

FROM THE EDITORS: THE NEXT THREE YEARS AT *AMJ*—MAINTAINING THE MISSION WHILE EXPANDING THE *JOURNAL*

With this issue, the 19th editorial team in the venerable history of *Academy of Management Journal* formally takes its place on the masthead. Our team inherits a journal that is thriving in a number of respects. Submissions continue to rise, with 2010 setting a new record of over 1,100 manuscripts received. Impact remains strong, with *AMJ* continuing to place near the top of ISI Web of Knowledge's one- and five-year impact factor ratings for management journals. Reviews of journal quality and influence continue to illustrate that *AMJ* publishes high-quality articles that make strong contributions to management (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Bachrach, & Podsakoff, 2005; Singh, Haddad, & Chow, 2007). Finally, citation patterns suggest that findings from *AMJ* articles get disseminated into practitioner journals, science-based popular business books, undergraduate textbooks, and other outlets that more directly reach practicing managers.

Our team has the 18,000+ members of the Academy of Management to thank for this exceptional status quo. After all, it is the members who have made *AMJ* their empirical journal of choice by submitting their manuscripts. It is the members who have stepped up to serve the *Journal* as ad hoc reviewers, Editorial Review Board members, associate editors, and editors. And it is the members who have voted for or been elected to the boards and committees that advise, shape, and staff *AMJ* over time. As scholarly life seems to get busier and busier, and as scholarly outlets seem to grow more and more abundant, our appreciation for these efforts deepens. Thus, on behalf of the new editorial team, please accept my sincere thanks for the support and passion for *AMJ* you have shown over the years, and your engagement in the *Journal*.

Of course, our strong status quo is due in no small part to the talents and efforts of *AMJ*'s 18th editorial team, led by R. Duane Ireland. Duane was, in every respect, the consummate editor. While serving as one of Duane's associate editors, I was struck by how keenly he understood *AMJ*'s mission, how deeply he cared about its history, and how honored he was to serve as a caretaker for that mission and history. The time and energy that he invested in that care-taking role were truly remarkable—I cannot imagine anyone working harder on

behalf of the *Journal* than Duane. He was also keenly aware that every action he took reflected on *AMJ*, and he channeled that awareness into every conversation, e-mail, phone call, presentation, and decision letter of his term. His stewardship would provide a veritable case study for any scholar interested in “idealized influence” (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Fortunately, we as members can be thankful that Duane is continuing to use those qualities in service to the Academy, as he transitions to five years of service on the Board of Governors. More personally, I cannot thank Duane enough for all of the e-mails, phone calls, and visits during my transition to incoming editor. Those interactions became a routine that made a busy spring both enjoyable and enlightening.

Our team also owes a considerable debt of thanks to Duane's distinguished group of associate editors (AEs): Peter A. Bamberger (Technion–Israel Institute of Technology), James G. Combs (Florida State University), K. Michelle (Micki) Kacmar (University of Alabama), David J. Ketchen Jr. (Auburn University), Elizabeth W. Morrison (New York University), Michael G. Pratt (Boston College), Wm. Gerard (Gerry) Sanders (Rice University), and Wenpin Tsai (Pennsylvania State University). Each and every one of them went above and beyond their role, authoring incredibly constructive and developmental decision letters and representing the *Journal* at annual meetings, research visits, and their own universities. Moreover, the concerns, suggestions, and insights they offered at our annual editorial retreats have shaped many of the ideas that our current team will be implementing. Like Duane, they will continue their service to the Academy, as virtually all of them have joined the current Editorial Review Board (ERB). Finally, we also owe our thanks to the 160 members of Duane's ERB, as well as his ad hoc reviewers, for all of their conscientious and timely reviews over the past three years.

NEW TEAM, NEW WORK FLOW

Introducing the New Team

I am honored to introduce the members of *AMJ*'s 19th team to you. In response to the rising number

of submissions and some changes to the *Journal's* work flow (discussed below), our team includes 13 AEs. They were chosen on the basis of a number of criteria, including research productivity in *AMJ*, research productivity in other top journals, reviewing quality, reviewing conscientiousness, and diversity in content area, theoretical orientation, gender, and national background. Considering all of these criteria simultaneously is a challenge when staffing a team of this type, but I think the resulting group is one that will be a true credit to the *Journal*. They work in both micro and macro content areas and use both quantitative and qualitative approaches. They are also diverse in gender (4 women and 9 men), national background (2 have non-U.S. affiliations and 3, non-U.S. citizenship), and rank (6 are full professors and 7 are associate professors). They have published, on average, 3 *AMJ* articles, with an average of 2 of those first-authored. Including those pieces, they average 11 articles in consensus top-tier management outlets. With respect to reviewing quality, as reviewers they averaged a 4.01 on the 5-point scale used to grade reviews, versus a mean of 3.37 for *AMJ* reviewers as a whole. With respect to reviewing conscientiousness, the new AEs accepted 94 percent of their reviewing invitations, returning those reviews in an average of 27 days (versus the requested 30 days). I have no doubt that these 13 individuals will represent the *Journal* well, and they have my utmost gratitude for stepping up to serve.

