Publishing in *AMJ*: Tips from the Editors

Professional Development Workshop offered at the 2013 meeting of the *Academy of Management*, Orlando, FL.

Welcome!

- How many of you have:
 - Never submitted to AMJ?
 - Gotten your work rejected from AMJ?
 - Published your work in AMJ?



Purpose of Workshop

• To offer tips, advice, and suggestions to improve the quality of your next *AMJ* submission



Structure of Workshop

- First half
 - Presentations on issues that are critical to publishing in *AMJ*, regardless of your content area
- Second half
 - Rotate through editors' tables



First Half: Presentations

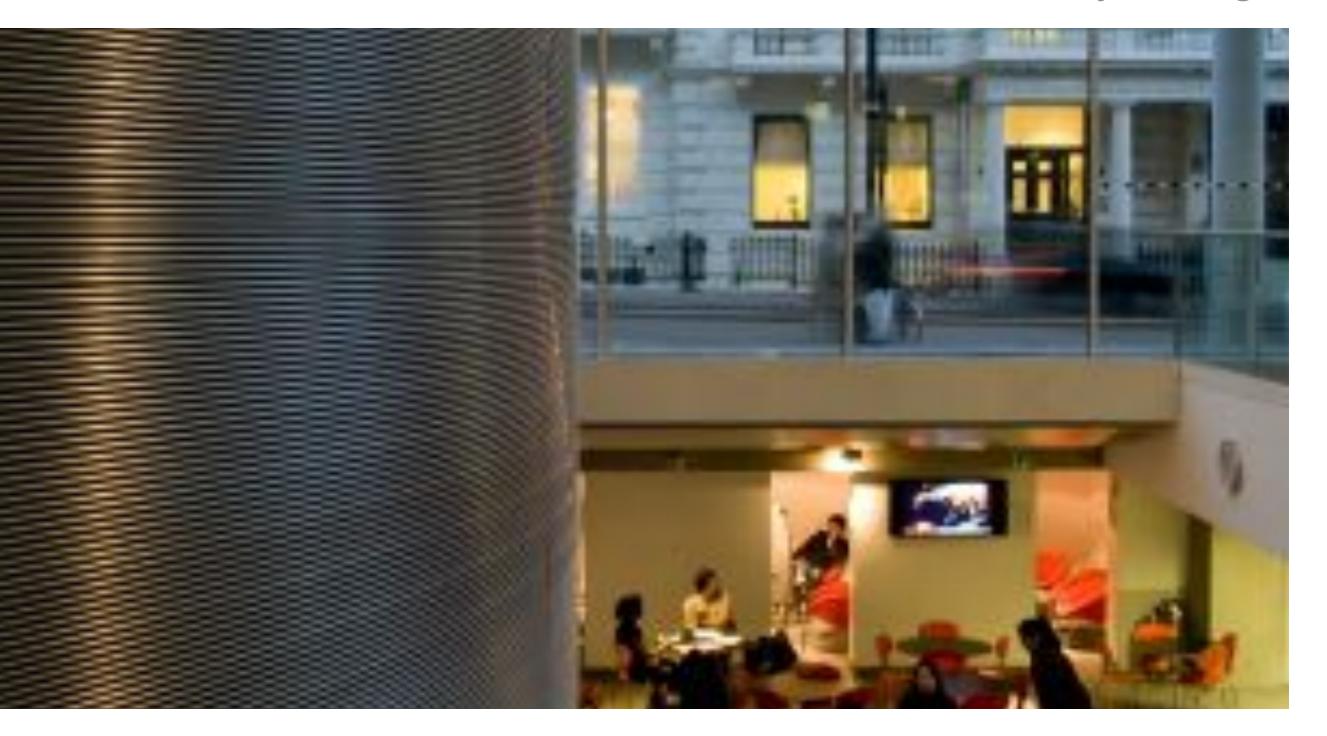
- Gerry George: An AMJ Overview
- Jason Colquitt: Topic Choice
- Tim Pollock: Writing "the Hook"
- Carol Kulik: AMJ: A Global Journal





Getting your work published in AMJ

Gerry George





Topics

- Some AMJ statistics
- What kinds of papers fit AMJ's mission?
- The editorial team
- Reviewing for AMJ
- Tips for improving your chances at AMJ



Some AMJ Statistics

- Now in its 56th year
- Receives 1200 original submissions per year (1500+ total)
- Averages a 65-day turnaround for fully-reviewed submissions
- Highest impact factor among exclusively empirical management journals 5.91 (2 year) and 10 (5 year)
- Growing from 9 papers to 12 papers an issue, which means from 54 to 72 papers per year



AMJ papers...

Conversations

– Does your study define a new conversation (theory/lens/ paradigm) or divert an existing conversation into a meaningfully different area?

Context

- True to context, inspired by phenomenon
- Relevant and interesting to managers (broadly construed)

Credible

- Rigor in study design and data analysis
- Persuasive in its argument and framing of issues



What Papers Fit AMJ's Mission?

- Mission Statement
 - The mission of the Academy of Management Journal is to publish empirical research that tests, extends, or builds management theory and contributes to management practice. All empirical methods--including, but not limited to, qualitative, quantitative, field, laboratory, and combination methods--are welcome. To be published in AMJ, a manuscript must make strong empirical and theoretical contributions and highlight the significance of those contributions to the management field.



What Papers Fit AMJ's Mission?

- Mission Statement
 - –Authors should strive to produce original, insightful, interesting, important, and theoretically bold research. Demonstration of a significant "value-added" contribution to the field's understanding of an issue or topic is crucial to acceptance for publication.



