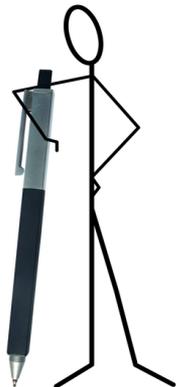




AMR Writing Theoretical Papers: A Workshop from the Editors

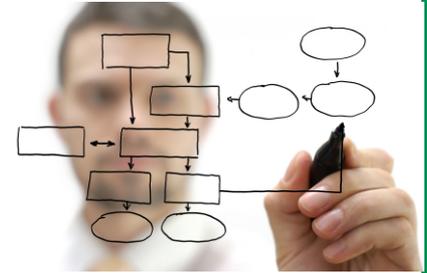
***Session Coordinators/Presenters:
Cindy Devers, Texas A&M University
Belle Rose Ragins, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee***



Academy of Management Meeting
August 4-8, 2017
Atlanta, GA



Workshop Objectives



- ◆ Help participants write theoretical articles that make a contribution to the literature.
 - ***Writing clear theory***
 - Writing style, presentation and organization of theoretical manuscripts
 - ***Making a theoretical contribution***
 - Content and paths to making a contribution
 - Challenges and dilemmas in theory building
 - Ways to address these challenges

Agenda



- ◆ 8:00-8:10: Introductory Comments: *AMR* mission
 - Belle Rose Ragins
- ◆ 8:10 – 8:40: *Publishing In AMR: Pitfalls and Solutions*
 - *Cindy Devers*
- ◆ 8:40- 10:00: *Small Group Discussions: What Makes a Theoretical Contribution?*
 - Led by current/past *AMR* Associate Editors/Editors
- ◆ 10:00-10:30: *Small Group Reports and Large Group Discussion*

AMR Facts & Stats

- ◆ Established: 1976
- ◆ Published: Quarterly (January, April, July & October)
- ◆ Circulation: 16,073
- ◆ Submissions: 400-500 a year
- ◆ Acceptance Rate: 6-8%
- ◆ Double-Blind Peer Reviewed: 3 reviewers
- ◆ Goal: 60 days from submission to first decision
- ◆ Impact Factor: 9.41 5-Year Impact Factor: 13.63
- ◆ Rank: #1 in Business; # 2 in Management
(2016 Journal Citation Reports)



AMR's Mission

<http://aom.org/Publications/AMR/Information-for-Contributors.aspx>

- ◆ To “publish new theoretical insights that advance our understanding of management and organizations.”
- ◆ AMR publishes “novel, insightful, and carefully crafted conceptual articles that challenge conventional wisdom concerning all aspects of organizations and their role in society.”
 - We do not publish literature reviews, case studies or empirical research.

Possible Paths

<http://aom.org/Publications/AMR/Information-for-Contributors.aspx>



- Develop new theory
- Significantly challenge current theory
- Synthesize recent advances and ideas into fresh theory
- Initiate a search for new theory by pointing out and carefully delineating a novel type of problem
- Craft ways to improve the process of theory development
- Diverse styles of theorizing: *proposition-based, process models/narratives & typologies* (Cornelissen, 2017)

What do we want? What do we need?



- ◆ We want our authors to
 - craft novel, groundbreaking theoretical papers that push the boundaries of our field.
- ◆ We need diverse new voices that create bold, “big idea” papers that launch new streams of research and change our conversations about organizations.





Our Developmental Mission



- **Develop our authors and make AMR the gold standard for developmental reviewing**

Developmental Reviews

- ◆ Helps authors discover gems and take their work to the next level
- ◆ *Perspective taking*
 - What does the author need?
- ◆ *Visualizing the Author*
 - Picture the author in your office....
what would you say to them?
- ◆ Role shift: *from gate keepers to colleagues*





Why a Developmental Approach is Important (for AMR and the Academy)



- **Raises the Level of Scholarship for AMR and the field.**
 - We need to encourage rather than deflate our authors, because our authors are the future of our field.
- **Helps Authors Push the Boundaries of Their Work**
 - Punitive reviews narrow visions and rewards authors for taking small, safe steps.
- **Levels the Playing Field and Promotes Inclusion of Diverse Voices**
 - We need bold new ideas from fresh voices.

The Review Process at AMR



- ◆ **Initial submission goes to Editor**
 - Suitable for *AMR*?
- ◆ **Editor assigns Associate Editor (AE) (please suggest!)**
 - Suitable for review?
- ◆ **AE selects three reviewers (double blind)**
- ◆ **AE renders final decision**
 - Goal: 60 days from submission to decision
 - Options: Reject, R&R, conditional accept, accept
 - *Approximately: 15-20% offered R & R*
 - *Approximately: 50% of R1s invited to do R2*
 - *Approximately: 90% of R2s accepted*
 - Goal: Make decision in 2 rounds

Academy of Management Review

- ◆ Why do papers get rejected?
- ◆ How do I get mine accepted?

Feedback Form for Reviewers

	Completely Inadequate	Weak	Modest	Strong	Very Strong
Clarity of Exposition					
Incorporation of related theory from other areas of management/ other disciplines?					
Level of interestingness, novelty or creativity?					
Level of Importance?					
Potential significance of theoretical contribution					
Magnitude of contribution relative to length					

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Reviewer Recommendation

- ◆ Accept as Is
- ◆ Minor Revision Needed
- ◆ Major Revision Needed
- ◆ Doubtful that revision would be successful
- ◆ Reject

Chutes and Ladders



◆ Scope and Contribution

- Hooking readers - Why is this important?
 - Need to answer problematization question: “without this work, what can’t we understand?” or even more seriously: “what do we get wrong?””
- Focus is too broad or too narrow (e.g., grand epic theory vs. incremental steps)
- Try to do too much or too little
- “First” or “Only” not enough
- Novel? Have others addressed this using different labels?