Our team includes six editors who handle quantitative micro submissions. **Joyce E. Bono** (University of Minnesota) handles submissions in the areas of leadership, mood and emotions, personality and individual differences, motivation, gender and diversity, and social issues in management. **Adam M. Grant** (University of Pennsylvania) covers submissions in the areas of motivation, job design, roles, and tasks, satisfaction and commitment, creativity, and reward and incentive systems. **Jason D. Shaw** (University of Minnesota) handles papers on retention and separation, reward and incentive systems, strategic HRM, diversity management, work and family, and group/team processes. **Raymond T. Sparrowe** (Washington University in St. Louis) handles submissions in the areas of leadership, social networks, organizational citizenship behavior, motivation, managerial and organizational cognition, and cross-cultural management. **Bennett J. Tepper** (Georgia State University) covers papers in the areas of deviance/counterproductive behavior, conflict management, stress, strain, and well-being, work and family, and person-environment fit. Finally, I serve as action editor on submissions in the areas of justice/fairness, trust, group/team processes, training and develop-

ment, social issues in management, and cross-cultural management.

Our team also includes six AEs whose expertise is quantitative macro submissions. **Gerard George** (Imperial College London) handles submissions in the entrepreneurship, knowledge management, technology and innovation management, and international management spaces. **Marta A. Geletkanycz** (Boston College) serves as action editor for papers on upper echelons/corporate governance, business and competitive strategy, strategic management process, and organizational demography. **Kyle J. Mayer** (University of Southern California) covers submissions in the areas of business-level resources/capabilities, cooperative strategy, international joint ventures and alliances, and production and operations management. **Gerry McNamara** (Michigan State University) manages submissions in the areas of business and competitive strategy, corporate strategy, upper echelons/corporate governance, organizational learning, decision making, and risk. **Timothy G. Pollock** (Pennsylvania State University) covers the reputation, organization and management theory, entrepreneurship, network theory, organizational communications and information systems, and managerial and organizational cognition realms. Finally, **Yan (Anthea) Zhang** (Rice University) handles submissions in business and competitive strategy, cooperative strategy, corporate strategy, entrepreneurship, and international management.

Our team also includes two AEs specializing in inductive and qualitative submissions. *AMJ's* commitment to being an outlet of choice for qualitative work intensified under the leadership of Tom Lee and, subsequently, Sara Rynes (see the February 2005 *From the Editors* [vol. 48: 9–15]) and continued when Duane made Mike Pratt *AMJ's* first AE dedicated solely to qualitative submissions. Our team expands that initiative by having both micro and macro qualitative AEs. **Kevin Corley** (Arizona State University) covers qualitative submissions in micro content areas, and **Pratima (Tima) Bansal** (University of Western Ontario) takes on qualitative submissions in macro content areas. (Kevin and Tima will discuss the current state of qualitative research in *AMJ* in next issue's *From the Editors*.)

Along with the AEs, our team includes the 174 members of our ERB. Each has agreed to contribute 8–10 reviews per year for the next three years, until a new board is chosen by my successor. As with the AEs, I am extremely grateful to the ERB members for agreeing to serve, given the competing demands of scholarly life. Decisions about staffing the board were based on the same criteria used in selecting AEs, including scholarly productivity, reviewing quality, and reviewing conscientiousness. All 174

members of the ERB have published at least once in *AMJ* and have published an average of ten articles in consensus top-tier management journals. As time goes on, we will expand the board to include productive scholars who have not yet published in *AMJ*, to reward good ad hoc service and cover areas of emerging need. With respect to reviewing quality and conscientiousness, the ERB averaged a 3.69 on the 5-point scale, accepted 91 percent of reviewing invitations, and returned reviews in an average 26 days. Truly these numbers represent remarkable service to the *Journal*, and we are honored to have an ERB of this caliber.

