

The librarian's guide to writing of publications.

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If you have ever thought whether you should submit that article you have been toying with to a journal, or whether any publisher would be interested in your book draft, this book will help you reach a decision. It is by no means a step-by-step guide, but is full of useful information. In Chapter 1 (Getting started in library publication) answers your first question regarding whether you are qualified to write that article: 'You are qualified to write for the profession merely because you are part of the profession.' Still not convinced? The next tip is 'Start small' by writing Letters to the Editor or book reviews. The confidence booster is to realise that 'publication in the library field is an achievable and valuable goal', to 'write what you know' and not to be put off by rejection.

If you have decided that your intention to write an article is serious, there are other helpful points, e.g. read the professional literature to find the gaps, read widely in the library field; read formal literature and Weblogs; identify subjects for future research; think about something you would like covered in the literature and then write it yourself; check professional associations' conferences.

Chapter 2 covers submitting your work. The author suggests that when you look for publishing outlets/publishers, also create a mental picture of the group of readers that you are trying to reach. With regard to journals, one needs to familiarise oneself the journal's tone and style (in other words, read the Author's Instructions).

Chapter 3 on 'Queries and Proposals' discusses how to go about 'selling' yourself and your idea to a publisher, including some sample letters and examples.

Chapter 4 looks at 'Increasing your odds' of acceptance, how to avoid common mistakes, editing and rewriting, and working with your editor.

The next chapter, on writing and editing your work, looks at how professional writing differs from other forms of written communication, and how to find time to write and manage your time for this task.

Networking, in the form of conferences and workshops and using surveys and interviews in your work, is examined next. When collaborating on an article with multiple authors, which author's name should appear first?. This chapter also stresses the importance of heeding advice and feedback from colleagues.

Chapter 7 covers writing in the academic environment, including the meaning of peer review, research articles, and research funding. There are even tips for reluctant academic authors – work with a co-author, find a mentor, submit work to a newer journal.

Chapter 8 examines related opportunities, such as speaking and presenting at events, and reviewing the work of other authors. An interesting point raised here is to be alert to publishing outside traditional 'library literature'. For example, if

you are a chemistry librarian, write for a chemistry journal on your work, but remember to limit library jargon to a non-library audience.

Chapter 9 covers writing a book, where similar principles to writing a manuscript apply, and Chapter 12 looks at the business of publishing. Here practical subjects such as keeping a track of expenses and payments for tax purposes, honoraria, royalties, copyright and permissions are covered.

Chapter 10 covers marketing and promoting yourself and your work

Chapter 11 is devoted to the electronic environment, and some of the benefits. These include that it allows quick communication, expands the range of potential publishing outlets, networking with colleagues through the web, using email discussion lists, locating online publications and reading them on the web. The important aspect of electronic ethics is also covered – be careful not to plagiarise, and give credit where it is due.

In summary, a useful book on publishing with a place in academic and public libraries. I liked the way Chapter 1 introduces the reader to the main points made in the rest of the book. The style is simple, ensuring that the reader is not intimidated or overwhelmed by the subject, and it is very readable. A complex topic is covered practically.

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