Experimenting at the fringes

Focus on the phenomenon

- Strong theoretical contributions need not imply weak adherence to the phenomenon
- Bring the richness of the context into the study
- How can we make this practical?
 - Explain the phenomenon a lot more in the intro, hypotheses development and discussion
 - Use the introduction to situate theory, but also why the setting makes it an interesting anomaly
 - Explain how theory is enriched by the context
 - Experiment with the format, multi-method, interview data



Experimenting at the fringes

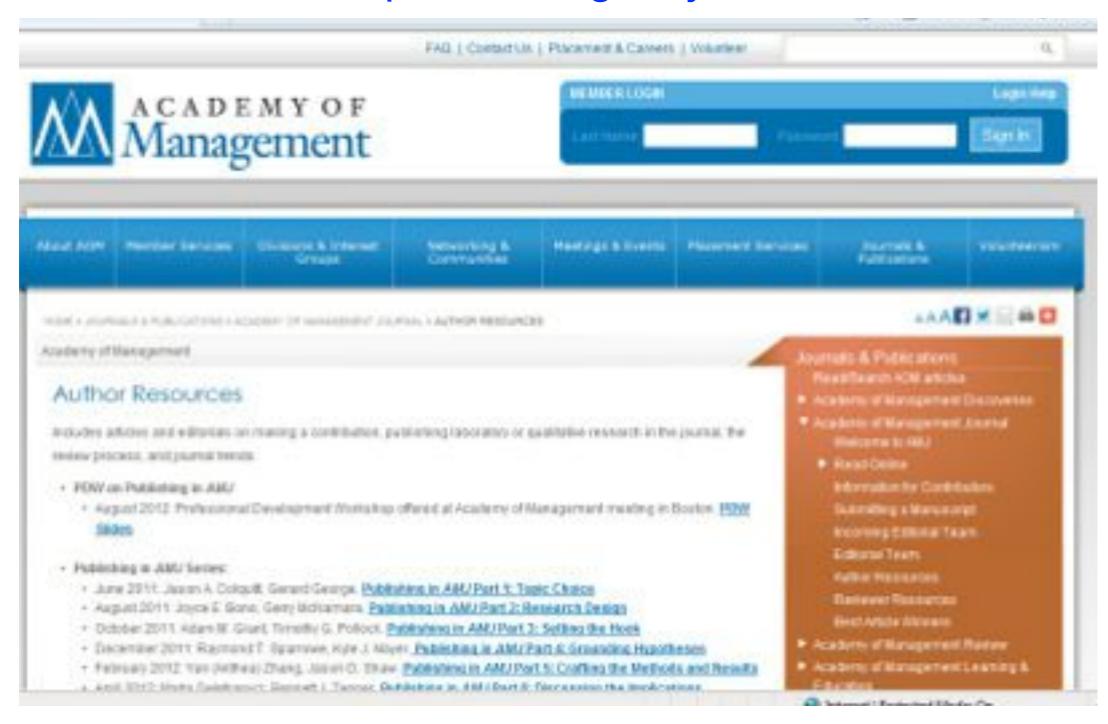
Frame for Impact and Relevance

- Big problems, unanswered questions
- Important phenomenon of managerial interest
- Trends shaping organizations and their futures
- Bring impact centre-stage
 - Picking topics that are Grand Challenges
 - Blending theoretical contribution with managerial relevance
 - Shaping 'Managerial Implications' as a central piece
 - Using the From the Editor notes as stage setters



What Papers Fit AMJ's Mission?

For more info, see http://aom.org/amj/





Editorial team with a global perspective

| | Micro | Macro | |
|--------------|--|---|--|
| Quantitative | Amy Colbert, Univ. of Iowa Aparna Joshi, Penn State Carol Kulik, Univ. of South Australia Dave Mayer, Univ. of Michigan Brent Scott, Michigan State Univ. Riki Takeuchi, HKUST, Hong Kong Gerben van der Vegt, Groningen, NL Daan van Knippenberg, Erasmus, NL | Gerry George, Imperial College, UK Scott Graffin, Univ. of Georgia Marc Gruber, EPFL Switzerland Martine Haas, Univ. of Pennsylvania Dovev Lavie, Technion Israel Keith Provan, Univ. of Arizona Laszlo Tihanyi, Texas A&M Heli Wang, Singapore Mgt. Univ. | |
| Qualitative | Elaine Hollensbe, Cincinnati Jennifer Howard-Grenville, Oregon Scott Sonenshein, Rice Univ. | | |

Mike Malgrande, Managing Editor



Heuristics on process and acceptance rates

7-8% target acceptance rate (note this is for thumbrule approximations, not guarantees)

Every month: 100 Manuscripts

Desk Reject/Edit 30% (70 reviewed)

R&R 25% (52 rejected, 18 revised)

(approx. 1 in 4 reviewed papers get a revision)

R1 50% (9 revised, 9 rejected)

(approx. 1 in 2 revised get a revision or conditional accept)

R2 10-20% (7 accepted, 2 rejected)