Finally, our team includes Michael P. (Mike) Malgrande, who returns for another term as *AMJ*'s managing editor. Mike works at the Academy of Management's headquarters in Briarcliff Manor, New York. He serves as the first point of contact for all *AMJ* submissions and interfaces with ScholarOne on any matters related to the Manuscript Central software system. Together with Susan Zaid, the senior managing editor for the Academy's journals, Mike also acts as the organizational memory for *AMJ*. Persephone (Seph) Doliner also returns as *AMJ*'s production and copy editor. Seph's efforts help *AMJ* maintain its reputation for clear, accessible, and professionally written articles. Finally, I am grateful for Liesl Wesson (Texas A&M University) for agreeing to serve as my editorial assistant, a position generously funded by my deans.

Introducing the New Work Flow

As noted above, we have instituted some changes to *AMJ*'s work flow that are relevant to the AEs and their work. As have prior editors, I examine each submission to determine whether a manuscript should enter our full double-blind review process or receive a desk decision (see below for more on these). If full review is warranted, I assign the submission to an action editor (either myself or an AE). Then—in a departure from the previous work flow—the relevant action editor is charged with selecting reviewers (typically, two ERB members and one ad hoc reviewer, along with two alternate ad hocs). Once all three reviews have been returned, the action editor makes the final decision on the manuscript.

Having action editors rather than the editor assign reviewers is a change that was made for three principal reasons. First, the greater content domain familiarity of the action editor should allow him or her to make more valid and thoughtful reviewer choices than I myself could make. Second, reviewers may be more likely to accept reviewing invitations when they come from a scholar working in

their own literature or professional network. Third, given the realities of addressing 1,000+ submissions, the more decentralized system will allow me to maintain better focus on the more strategic elements of my editorial role.

As noted, when full review of a submission is not warranted, it receives a desk decision. Some desk decisions are *desk rejects*, especially in cases where an article is strictly conceptual, not relevant to management, focused purely on methodological contribution, or otherwise falls outside the *Journal*'s mission. I handle all desk rejects. Other desk decisions are *desk edits*. Leaving aside desk edit decisions based merely on style or length issues, desk edits tend to be submissions that fall within the *Journal*'s mission and scope but need just a bit more work before they warrant an investment of our limited reviewer resources. I handle the desk edits for quantitative micro submissions but delegate the macro and qualitative desk edits to the appropriate AE. The authors of these submissions receive a few paragraphs of substantive feedback, which often centers on a significant rewriting of their framing and theorizing (and sometimes the collection or reporting of additional data). If they are willing, the authors may resubmit their study after making those changes, to see if the retooled version warrants full review.

The new work flow appears to be working very well thus far. As of early January, our team had received 469 submissions since the July 1 transition. Of those, 41 received desk rejects, with that notification reaching the authors in an average of three days. Ninety-two received desk edits, with those letters reaching the authors in about five days. Taken together, the 133 desk rejects and desk edits represent a 28 percent desk decision rate, which is just under the typical rate for previous teams. The remaining 336 submissions have gone out for full review, with final decisions being rendered within an average of 55 days from submission. Thus, the new reviewing work flow has maintained *AMJ*'s reputation for quick turnaround. Action editors are choosing reviewers in a timely manner; reviewers are accepting those invitations and returning their reviews on time; and action editors are making final decisions within the customary two-month window.

GOALS AND INITIATIVES MOVING FORWARD

Other than this revised work flow, what can Academy members expect from the 19th editorial team? First and foremost, they can expect us to maintain the mission and standards of the *Journal*. As described in our "Information for Contributors,"

we will continue to seek “empirical research that tests, extends, or builds management theory and contributes to management practice.” We will continue to welcome “all empirical methods—including, but not limited to, qualitative, quantitative, field, laboratory, and combination methods.” We will continue to expect submissions to make “strong empirical and theoretical contributions and highlight the significance of those contributions to the management field.” Finally, we will continue to challenge authors to “produce original, insightful, interesting, important, and theoretically bold research.”

Put simply, the theoretical contribution criterion that has come to define *AMJ*'s brand will continue to do so on our watch. Ketchen and Ireland's survey of the previous ERB provides support for that position, with 85 percent of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the view that “*AMJ* should maintain a strong emphasis on effectively testing, extending, or developing theory as part of its editorial mission” (see the April 2010 *From the Editors* [vol. 53: 208–217]). Clearly there has been and continues to be value in other kinds of research (Hambrick, 2007), but no journal needs to be “all things to all submitters,” and other top journals do view less theory centered work as within their scope. For our part, we will continue to view “theoretical contribution” in broad terms, asking whether submissions change, challenge, or advance knowledge of the concepts, relationships, models, or theories embedded in relevant literatures, or whether they stimulate thought about some phenomenon in a way that would not normally be anticipated from extrapolations of existing work.

