Reviewers and Board Members: The Unsung Heroes of Publishing

Every journal is composed of four parts. A journal has to have a publisher, editor, authors, and readers. Additionally, most journals have reviewers, boards, or colleagues who agree to provide assistance in the scholarly process of publications.

The publisher is in the business of providing a service to a specific audience, in our case, nurses interested in continuing, professional development. Currently, most publishers are owned by international groups. SLACK Incorporated, one of the few U.S.-based publishers, focuses mainly on health care publications. The Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing is one of six nursing journals published by SLACK. Feedback from authors suggests that the staff are exceptionally helpful! Thank you to all who deserve those good comments!

Professional journals almost always have a board (to provide advice and review manuscripts) and reviewers (a cadre of experts in the field who can provide discriminating advice regarding manuscripts). Additionally, some journals, such as The Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing, have associate editors. Together this team of experts scrutinize submissions and offer their best advice. Thus, one of the editor’s key tasks is to find those experts who can contribute to the profession through their service in reviewing manuscripts, suggesting prospective authors, writing columns, and, in general, providing support and advice to the editor and the publisher. Our Board and Associate Editors are exemplars in continuing education/professional development. They know what is emerging and what has been critical. The goal of their deliberations and readings is to provide quality feedback about the direction of The Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing and about the manuscripts submitted. I think of this work as altruistic. These individuals give to their profession every time they review a manuscript or send an e-mail with an idea.

I also think our reviewers always do this work with the readers in mind. In fact, some reviewers couch certain feedback in terms of how readers will understand or value something. We are grateful to our reviewers for the hours they devote to making the journal relevant to our readers, and we are grateful to our readers who respond to surveys, download manuscripts, read the print journal, and engage with us on Twitter and Facebook.

But, none of this would be possible if we didn’t have authors! Authors are the ones who have created a program or study. They have translated their experience into a manuscript and then have retranslated it based on feedback from reviewers. Their ideas are keeping us all moving ahead in the practice of continuing education.

To all—the publisher’s staff, Board members, reviewers, Associate Editors, readers, and authors—thank you. As we celebrate Thanksgiving, a U.S. holiday, this month, know that I am thankful for each of you. You make serving as Editor-in-Chief a true honor.

Patricia S. Yoder-Wise, RN, EdD, NEA-BC, ANEF, FAAN
Editor-in-Chief
psywjcen@aol.com

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