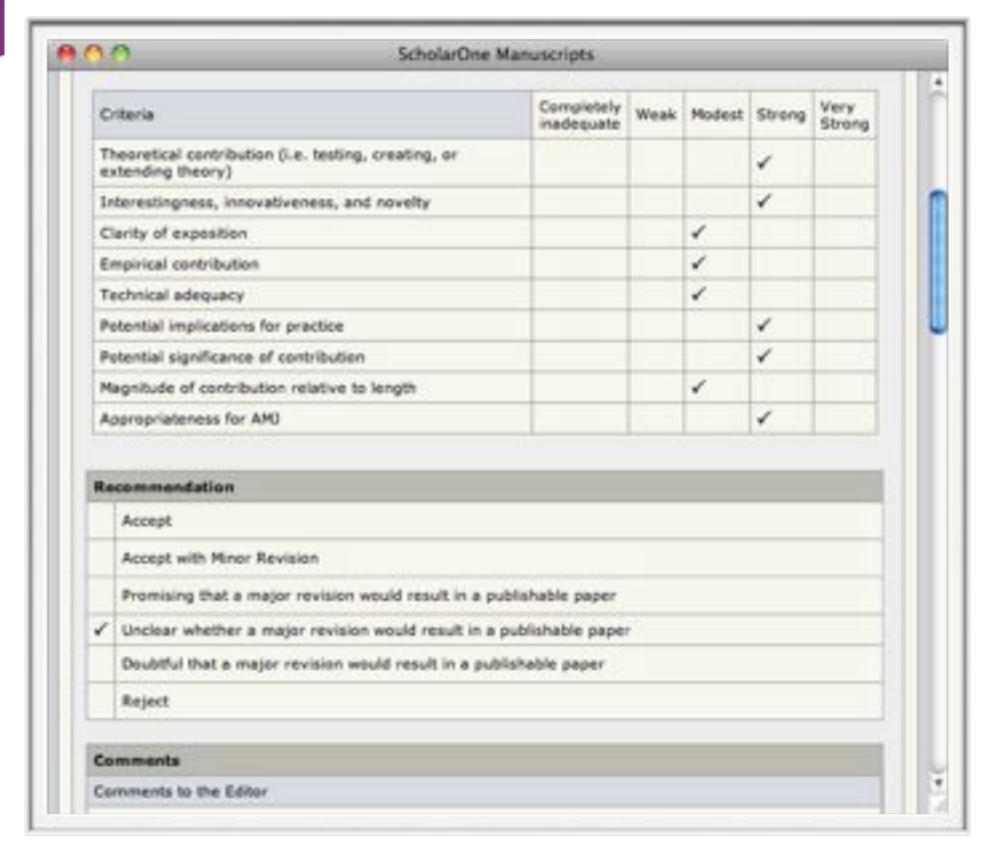


The Editorial Team

- What happens when a manuscript is submitted to AMJ?
 - First stop: Mike Malgrande, Managing Editor
 - Second stop: Gerry George, Editor-in-Chief
 - Reads submissions to determine desk decisions and action editor assignment
 - Handles desk decisions for macro papers, delegates some desk decisions for micro papers
 - Third stop: Action Editor
 - Chooses five reviewers in an effort to sign up three
 - Makes final decision on manuscript

