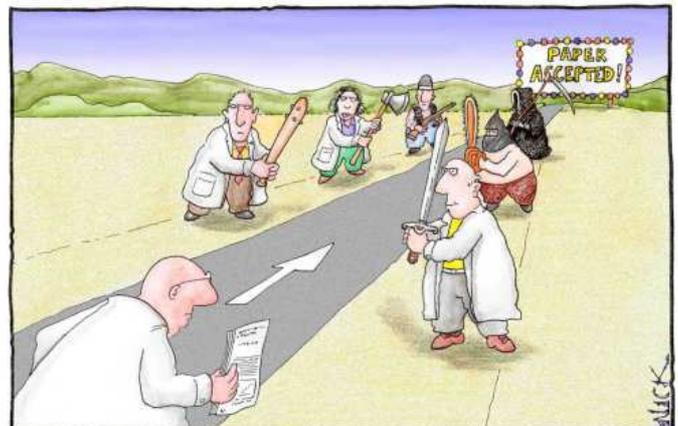
account. The cartoon below is from Justin's article.

Education Cluster news is presented on page 2.

Good luck with your research and stay in touch.

Regards,

Angela



Most scientists regarded the new streamlined peer-review process as 'quite an improvement.'

RESPONDING TO REVIEWERS BY ASSOC. PROF VEER

One part of my job that I quite enjoy is reviewing works in progress sent to me by editors of journals or conference Chairs.

I don't know the exact number, but I would say I average about 100 papers a year to review. Some of them are 5 page abstracts for a conference, while others are tomes of knowledge

that would make Tolstoy blush.

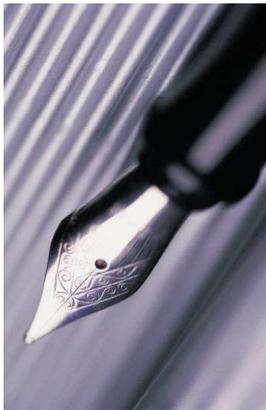
One part of reviewing that does annoy me is when authors fail to respond to reviewers comments in an appropriate way.

It's become clear to me that how to write a response to reviewers' comments is not universally taught, or authors don't

understand the importance of a well-crafted response.

Here are some tips on writing a response to reviewers:

1. Read the Editor's Comments First You're about to be hit with a barrage of comments. Some won't be nice. Start with the editor's letter and establish what he/she feels your next



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EDUCATION CLUSTER NEWS 2



Associate Professor Ekant Veer

WOMEN AND RESEARCH

CENTRE FOR BUSINESS EDUCATION RESEARCH BY PROFESSOR JONES

A number of exciting events have happened over the last month in regard to our advances into business education research. Our **CBER website** has gone live at <http://bit.ly/155iELN>.

We are trying to ensure that this provides a core place for us to publicise the research we are doing, so please make sure you keep me updated on your achievements.

CBER has received the support of HERDSA (Vic), through the Chain, A/ Prof. Joan Richardson, for a joint research event in July entitled: *New Generation learning Spaces—Build it but will they learn?*

CBER Members Meeting

A recent CBER members meeting identified possible strategies for obtaining support for potential grant applications. This is currently being explored and will be publicised through the CBER website

Recent research publications: Elspeth McKay has edited a book entitled *ePedagogy in Online learning: New Developments in web mediated human capital interaction*

Kathy Douglas (with Lemon, Cosalante (Coreniel-

le) has had a chapter publication entitled: *Video annotation for collaborative connections in learning: case studies for an Australian Higher Education context*

Angela Dobeles, Michael Ganjemi, Foula Kopanidis and Stuart Thomas have published a paper in Education + Training entitled: *At risk policy and early intervention programmes for underperforming students: Ensuring success?*

Joan Richardson & Kathy Henschke (with Tempone & Jackling,) have an article published in the Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education entitled: *Developing a collaborative model of industry feedback from work placement of business students*

Sandra Jones has published a paper in HERD entitled: *Beyond the teaching-research nexus: the Scholarship-Teaching-Action-Research (STAR) conceptual framework.*

From the Director CBER: Emergent concepts in Business Education

An exciting concept emerged at a recent Leadership conference I attended that have interesting implications for research into business leadership, particularly

for women researchers. Ever been told you're "using your heart rather than your head", OR "you're relying on your gut instinct rather than your head"? Well, there may be a neurological reason for this!

Recent scientific research is finding evidence of clusters of cells associated with brain activity in the heart and gut. At a recent international Leadership Association Conference the implications of these findings for learning in how to activate people's use of these 'multiple brains' was discussed.

Significant implications exist for possible research into the effects of these findings for business education arise from this., particularly for women researchers and those interested in researching different neurological approaches of women researchers. Anyone interested in exploring this might like to have a look at www.mbraining.com.

Finally, a very successful conference into HRM in Vietnam and China was organised by Dr Ngan Collins.

This is an important issue that we need to consider further.



Professor Sandra Jones
Director, CBER



Professor Sandra Jones & Professor Brad Jackson at the recent ILA (Oceania) conference

WORKLOAD RESEARCH, CONTINUED FROM PG 1

steps should be.

2. Skim Read the Reviewers' Comments Start with the Associate Editor's comments, if your journal has one. Then read each of the reviewers' comments one by one. But don't start addressing issues until you've read them all. Reviewers can often disagree (see picture right). Read all the reviewers' comments before thinking about what you should do to improve your manuscript. Trust me, this part hurts and it can be emotional – it's normal.

