Publishing in AMJ:
Tips from the Editors

Professional Development Workshop offered at the 2012 meeting of the Academy of Management, Boston, MA, August 4th, 1-4pm.
Welcome!

• How many of you have:
  • Never submitted to *AMJ*?
  • Gotten your work rejected from *AMJ*?
  • Published your work in *AMJ*?
AMJ’s Mission

• 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.
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.
AMJ Stats

• We received 1127 original submissions last year
  • Up from 993 the year before
# AMJ Stats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Micro</th>
<th>Macro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quantitative</strong></td>
<td>Joyce Bono, Univ. of Florida</td>
<td>Gerry George, Imperial College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jason Colquitt, Univ. of Georgia</td>
<td>Marta Geletkanycz, Boston College</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Adam Grant, Univ. of Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Kyle Mayer, Univ. of Southern Cal</td>
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<td>Jason Shaw, Univ. of Minnesota</td>
<td>Gerry McNamara, Michigan State</td>
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<td>Ray Sparrowe, Washington Univ.</td>
<td>Tim Pollock, Pennsylvania State</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ben Tepper, Georgia State Univ.</td>
<td>Anthea Zhang, Rice Univ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Qualitative</strong></td>
<td>Kevin Corley, Arizona State Univ.</td>
<td>Tima Bansal, Univ. of Western Ontario</td>
</tr>
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## AMJ Stats

<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Quantitative</strong></td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>44%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Qualitative</strong></td>
<td>6%</td>
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</table>

Joyce Bono, Univ. of Florida  
Jason Colquitt, Univ. of Georgia  
Adam Grant, Univ. of Pennsylvania  
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Tima Bansal, Univ. of Western Ontario
AMJ Stats

- Rejections: 50%
- Desk Rejects: 21%
- Desk Edits: 14%
- Revisions: 16%
AMJ Stats

- Rejections: 47%
- Rerevisions: 43%
- Accepts: 10%
AMJ Stats

- Accepts: 84%
- Rejections: 11%
- Re-revisions: 5%

88%
Purpose of Workshop

• To offer tips, advice, and suggestions to improve the quality of your next AMJ submission
Author Resources
Author Resources
FROM THE EDITORS

PUBLISHING IN AMJ—PART 1: TOPIC CHOICE

Editor's Note:

This editorial kicks off a seven-part series, “Publishing in AMJ,” in which the editors give suggestions and advice for improving the quality of submissions to the Journal. The series offers “bumper-to-bumper” coverage, with installments ranging from topic choice to crafting a Discussion section. The series will continue in August with “Part 2: Research Design.” -J. A. C.

At the moment of this writing, there are 64 submissions in the hands of AMJ reviewers, who have been asked to critically evaluate the merits of those submissions relative to the mission and goals of the Journal. Although those reviewers will read their assigned manuscripts carefully and thoughtfully, their recommendations to the action editor will depend, in part, on a choice made years earlier: the topic of the study. The seeds for many rejections are planted at the inception of a project, in the form of topics that—no matter how well executed—will not sufficiently appeal to AMJ’s reviewers and readers. Likewise, many manuscripts ultimately earn revise-and-resubmits as a result of topic choices that gave them clear momentum, right out of the gate. What is the anatomy of a topic that, in the adoption of less conventional approaches to tackling large, unresolved problems.

Of course, few AMJ submissions will deal with topics as globally significant as reducing poverty or combating hunger. What AMJ submissions can do is deal with large, unresolved problems in a particular literature or area of inquiry and tackle those problems in a bold and unconventional way that leaps beyond existing explanations. Often that leap will engender new paradigms or open new pastures for scholarly discourse. For example, Ferlie, Fitzgerald, Wood, and Hawkins (2005) took on a grand challenge in asking why evidence-based innovations failed to spread in the health care industry. Innovation diffusion is an issue of vital importance in a number of literatures, and the focus on health care innovations lent additional weight to the topic. Ferlie et al. (2005) then confronted the topic in a bold and unconventional way by going beyond linear models of diffusion and arguing that factors that could seemingly aid diffusion—such as professionalization—could instead create “nonspread.”

This conceptualization of grand challenges provides a crucible for melding discussions of theoretical and practical issues and for asking questions that
Publishing in AMJ Series

- **Topic choice** (Jason Colquitt, Gerry George)
- **Research design** (Joyce Bono, Gerry McNamara)
- **Setting “the hook”** (Adam Grant, Tim Pollock)
- **Grounding hypotheses** (Ray Sparrowe, Kyle Mayer)
- **Crafting the Method and Results** (Anthea Zhang, Jason Shaw)
- **Discussing the implications** (Marta Geletkanycz, Ben Tepper)
- **Qualitative distinctions** (Tima Bansal, Kevin Corley)
Structure of Workshop

• First half

• Presentations on issues that are critical to publishing in AMJ, regardless of your content area
Presentations

• Jason Colquitt
• Univ. of Georgia

Topic Choice
Presentations

• Adam Grant

• Univ. of Pennsylvania

Making a Theoretical Contribution
Presentations

- Tim Pollock
- Pennsylvania State Univ.