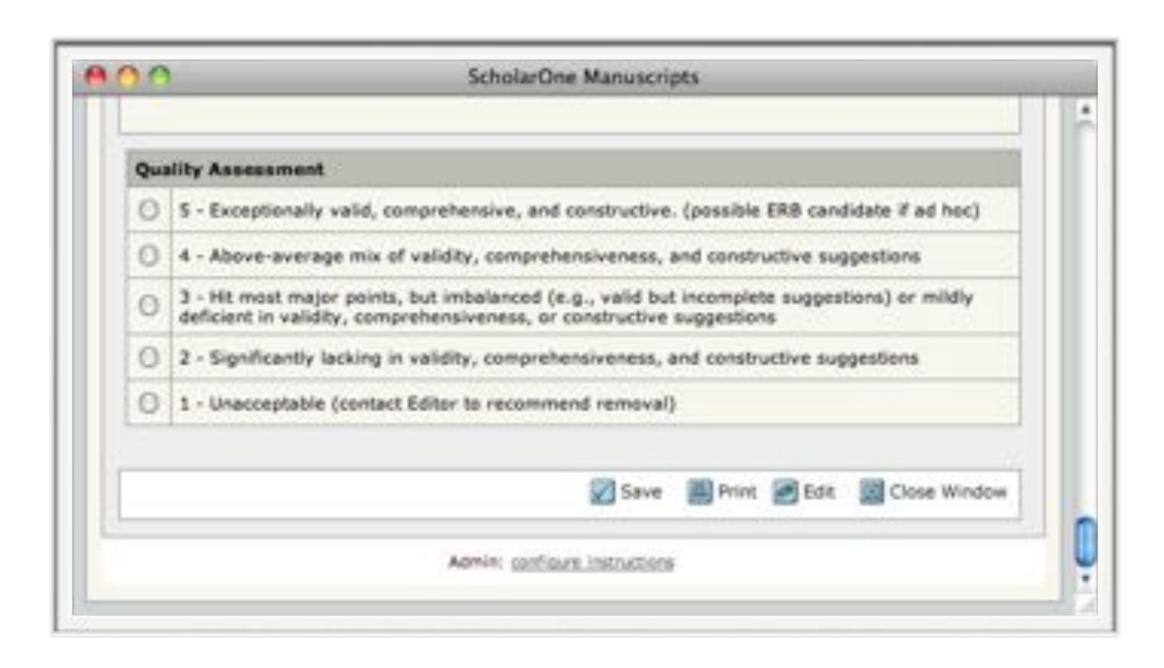


How reviewers score papers





Rating each paper

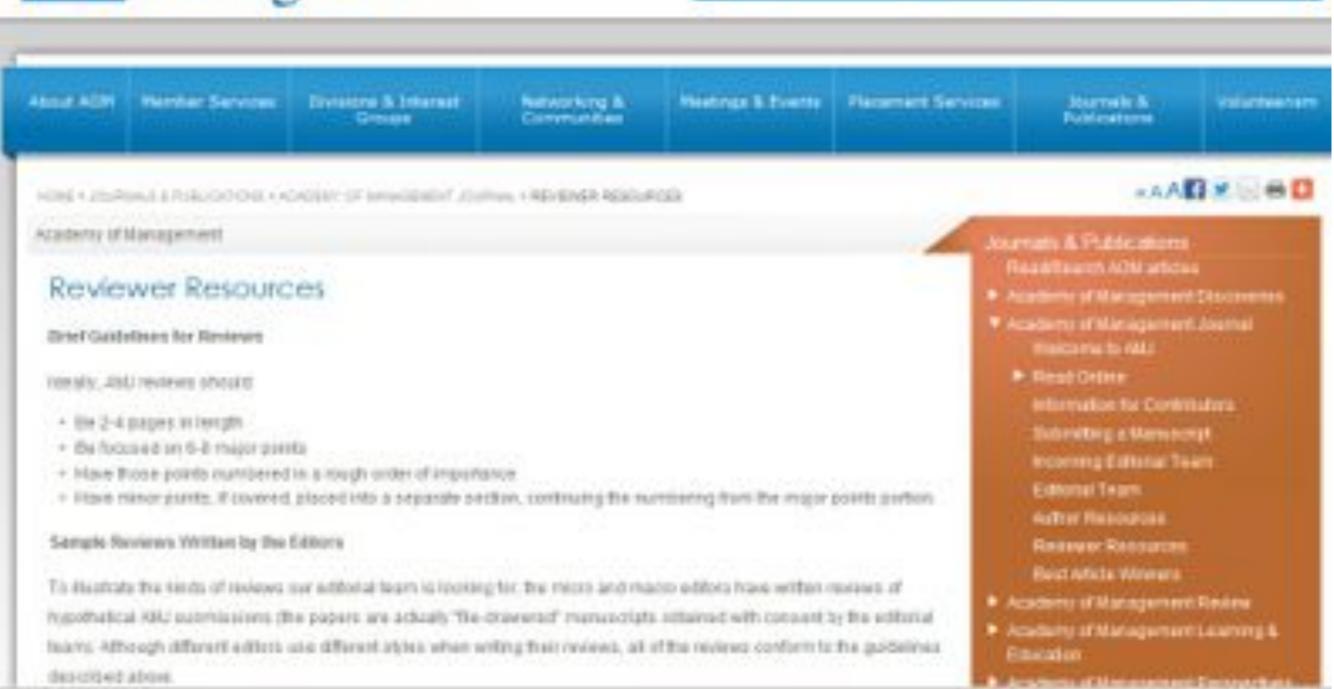




Reviewer Resources at AMJ









Improving Your Chances at AMJ

- Four most common themes for rejections:
 - Theoretical Contribution
 - Novelty
 - -Scope
 - Technical Adequacy



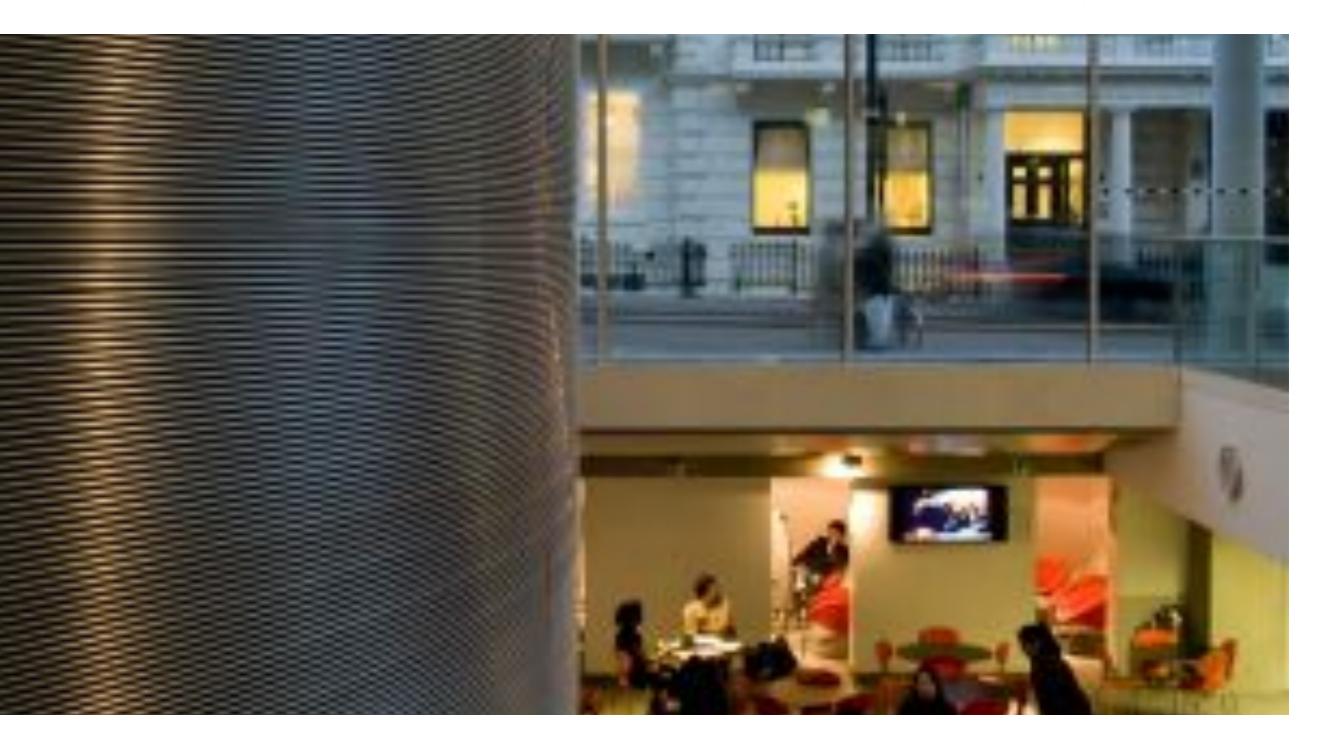
Improving Your Chances at AMJ

- Get "friendly reviews" from colleagues who publish in, and review for, AMJ, at each of these stages:
 - Topic choice
 - Study design
 - Writing



Getting your work published in AMJ

Questions?