3. Walk Away Unless you've been asked to make some basic editorial changes, it's best to walk away from the reviews and take a couple of days to focus on something else.

4. Return to the Reviews

You've had a couple of days to ignore the reviews and the initial emotional shock or elation has worn off (it may take longer, of course). Re-read all the comments, starting with the Editor, the AE and then the Reviewers and read them all thoroughly.

You'll likely see that many of them have presented good points on ways to improve your work, not ways to annoy you or just cause you heartache.

5. Address EVERY Comment Made This doesn't mean you have to agree with every comment or change your paper to suit what the reviewers have said, but it does mean you should address every single comment made in

your manuscript.

Don't leave it without any amendments as this is the sort of thing a reviewer will pounce on. Reviewers get upset when they're ignored and editors don't like to upset reviewers, who offer their time for free.

6. Crafting your Response to Reviewers

I've not said 'writing' a response to reviewers – your response is an art – the response needs to be crafted.

Think about the politics involved with your paper – you need to be published to ensure your research makes it to the public sphere and you can put it on your promotion application; the editor needs good work in his/her journal so that the journal gets cited, and the reviewers are giving up their time for free to help you improve your work and improve the field.

7. General Response

Start by thanking the editor, AE and reviewers for their time and insight. Explain how you approached the changes and what general changes you made.

Explain why you may have chosen to follow one reviewer's advice, but not the other, and justify your choice:

Finish by thanking them all again.

8. Specific Response

After the general response, respond to each reviewers' comments one by one.

If you outright disagree

with a comment or (and this happens) the reviewer is just plain wrong, then DON'T IGNORE THEM, write their comment again and respond to it.

An editor will also be more willing to support an author that appeases his/her reviewers than one that antagonises them. Remember, the editor needs to keep the reviewers happy!

9. Reviewing your Response to Reviewers

Finally, check your response for clarity, flow, and tone. You want to come across as thankful, not antagonistic; humble, not arrogant; confident, but not cocky. Check spelling and grammar and make sure all cross references to the main manuscript are accurate.

10. Finally, Submit it for Re-Review I find submitting a revision more stressful than a first submission. It's mine to lose now as I've been told which way to go and it's up to me to see if I've achieved that.

I will admit that I make most of the changes reviewers ask for – it's often a safer strategy to publication.

Hopefully this will help you and improves your chances at getting published. Also, consider signing up as a reviewer for various journals – it is a lot of work, but you learn very quickly what mistakes to avoid and what it feels like to receive work to review.

Good luck!



“Walk away. Take a couple of days to focus on something else.”

Interested in the full story? Go to

<http://bit.ly/ZXab99>

HOW TO REVIEW A MANUSCRIPT BY ASSOC. PROF VEER

Reviewing is part of your service to the academic community, but it can get on top of you and interfere with your other duties, such as teaching and research.

So, finding an efficient and effective means of reviewing is necessary, especially when you see as many manuscripts as I do. I tend to carry out each review the same way, here's the process I go through:

Skim the entire MS and get a feel for what the authors are trying to say. This is especially useful when the authors have some great ideas, but they're poorly organised.

Have a quick skim and look particularly at the introduction and conclusion. See if what the authors aim to carry out actually fits with what they said they did.

After a skim, **I go through the manuscript systematically and check particular things that are important to me.** Some editors will recruit you for a specific reason, for example, the research topic or a methodology. Start to read the manuscript and look for aspects of the research that is important to you – here's my list, but yours will (and can) be different:

- Is the research question interesting & important to our field/society?
- Is the methodology sound?
- Are the findings logical based on the literature and methodology?
- Is the contribution/

impact from the research important to the field/society?

e) Is the manuscript a good fit for the journal?

If I can tick off each of these with some level of confidence, then I'll give the manuscript at least a revise and resubmit, sometimes better.

The way I tend to review is that I ask questions - "Why do you say that?"; "Why did they take that line of reasoning?"; "What was the reason for that method?". The more questions I ask, without answers from the authors, the worse the paper is, in my estimation. I take notes on the manuscript when I spot these things and I draw on these comments when I come to crafting the review letter.

Now it's time for me to write my review – Please note, I don't tend to write my review while I'm reviewing the paper – it can lead to your letter becoming a bit of a mishmash of ideas, rather than a coherent examination and critique.

I start by thanking the authors for their paper and include the title of their paper in my first line - by including the title, you avoid confusion - yes, this is definitely your paper I'm slamming ;).

My first paragraph outlines the main reasons I like/dislike their paper - always try to have a positive point in the first few lines, even if it's "I found the paper interesting to read" ."

After outlining my concerns, I break down my

thoughts in to individual paragraphs– this makes it easier for the authors to follow and understand why I found each point important to discuss.

You are critiquing, but also offering ideas to improve the manuscript. That's what reviewing is about, in my mind – not rejecting work, but improving work to a level that will expand the field's knowledge.

I conclude by saying which of my concerns the authors should focus on first – not only does this offer the author with some sense of importance to each of my concerns, but it helps the editor, too.

Finally, I wish the authors luck for the future and state which aspects of their research I particularly think have promise - even the worst piece of work has something that could be crafted into a future research project-it's usually context, for me, that people do a good job in, so I say "We need more in this area, but this paper is not the place to start - keep up the good work, because this is a field that's important to the field"

I seems like a lot, but with practice, the method I use to review a paper becomes almost second nature.

It also helps when critiquing published literature and developing research ideas for the future.



Associate Professor Ekant Veer

"This method can help when critiquing published literature or developing research ideas for the future."