In the course of maintaining that mission, however, members can expect one overarching strategic goal to underlie many of our team's actions: expanding the number of articles in each issue of the *Journal*. The membership of the Academy has increased significantly over the past decade. It is that membership growth that has, in large part, fueled the rise in *AMJ* submissions over the same time frame. Despite those two trends, the size of a typical *AMJ* issue has remained consistent, at around nine articles. In part, that disconnect reflects desk decisions, as many new members work in institutions that have not previously given faculty incentives to submit to *AMJ*. Those faculty are reflected in the membership and submission growth, but perhaps have not yet reached the point on the learning curve at which their work is being reviewed and accepted.

All that said, this disconnect could fuel a sense that *AMJ* does not sufficiently meet the needs of its members as an outlet for their empirical work (see DeNisi [2010] for a brief discussion of such issues).

Our goal is to expand the number of articles published by the *Journal* without lowering the standards that have helped establish its reputation and influence. To make that goal more effective, and to engender the appropriate level of commitment to it (Locke & Latham, 1990), we are setting a specific and difficult goal of 12 articles per issue by the end of our term. That represents a 33 percent increase over the length of a typical issue, which is ambitious given that the *Journal* currently publishes every single manuscript that makes its way through the review process successfully. Some members believe that *From the Editors* pieces or Special Research Forum issues “squeeze out” otherwise deserving manuscripts, but that is not the case. *AMJ* publishes each and every paper that, according to action editors in conjunction with reviewers, meets the bar for theoretical and empirical contribution. Our team is therefore pursuing a number of steps to reach our goal, steps that center on two areas: education and outreach.

Education Initiatives

As with past teams, decision letters are central to our educational efforts. Rather than merely delivering a decision or distilling the three reviews, our letters focus on “demystifying” *AMJ*'s standards and expectations. Most submissions get rejected because of issues pertaining to theoretical contribution, novelty, scope, or technical adequacy. In our rejection letters we endeavor to describe and distill those issues fully, while offering specific steps for improving the next submission from a given stream of research. That educational focus explains why 69 percent of our desk decisions are desk edits, as those letters provide specific and substantive feedback from the most relevant action editor. Even if few desk-edited manuscripts are actually resubmitted (which has been the case so far in our term), we hope that this feedback will allow authors to incrementally improve their next submissions.

We have also completed a significant overhaul of *AMJ*'s web site (<http://journals.aomonline.org/amj/>) and embedded links to the site in our desk edit and rejection letters. Along with the more typical pages (“Information for Contributors,” submission instructions, editorial team listings with links to personal web pages, calls for Special Research Forums, Best Article Award winners), the site includes two new pages. The “Author Resources” page includes links to past *From the Editors* in five different areas: (1) making a contribution, (2) laboratory research, (3) qualitative research, (4) the review process, and (5) journal trends. The “Re-

viewer Resources” page includes brief and extended guidelines for writing reviews, sample reviews of micro and macro manuscripts written by the current AEs, and discussions of earning and maintaining membership in the ERB. We believe *AMJ*’s new web site provides a valuable resource to new Academy members, doctoral students, junior faculty, and faculty who have gone several years without submitting to the *Journal*.

Our *From the Editors* will also be a significant part of our educational efforts. Like Duane’s editorials, they will be somewhat short, on journal-centric topics, and written solely by the editors. Beginning with the June issue, we will launch a series of seven interlocked pieces on publishing in *AMJ*, each coauthored by a micro and macro editor. These are meant to provide “bumper to bumper” coverage relevant to any *AMJ* submission. At the time of this writing, the docket includes: (1) topic choice, (2) research design issues, (3) writing the opening of an Introduction, (4) drawing on existing theory in an Introduction, (5) crafting a Methods section, (6) crafting a Results section, and (7) building theory in a Discussion. When bundled together, we believe the editorials in this series will comprise a valuable resource for prospective authors.

Finally, the Academy of Management’s annual meeting in San Antonio will include the inaugural “Publishing in *AMJ*” Professional Development Workshop (PDW). This PDW will be three hours long, open to all members with no preregistration required, and combine presentations, panel discussion, and table topics, led by the editors. The presentations will focus on issues relevant to any submission, including (1) topic choice, (2) making a theoretical contribution, (3) writing an Introduction, and (4) learning from rejections. The panel discussion will consist of questions about the presentations, along with audience-generated topics of interest. Finally, the table topics will concern submission-specific research design issues, including (1) qualitative studies, (2) laboratory experiments, (3) field surveys, (4) quasi and field experiments, (5) cross-level and nested studies, (6) network studies, (7) archival studies, and (8) studies in international/emerging markets. Participants will be able to rotate into two different table topics. This PDW will be valuable to new submitters to *AMJ*, those whose work has been rejected, and all who would like to maximize the quality of their next *AMJ* submission.