First Half: Presentations

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Topic Choice

- Why focus on topic choice?
 - Consider the case of AMJ-2013-9999





Topic Choice

- Why focus on topic choice?
 - Consider the case of AMJ-2011-9999

| Criteria | Completely inadequate | Weak | Modest | Strong | Very Strong |
|--|--------------------------|------|--------|--------|----------------|
| Theoretical contribution (i.e. testing, creating, or extending theory) | | 1 | | | |
| Interestingness, innovativeness, and novelty | | 1 | | | |
| Clarity of exposition | | 1 | | | |
| Empirical contribution | | 1 | | | |
| Technical adequacy | | 1 | | | |
| Potential implications for practice | | | 1 | | |
| Potential significance of contribution | | | 1 | | |
| Magnitude of contribution relative to length | | | 1 | | |
| Appropriateness for AMJ | | 1 | | | |

Academy Ianagement

Topic Choice

- Why focus on topic choice?
 - Consider the case of AMJ-2011-9999



The Academy of Management

Journal

AMJ's Mission

• Authors should strive to produce *original*, insightful, interesting, *important*, and theoretically *bold* research. Demonstration of a significant "*value-added*" contribution to the field's understanding of an issue or topic is crucial to acceptance for publication.









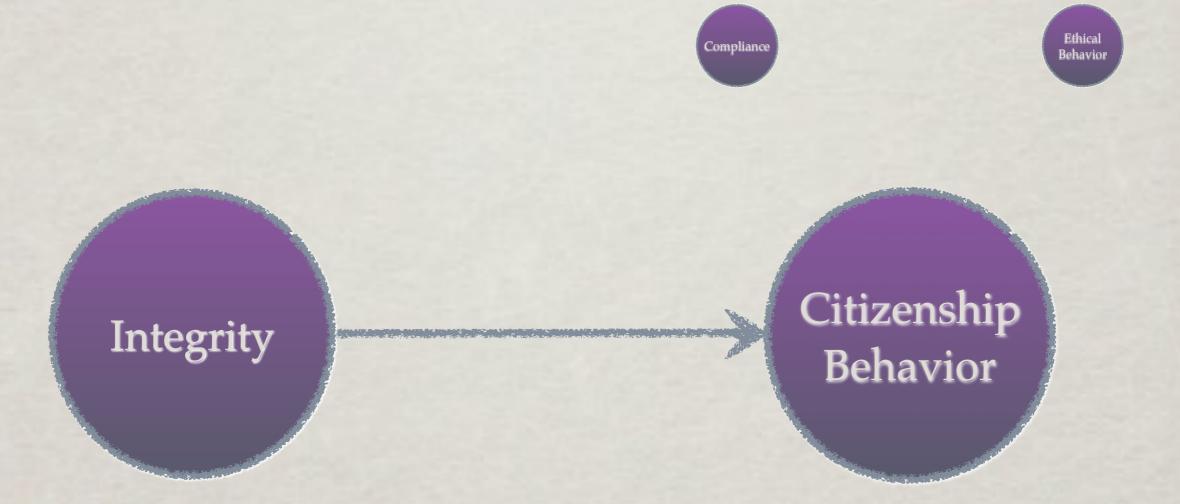








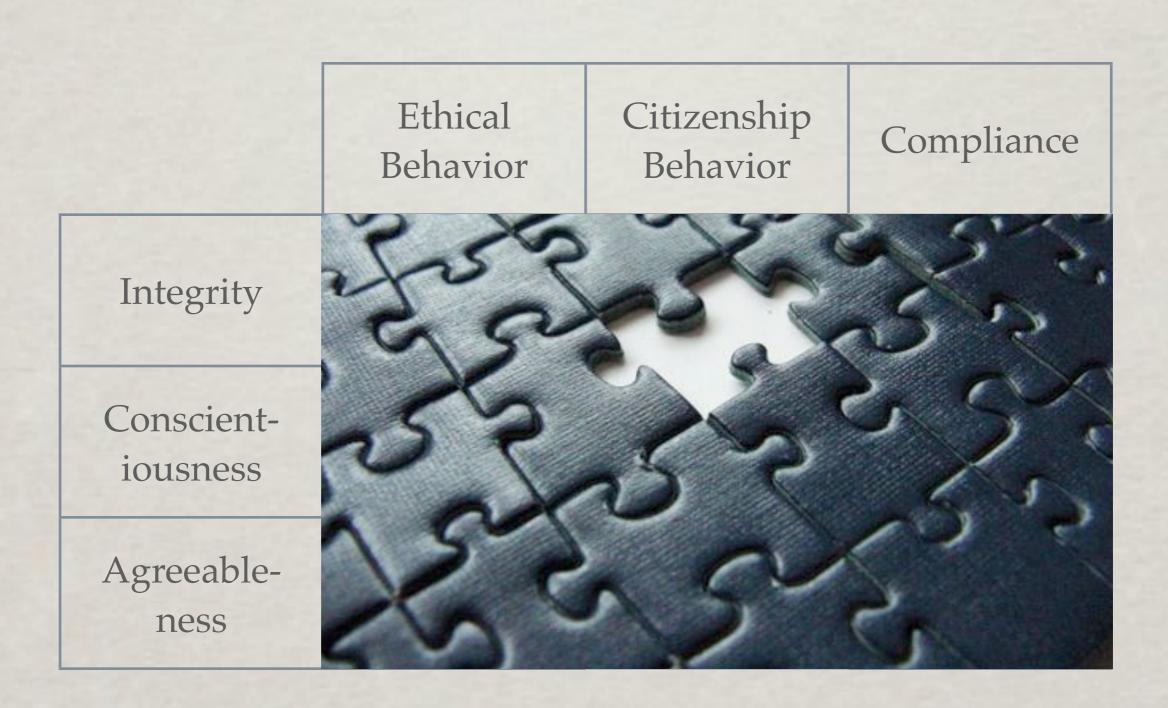






| | Ethical Behavior | Citizenship Behavior | Compliance |
|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Integrity | | | |
| Conscient- iousness | | | |
| Agreeable- ness | | | |

| | Ethical Behavior | Citizenship Behavior | Compliance |
|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Integrity | | GAP | |
| Conscient- iousness | | | |
| Agreeable- ness | | | |



















AMJ's Mission

• Authors should strive to produce original, *insightful*, interesting, important, and theoretically bold research. Demonstration of a significant "value-added" contribution to the field's *understanding* of an issue or topic is crucial to acceptance for publication.