Writing “the Hook”
Structure of Workshop

• First half
  • Presentations on issues that are critical to publishing in *AMJ*, regardless of your content area

• Second half
  • Rotate through three editors’ tables, focusing first on reactions to the presentations and next on methodological issues
First Half: Presentations

- Jason Colquitt: Topic Choice
- Adam Grant: Making a Theoretical Contribution
- Tim Pollock: Writing “the Hook”
Topic Choice

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

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

<table>
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<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Completely inadequate</th>
<th>Weak</th>
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<td>Theoretical contribution (i.e. testing, creating, or extending theory)</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Clarity of exposition</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Potential implications for practice</td>
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<td>Potential significance of contribution</td>
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Topic Choice

• Why focus on topic choice?

• Consider the case of AMJ-2011-9999
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 *Important*?

Integrity

Citizenship Behavior
When is a Topic *Important*?

- Integrity
- Citizenship Behavior
- Agreeableness
- Conscientiousness
When is a Topic Important?

Integrity → Citizenship Behavior
### When is a Topic *Important*?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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When is a Topic *Important*?

Integrity

Citizenship

Behavior

The Academy of Management Journal
When is a Topic **Important**?

Integrity  
Citizenship  
Behavior  
Promotability

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.
When is a Topic *Insightful*?
When is a Topic Insightful?

- Integrity
- Typical Performance
- Situational Ruthlessness
- Promotability
When is a Topic Insightful?

- Typical Performance
- Situational Ruthlessness
- Promotability
- Maximum Performance
- Cognitive Ability
- Integrity

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.
When is a Topic Interesting?

Integrity

Promotability
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
First Half: Presentations

- Jason Colquitt: Topic Choice
- Adam Grant: Making a Theoretical Contribution
- Tim Pollock: Writing “the Hook”
Road Map

• Common pitfalls

• Useful heuristics

• Exemplars
Common Pitfalls

• Paper summarizes findings, but not what we learn from them

• Paper makes a narrow or incremental contribution

• Paper makes an empirical contribution, but not a theoretical contribution (new knowledge gained)
  • Supports dominant theories
  • Replicates previous findings
  • Fails to surprise, challenge assumptions, or question intuitions
Heuristic #1: Join Multiple Conversations

- **Looking beyond your core focus**: What have we learned about each of the variables or relationships in your study?

- **Incorporating alternative views**: What other theoretical perspectives have approached your question, and how do your findings change, challenge, complicate, or advance these perspectives?

- **Reducing the trade deficit**: How do your findings contribute back to the theoretical perspective on which you draw?
Heuristic #2: Perspective-Taking

• What would the experts say? Who are the three most important contributors to your conversation, and what would they find most interesting about your research?

• Whose problem are you solving? What puzzle, tension, or controversy has plagued others in your domain, and how does your research address it?

• Ask the audience: If you were a reviewer on this paper, what would surprise you the most?
Heuristic #3: Consult Davis’s Index of the Interesting

- Organization: structured → unstructured \(^{(Cohen, March, & Olsen, 1972)}\)
- Composition: homogeneous → heterogeneous \(^{(Meglino & Korsgaard, 2004)}\)
- Abstraction: individual → collective \(^{(Klein, Lim, Saltz, & Mayer, 2004)}\)
- Generalization: local → general \(^{(Frese, Kring, Soose, & Zempel, 1996)}\)
- Stabilization: changing → unchanging \(^{(Staw, Bell, & Clausen, 1986)}\)
- Function: effective → ineffective \(^{(Staw & Boettger, 1990)}\)
- Evaluation: bad → good \(^{(Schweitzer et al., 2004)}\)
Heuristic #3: Consult
Davis’s Index of the Interesting

• Co-relation: independent $\leftrightarrow$ interdependent (Lee & Tiedens, 2001)

• Co-variation: positive effect $\leftrightarrow$ negative effect (Duffy, Ganster, & Pagon, 2002; Xie & Johns, 1995)

• Opposition: similar $\leftrightarrow$ contrasting (LePine & Van Dyne, 2001)

• Causation: cause $\leftrightarrow$ effect (Agle, Nagarajan, Sonnenfeld, & Srinivasan, 2006)
Margolis and Molinsky (2008): navigating the bind of necessary evils

- Harmdoing: index of interesting
  - Engagement, not only disengagement (homogeneous → heterogeneous)
  - Benefits of engagement, not only costs (bad → good)
  - Even disengaged performers can deliver sensitive, personalized treatment (independent → interdependent)

- Justice and interpersonal sensitivity: perspective-taking
  - Specifying challenges of being just
  - Introducing new forms of just action
Exemplars: Quantitative

• Griffin, Neal, & Parker (2007): proficient, adaptive, proactive performance

• Madsen & Desai (2010): learning from failure

• Leana, Appelbaum, & Shevchuk (2009): individual to collaborative job crafting
First Half: Presentations

- Jason Colquitt: Topic Choice
- Adam Grant: Making a Theoretical Contribution
- Tim Pollock: Writing “the Hook”
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, Revise, Revise, Revise, Revise, Revise, Revise, Revise, Revise, Revise, Revise, Revise, Revise, Revise...
  • Ruthless Rewriting
  • Iterative Enactment