Outreach Initiatives

In addition to our education efforts are some new initiatives reaching out to members who submitted

their work to *AMJ* in the past but, for whatever reason, have stopped doing so. Many of these efforts will center on improving the “user experience” for authors. I’ve already mentioned the potential increase in reviewer appropriateness brought about by our new work flow. In addition, reviewers are now asked to make their reviews only two to four pages long, focusing on six to eight major points in a rough order of importance, with any minor points placed under a separate heading. These guidelines are provided in the e-mail that reviewers receive when they agree to review, and that e-mail also includes a link to the “Reviewer Resources” page of the website. Our hope is that these guidelines will maintain *AMJ*’s reputation for constructive and developmental reviews but lessen the occurrence of reviews that cover 20+ points, some perhaps repetitive and on matters of taste. The clear delineation of important points should also signal to action editors the most critical issues to address in their decision letters.

A related, occasionally controversial user experience issue has been the crafting of the responses document after authors earn a revise-and-resubmit. Previous teams have explored a number of avenues for shortening these documents to preserve time to focus on the paper (see *From the Editors* for October 2006 [vol. 49: 873–874] and December 2008 [vol. 51: 1049–1050]). Building on Duane’s policy, our team continues to request point-by-point responses to action editor and reviewer comments, but when the action editor’s letter and the reviewer comments allude to the same issue, authors are instructed to respond in detail to the reviewers only. In the editorial portion of their responses, they will simply refer the action editor to the relevant page number in the reviewer portion. Along with the new guideline calling for shorter reviews focused on major points, this approach should make navigating the revision process at *AMJ* more manageable without sacrificing the quality of the information authors convey. Our team has also pledged to make a final decision on every manuscript (i.e., either conditional accept or reject) after either a first or second revision.

Finally, we will continue to reach out to members who do theory-centered research but who feel that *AMJ* is somehow not amenable to that work. In many respects, the outreach to qualitative authors represents a success story on this front, as will be discussed in next issue’s *From the Editors*. As part of Duane’s team, I wrote an editorial about *AMJ*’s desire to publish more laboratory studies, given the importance of causal inference in scholarly theorizing (see the August 2008 *From the Editors* [vol. 51: 616–620]). Of the 336 fully reviewed manuscripts

that our team has handled thus far, 22 have been laboratory studies (defined here as studies involving undergraduate participants occurring in an environment that was created for research purposes). That 7 percent rate represents a slight increase over the historical 5 percent but reveals that more work needs to be done on this front. The good news is that 7 of those 22 studies have earned revise-and-resubmits so far, a 31 percent rate that is slightly above our team's overall average. This suggests that our editors, our ERB, and our ad hoc reviewers are indeed amenable to laboratory studies. I would encourage any scholars who do plan to submit laboratory work to review the editorial referenced above, given that laboratory studies published in *AMJ* typically look somewhat different from those published in psychology journals. And moving beyond qualitative and laboratory work, our team is on the lookout for any content areas or methodological approaches that seem underserved by *AMJ*.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Our editorial team has enjoyed its work so far. We are honored to have been entrusted with this responsibility and humbled to become a part of the history created by the previous 18 teams. We will do our best to be good stewards for *AMJ*, as well as enthusiastic boosters for its growth initiatives (Moorman & Blakely, 1995). We thank the members of the Academy, in advance, for their readership and their submissions over the next three years. If

anyone would like to discuss the *Journal* and its education and outreach efforts, please do not hesitate to contact me (colquitt@ufl.edu). I look forward to communicating with you!

Jason A. Colquitt
University of Florida

REFERENCES

- Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. 2006. *Transformational leadership*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- DeNisi, A. S. 2010. Challenges and opportunities for the Academy in the next decade. *Academy of Management Review*, 35: 190–201.
- Hambrick, D. C. 2007. The field of management's devotion to theory: Too much of a good thing? *Academy of Management Journal*, 50: 1346–1352.
- Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P. 1990. *A theory of goal setting and task performance*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Moorman, R. H., & Blakely, G. L. 1995. Individualism-collectivism as an individual difference predictor of organizational citizenship behavior. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 16: 127–142.
- Podsakoff, M., MacKenzie, S., Bachrach, D., & Podsakoff, N. 2005. The influence of management journals in the 1980s and 1990s. *Strategic Management Journal*, 26: 473–488.
- Singh, G., Haddad, K. M., & Chow, C. W. 2007. Are articles in "top" management journals necessarily of higher quality? *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 16: 319–331.

Copyright of Academy of Management Journal is the property of Academy of Management and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.