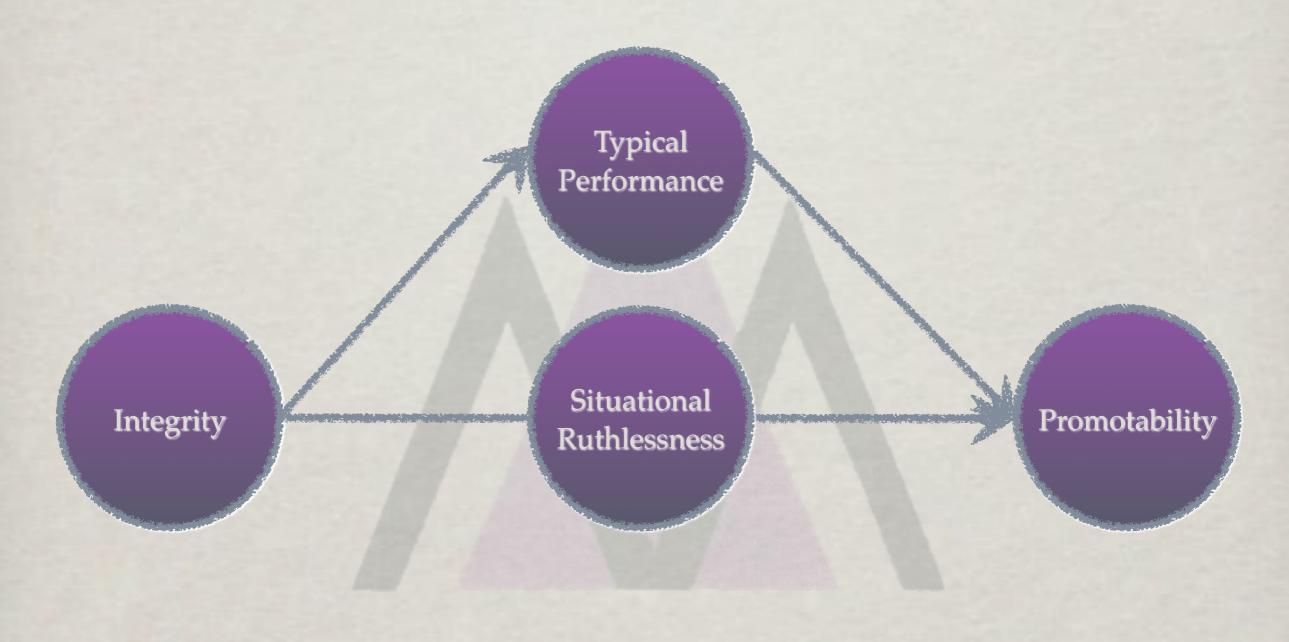
When is a Topic Insightful?



The Academy of Management

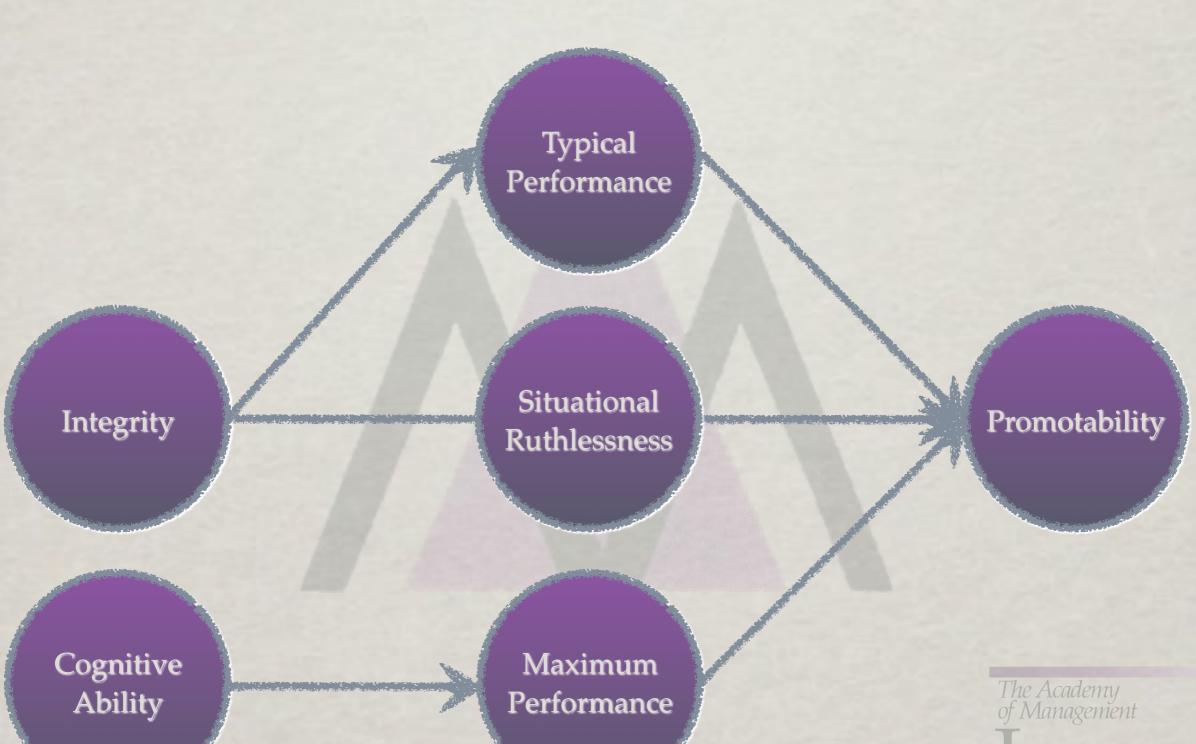
Journal

When is a Topic Insightful?