Chutes and Ladders



◆ Structuring the Paper

- Teeing up, wait for it, and winding roads
- Literature review overwhelms paper
- Promises made but not delivered

◆ Clear Writing (and rewriting!)

- Clear thinking/clear writing synergy
- Friendly reviews
- **It's all about the rewrite – nothing is wasted.**
- *Never lose sight of your reader*



What readers want



- ◆ **Clear** (nearly effortless reading)
- ◆ **Compelling** (why is this important?)
- ◆ **Coherent and focused** (1-2 strong messages)
- ◆ *Papers that offer a clear, direct, and compelling story that hooks the reader, then carries them on a straightforward journey from the beginning to the very end of the manuscript.*
- ◆ **Novel and exciting new ideas they can use**
 - *They can't use your ideas if they don't understand them or if your gems are buried in your paper.*

Summary: Core Questions

- ◆ **Is the topic important and interesting? Does it pass the “so what” test?**
- ◆ **Does the paper create, extend or advance management theory in a significant way?**
- ◆ **Are there clear implications for future research/ practice?**
- ◆ **Does it contain a well-developed and articulated theoretical framework or typology?**
- ◆ **Are underlying causal mechanisms explained clearly?**

Summary: Core Questions

- ◆ **Is relevant literature used and accurately cited?**
- ◆ **Are the constructs defined clearly? Avoid:**
 - Same constructs labeled differently throughout manuscript
 - Different constructs used synonymously - construct soup
 - Questionable selection (why these and not others?)
 - New label for same old thing/repackaging old ideas
- ◆ **Did you demonstrate effort?**
 - Don't hand wave – know the literature, cite the literature
 - **AVOID TYPOS AND GRAMMAR/LANGUAGE ERRORS**

And...

- ◆ **Friendly (but not overly friendly)-review, a must!!!!**
- ◆ **Get a non-academic friendly-review:**

The Grandmother Test



Small Group Discussion

◆ Sample questions

- What does “making a theoretical contribution” mean?
- As authors, what are some of the dilemmas we face when writing theory?
- Handling R & R’s and the publication process



Report Back

(15 minutes to share
small group ideas)

◆ Common themes, ideas and resources



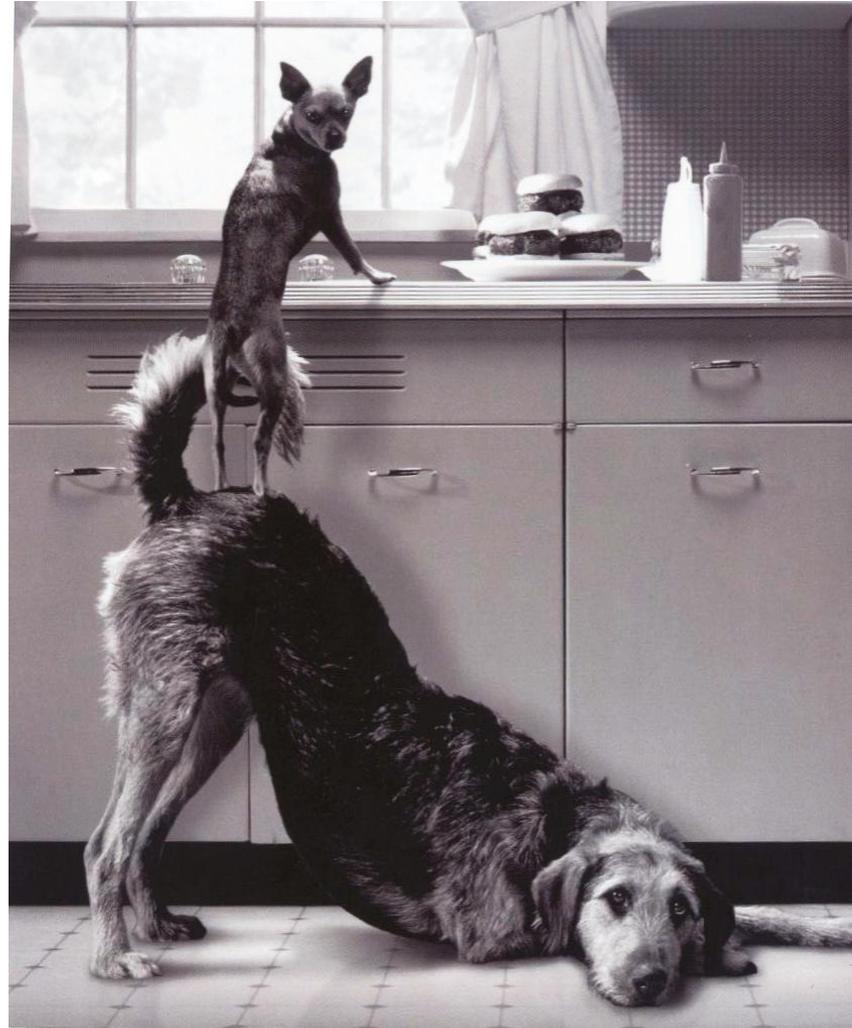
- Check out our FAQ website
 - <http://aom.org/Publications/AMR/Frequently-Asked-Questions.aspx>

Remember.....

**It's all
about
support and
relationships**

...

**no one does
it on their
own.**



Joy and Humor

