



Transforming a Paper or Chapter into a Publishable Article

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Today's Goals

1. Choose a paper or chapter to transform
(or write a paper with a journal in mind)
2. Learn how to target a journal
3. Understand what reviewers want
4. Articulate your main idea and your
contribution to the conversation
5. Take the next steps

1. Choose a Paper to Transform (Or, Consider How to Write One for Publication)

Choose a Paper or Chapter

- Have you written a paper that your classmates, professor, or advisor responded well to?
- Have you presented a paper at a conference or given a poster presentation?
- What ideas or research do you most want to share with other researchers?
- Do you want to write a better paper, or do you simply want to publish a paper that you think is already good by adapting it to a new audience? Or both?

2. Target a Specific Journal

What Journals Publish

Research journals publish contributions to the field, including, for example, research that:

- “Approaches new evidence in an old way” (p. 50)
- “Approaches old evidence in a new way” (p. 51)
- “Pairs old evidence with old approaches in a new way” (p. 52)

— W. Belcher, *Writing Your Journal Article in 12 Weeks* (2009, pp. 48-53)

Study Several Journals

Study several journals to help you choose one. Understand the different audiences. Look at the papers that the journals have published and note:

- *Where* do authors articulate their key message?
- *How* do authors communicate their work's contribution and value to the field?

To plan your work, attend to what you've noticed in journals you've studied.

Target a journal whose values match or “fit” what your paper values.

Let's Study a Sample Article

Bell, A. (2014). "I think about Oprah": Social class differences in sources of health information. *Qualitative Health Research*, 24(4), 506–516.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732314524637>

You can download here:

<https://www.cdhs.udel.edu/content-sub-site/Documents/CDHS/ABell%202014.pdf>

3. Understand What Reviewers Want

Consider Your Audience

- In order to reach other scholars in your field (your audience), you need to get through to the editors and reviewers of the journal you've selected:
 - Who is your intended audience?
 - What do they value?
 - How do they communicate their values?

Reviewers Want (Part 1):

- Focused, relevant, informative title
- Abstract that sparks readers' interest
- **Clear key message (argument)**
- **Clear contribution of something relevant and new to the field (significance)**
- Argument firmly grounded in relevant theory or methodology (a good literature review)
- Issue sufficiently well-explained for the target audience

Reviewers Want (Part 2):

- Good use of evidence that demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of literature available on the topic (literature review)
- Well-organized, following typical structure for that journal
- Well-written, appropriate style/discourse for field
- Paper referenced appropriately to journal's style
- Presentational aspects that conform to journal's house style

4. Articulate Your Main Idea and Your Contribution to the Conversation

Focus on Your Main Idea

- What is your current paper's take-home message?
- Where do you most clearly state your take-home message? (e.g. abstract, introduction, conclusion, throughout the analysis?)

Clarify Your Contribution

- What is your paper's key contribution to a current conversation in your field?
- What scholarship do you still need to review to demonstrate how your research contributes to the field?

5. Take the Next Steps

First Steps (Review)

1. Choose a paper or chapter:
 - a. to revise/transform or
 - b. to start from scratch
2. Select a journal: evaluate its structure and audience.
3. Consider what reviewers (and that journal's readers) want.
4. Articulate your main idea as an argument. (Craft an abstract to get to your argument.)
5. Explain your contribution to the field. (What's the "So what" factor?)

Take the Next Steps

Based on the journal (readers) you chose, revise and transform your paper by:

1. Reviewing relevant literature.
2. Tying your evidence analysis to your key contribution.
3. Considering how you *present* your evidence.
4. Adapting your structure to your chosen journal's structure.
5. Revising your introduction and conclusion.
6. Revising abstract, argument, and contribution to meet the demands of your audience.

Final Steps

1. Ask for feedback by discussing and sharing your draft with colleagues and/or advisors.
2. Revise, using the feedback you received.
3. Polish at the sentence level for correctness and appropriate style for your discipline.
4. Send out your article!
5. Revise and resubmit based on feedback from reviewers.

References

- Belcher, W. (2009). *Writing your journal article in 12 weeks : a guide to academic publishing success*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE Publications
- Bell, A. (2014). “I think about Oprah”: Social class differences in sources of health information. *Qualitative Health Research*, 24(4), 506–516. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732314524637>
- “Journal Article Writing.” Student learning and development, Australian National University. anu.edu.au/students/academic-skills/research-writing/journal-article-writing

Thank you!

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virtual appointments at

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