When is a Topic Insightful?



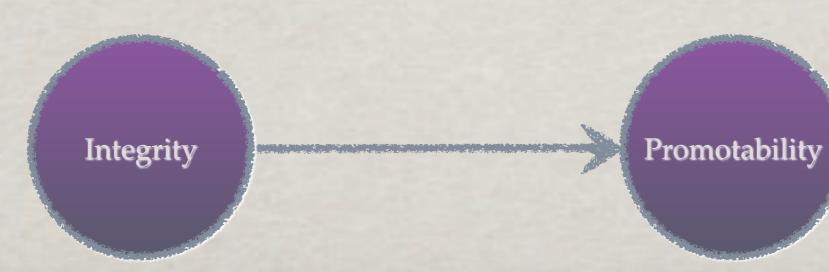
AMJ's Mission

• Authors should strive to produce original, insightful, *interesting*, important, and theoretically bold research. Demonstration of a significant "value-added" contribution to the field's understanding of an issue or topic is crucial to acceptance for publication.



When is a Topic Interesting?







Topic Choice: Summary

- Choose an important topic
 - Don't just fill a nuanced or semantic gap--change the scholarly conversation
- Make it insightful
 - Expand the scope of your model to include relevant mediators and complementary variables
- Choose an interesting topic
 - Examine relationships or phenomena where the end isn't obvious or predictable

 Our

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What We Do

Answer Interesting
Unanswered Questions



Tell the Story



Why?

Why the Introduction is Important

- Creates the first impression with readers
- Determines whether readers move on to the rest of the article
- Frames how reviewers read the remainder of the paper – looking for reasons to give a revision, or reasons to reject



Key Questions

- Who cares?
- What do we know, what don't we know, and so what?
- What will we learn?



Who Cares?

- "Hook" the reader Capture their attention and interest
- Highlight why the study matters to both theory and practice
- Two most prevalent hooks used by the AMJ Best Paper Award winners:
 - The Quote
 - The Trend



Who Cares?

• The Quote: Quotation or vignette that engages the reader in the intriguing and practical nature of question

Alex Trotman's goal: To make Ford No. 1 in world auto sales.

Kellogg's cutting prices . . . to check loss of market share.

Amoco scrambles to remain king of the polyester hill.

- Ferrier, Smith & Grimm, 1999



Who Cares?

- The Trend: Highlight trends in the real world or the academic literature that are important or represent some puzzle or paradox
- "Moreover, people associate creativity with a variety of other positive attributes, including superior intelligence, humor, and leadership ability (Sternberg, 1999). Such beliefs have helped spawn a virtual cottage industry of management books and business school courses that extol the virtues of creativity and provide suggestions for eliciting higher levels of creativity" - Elsbach & Kramer (2003)

What Do We Know, What Don't We Know, and So What?

- Establish the Inter-textual Field: Identify the "conversation" (Huff, 1999) you are joining, where it hasn't gone, and why it needs to go there (Locke & Golden-Biddle, 1997)
 - Synthesized Coherence Identify two conversations and bridge across them
 - Progressive Coherence Identify an ongoing conversation and describe how it needs to move forward
 - Non-Coherence Present competing perspectives reflected in the same or different conversations and explain how you will adjudicate between them

What Do We Know, What Don't We Know, and So What?

- Problematize the Inter-textual Field: Establish how the current state of the conversation is deficient (Locke & Golden-Biddle, 1997)
 - Incompleteness: Field needs to be developed further
 Can be too incremental
 - Inadequacy: Fails to incorporate important perspectives
 - Incommensurability: Is altogether inaccurate
 - Can be overly polemical and antagonistic



What Do We Know, What Don't We Know, and So What?

- Give readers a clear sense of how you will deliver on your promise to change, challenge, or advance the conversation that you have entered
- "Just because a gap exists does not necessarily make the study interesting or worthwhile." Outstanding Reviewer
- "Not all gaps need to be filled!" Different Outstanding Reviewer



What Will We Learn?

- Consensus Shifting: Identify widely-held assumptions, proceed to challenge them, and describe the implications for ongoing research
- Consensus Creation: Show a lack of consensus in the literature and describe how your study either clarifies the lines of debate or resolve the conflict (Hollenbeck, 2008)



Pitfalls and Common Mistakes

- Fail to Motivate and Problematize
 - Assume motivation is obvious
 - Assume there is value in being "the first" to study something
 - Focus more on "gap filling" than on addressing a question, problem, puzzle or paradox

Pitfalls and Common Mistakes

Lack of Focus

- Try to cram too much in; becomes long and rambling
- Try to use too many rhetorical fireworks and never say what the paper is about and why we should care
- Spend too much time describing structure of the paper

Pitfalls and Common Mistakes

Overpromising

- Set overly-high expectations by claiming contributions that the theory and/or results don't deliver
- Research questions in introduction don't match the rest of the paper
- Make claims so extravagant they seem outlandish and self-serving



An Effective Introduction

- Is short and focused; 3-4 double spaced pages
- Hooks the reader and makes them care about the study's topic
- Clearly states the research question and its relevance i.e., identifies what we know, what we don't know, and why it's important
- Clearly enumerates the study's contributions and explains what we'll learn
- Doesn't write checks the rest of the article can't cash

