

Technical **COMMUNICATION**

Changing the Way the Profession Communicates

A Workshop

for Prospective Journal Peer Reviewers

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STC's Strategic Plan, 1997-2001

The Society's current strategic plan includes a tactic to

“Establish comprehensive programs to develop . . . qualified peer reviewers for *Technical Communication*.”

The Types of Original Articles the Journal Publishes

- ◆ results of original research
- ◆ original theoretical contributions
- ◆ case studies
- ◆ tutorials on processes or procedures
- ◆ reviews of research, bibliographies, and bibliographic essays

The Audience

- ◆ More than 90% are informed practitioners--writers, editors, illustrators, designers, trainers, and project managers.
- ◆ About 10% are teachers and students.
- ◆ They come from diverse backgrounds as well as from technical communication programs.

Review Procedure, 1

- ◆ Editor chooses review coordinator and sends him/her copies of manuscript.
- ◆ Review coordinator recruits two knowledgeable peer reviewers, at least one of whom is a practitioner.
- ◆ Review coordinator sends reviewers blind copies of manuscript.

Review Procedure, 2

- ◆ Each reviewer evaluates manuscript according to criteria, and makes of the following recommendations:
 - ◆ accept
 - ◆ accept with light revisions
 - ◆ ask author to revise and resubmit
 - ◆ reject

Review Procedure, 3

- ◆ Reviewers send their recommendations and comments to review coordinator.
- ◆ Reviewers' comments should explain reasons for accepting or rejecting manuscript. Comments should be reasonably detailed and stated as positively as possible.

Review Procedure, 4

- ◆ If the two reviewers do not agree, the review coordinator recruits a third reviewer.
- ◆ When two reviewers' recommendations are the same, the review coordinator informs the editor and writes a summary letter to editor advising him of the results.
- ◆ The editor informs the author(s) of the reviewers' recommendation.

Review Criteria

- ◆ Audience awareness
- ◆ Facts, assertions, and arguments
- ◆ Originality and use of sources
- ◆ Research methodology and reporting
- ◆ Structure and style
- ◆ Applicability to practitioners and ultimate value

Writing a Constructive Evaluation

- ◆ Comments should focus on ideas, not personalities.
- ◆ Observations should be specific and refer to the manuscript.
- ◆ Criticisms should be stated positively rather than negatively.
- ◆ Suggestions for improvement should be included.

Contacting the Editor

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