• Clearer Map
Structure of Workshop

• First half
  • Presentations on issues that are critical to publishing in AMJ, regardless of your content area

• Second half
  • Rotate through three editors’ tables, focusing first on reactions to the presentations and next on methodological issues
Structure of Workshop

Rotating Tables

There will be 11 rotating tables in the second half of the PDW, each staffed by an AMJ editor (see the numbers below). You will rotate through 3 of these 11 tables, spending 20 minutes at each. The first rotation will cover reactions to the presentations. The second and third rotations will focus on methodological topics, as listed below. Think about your preferred rotations during the break, being sure to save your methodological interests for the second and third rotations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Editor</th>
<th>Rotation 1</th>
<th>Rotation 2</th>
<th>Rotation 3</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tim Bansal (Univ. of Western Ontario)</td>
<td>Reactions to presentations</td>
<td>Qualitative methods (macro)</td>
<td>Qualitative methods (macro)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kevin Corley (Arizona State Univ.)</td>
<td>Reactions to presentations</td>
<td>Qualitative methods (micro)</td>
<td>Qualitative methods (micro)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Jason Colquitt (Univ. of Georgia)</td>
<td>Reactions to presentations</td>
<td>Laboratory experiments</td>
<td>Laboratory experiments</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Adam Grant (Univ. of Pennsylvania)</td>
<td>Reactions to presentations</td>
<td>Field studies</td>
<td>Field studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ray Sparrowe (Washington Univ.)</td>
<td>Reactions to presentations</td>
<td>Network studies</td>
<td>Network studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Tim Pollock (Pennsylvania State Univ.)</td>
<td>Reactions to presentations</td>
<td>Archival studies</td>
<td>Archival studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Gerard George (Imperial College)</td>
<td>Reactions to presentations</td>
<td>International &amp; emerging markets</td>
<td>International &amp; emerging markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Marta Geletkanycz (Boston College)</td>
<td>Reactions to presentations</td>
<td>Cross-disciplinary studies</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Anthea Zhang (Rice Univ.)</td>
<td>Reactions to presentations</td>
<td>Studies on entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Studies on entrepreneurship</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Gerry McNamara (Michigan State Univ.)</td>
<td>Reactions to presentations</td>
<td>Macro questions with micro methods</td>
<td>Macro questions with micro methods</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Kyle Mayer (Univ. of Southern Cal)</td>
<td>Reactions to presentations</td>
<td>Miscellaneous macro topics</td>
<td>Miscellaneous macro topics</td>
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10 Minute Break

The first table rotation is coming up next...
Second Half: Table Topics

• 1st 20 minutes
  • Reactions to presentations
    • Topic choice
    • Making a theoretical contribution
    • Writing the “hook”
Please Rotate Tables
Second Half: Table Topics

• 2nd 20 minutes

• Methodological topics
Please Rotate Tables
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1. **Tina Bared (Univ. of Western Ontario)**
   - 1st 20: Reactions to presentations
   - 2nd 20: Qualitative methods (macro)
   - 3rd 20: Qualitative methods (micro)

2. **Kevin Corley (Arizona State Uni.)**
   - 1st 20: Reactions to presentations
   - 2nd 20: Qualitative methods (micro)
   - 3rd 20: Qualitative methods (micro)

3. **Jason Colquitt (Univ. of Georgia)**
   - 1st 20: Reactions to presentations
   - 2nd 20: Laboratory experiments
   - 3rd 20: Laboratory experiments

4. **Adam Grant (Univ. of Pennsylvania)**
   - 1st 20: Reactions to presentations
   - 2nd 20: Field studies
   - 3rd 20: Field studies

5. **Ray Spannour (Washington Univ.)**
   - 1st 20: Reactions to presentations
   - 2nd 20: Network studies
   - 3rd 20: Network studies

6. **Tim Pollock (Pennsylvania State Uni.)**
   - 1st 20: Reactions to presentations
   - 2nd 20: Archival studies
   - 3rd 20: Archival studies

7. **Gerard George (Imperial College)**
   - 1st 20: Reactions to presentations
   - 2nd 20: International & emerging markets
   - 3rd 20: International & emerging markets

8. **Marta Galatkanycz (Boston College)**
   - 1st 20: Reactions to presentations
   - 2nd 20: Cross-disciplinary studies
   - 3rd 20: Cross-disciplinary studies

9. **Anbus Zhang (Rice Univ.)**
   - 1st 20: Reactions to presentations
   - 2nd 20: Studies on entrepreneurship
   - 3rd 20: Studies on entrepreneurship

10. **Gerry McNamara (Michigan State Univ.)**
    - 1st 20: Reactions to presentations
    - 2nd 20: Macro questions with micro methods
    - 3rd 20: Macro questions with micro methods

11. **Kyle Mayer (Univ. of Southern Cal)**
    - 1st 20: Reactions to presentations
    - 2nd 20: Miscellaneous macro topics
    - 3rd 20: Miscellaneous macro topics
Conclusion

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