Writing Introductions

- Early or Late?
- Proportion of total writing time?
- Revise, Revise...
 - Ruthless Rewriting
 - Iterative Enactment
 - Clearer Map



First Half: Presentations

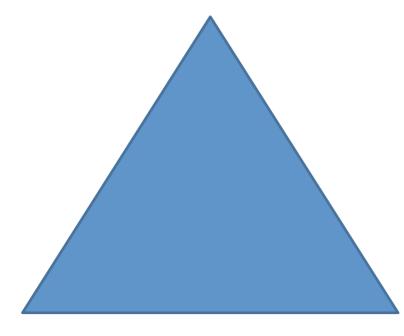
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AMJ: A global journal

International Authors (29 countries and growing)

International Readers (110 countries)



International Editorial Team (15 countries)

A commitment to making AMJ a global journal in submissions, acceptances, and readership

Reasons for Rejection

- Framing and contribution
- Theory and method
- Presentation

Framing and Contribution



The pitfall:

- Location is not automatically a contribution!
- What's the contribution to theory?

Framing and Contribution

Common examples of weak frames

- "Construct in country" papers that examine wellestablished constructs in a new context
- "Comparative country" papers that present descriptive differences across contexts using well-established constructs
- Any frame that puts the context more front-and-center than the theory

Framing and Contribution

Creating stronger frames

- Shift the theoretical question to the foreground
- Context may be immaterial, or
- Context may change, expand, or bound our understanding of the theoretical relationships

Examples:

Board gender diversity in Australia Racial diversity in Malaysia

Theory and Methods



The pitfall:

- Under-developed theory and/or
- Inadequate research designs
- Use the right tool for the job!

Theory and Methods

Common examples of weak theory/methods

- "Theory development by citation"; causal reasoning and well-grounded hypothesis statements are lacking
- Using cross-sectional data to test causal, longitudinal, or temporally sensitive arguments
- Samples that are too small, truncated, or otherwise poorly matched to the research question
- A flawed design will undo a solid front end

Theory and Methods

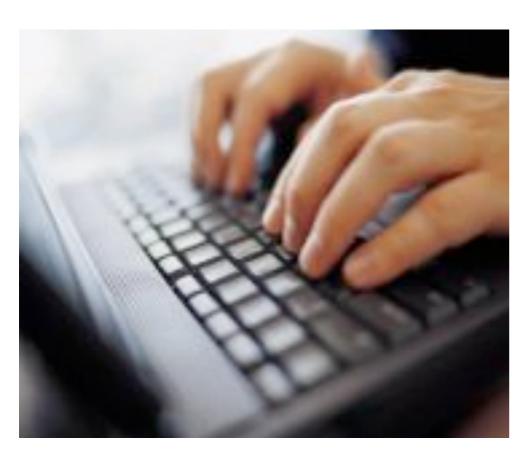
Creating stronger theory/methods

- Apply the most rigorous methods possible in your location – to test and expand theory
- Develop expertise with the most portable methods (qualitative interviews and intensive case studies) – to develop theory

Example:

Australian SMEs

Presentation



The pitfall:

- It's not the English!
- It's about more subtle (and more fundamental)
 communication missteps

ScholarOne's American Journal Editors feature (on the author dashboard of manuscript central)

Presentation

Common examples of weak presentation

- Failing to follow "house style" in article/structure, reference formatting, or table/figure presentation
- Failing to follow "house style" in the paper's metastructure – how arguments are laid out
- Failing to build on mutual knowledge by citing inaccessible material or leaving out critical background

Presentation

Creating stronger presentations

- Know the conversation you are joining
- Immerse yourself in the journal's "house style"
- Anticipate the reader's expectations; you may need to educate the reader if expectations are inapplicable
- Use peer reviewers who know the "house style"

Examples: OB/HRM vs IR/HRM American demographics

Structure of Workshop

- First half
 - Presentations on issues that are critical to publishing in *AMJ*, regardless of your content area
- Second half
 - Rotate through editors' tables



Editors' Tables

A martinia di aliasa di mandi di mantanta di aliasa di a

TABLE PREFERENCES FOR PDW



Amy E. Colbert University of Iowa

- Round 1 Micro
- Round 2 Micro



Carol T. Kul

- University of South Australia
- Round 1 Micro



Jason Colquitt University of Georgia

- Round 1 Micro
- Round 2 Walk around



Dovev Lav

- Round 1 Macro
- Round 2 Network analysis



Gerry George Imperial College London

- Round 1 Macro
- Round 2 Walk around



David M. Mayer

- Round 1 Micro
- Round 2 Experiments



Scott D. Graffin University of Georgia

Round 1 - Macro Round 2 - Macro



Tim Pollock

- Pennsylvania State University
 Round 1 Macro
- Round 2 Macro



Elaine Hollensbe University of Cincinnati

- Round 1 Qualitative
- Round 2 Qualitative



Brent A. Scott Michigan State University

- Round 1 Lab/Field Experiments
- Round 2 Meta analysis



Jennifer Howard-Grenville University of Oregon

- Round 1 Qualitative
- Round 2 Qualitative

nsvlvania State University

Round 1 - Micro



Riki Takeuchi Hong Kong University of Science &

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- Round 2 Micro





Laszlo Tihanyi Texas A&M University

Round 1 - Macro
 Round 2 - Meta analysis



Gerben S. van der Vegt University of Groninger

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10 Minute Break



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Please Rotate Tables



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Round 1 - Macro Round 2 - Macro



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Michigan State University

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Hong Kong University of Science &

- Round 1 Micro
- Round 2 Micro





Texas A&M University

Round 1 - Macro Round 2 - Meta analysis



University of Groninge

- Round 1 Lab/Field Experiments

Round 2 - Network analysis

Conclusion

- Thank you for coming!
- All slides will be posted to the Author Resources page of the *AMJ* website