



Emerald Group Publishing Limited
Guide for
African Authors

With a foreword by Professor Stella Nkomo
President, Africa Academy of Management, and Professor of Human
Resource Management at the University of Pretoria

Original version created by: Dr Lucy Lu, Academic Director – MBA
Programme, Newcastle University Business School
Yang.lu@newcastle.ac.uk



Published in cooperation with the Africa Academy of Management



www.emeraldinsight.com

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Preparing an academic paper	3
2.1 Understanding the publishing process	3
2.2 Identifying the most relevant journal and content	4
2.3 Planning and organization	5
2.3.1 Choice of topics and supporting materials	5
2.3.2 Single author or collaboration?	5
2.3.3 Joint authorship	5
2.3.4 The challenges of collaborative research	5
2.3.5 Timing	6
2.3.6 Following the Emerald house-style guidance	6
3. Writing an academic paper	6
3.1 Where to start	7
3.2 Different types of research and academic papers	7
3.2.1 Different types of research	7
3.2.2 Different academic papers	8
3.3 Creating a structured abstract	8
3.4 How to write a literature review	8
3.5 Designing an appropriate research strategy	9
3.6 Academic structure and writing style	9
3.7 Key issues and policy agendas	9
4. Submitting an academic paper	10
4.1 The cover letter	10
4.2 Communicating with Editors (reviewers)	10
4.2.1 Role of Editors	10
4.2.2 Role of reviewers	10
4.3 Responding to reviewers and resubmission	10
5. Author's check-list	11
6. Emerald A-Z of academic journal writing guide	11
7. Key references and further reading	13
8. Emerald Research Awards for Africa	14
8.1 AABS – Emerald Case Study Competition	14
9. <i>African Journal of Economic and Management Studies</i> and other titles of interest	14
10. Contact information	15

1. Introduction

Prospects for Africa claiming the 21st century as its renaissance era have never been brighter. Forecasts for economic growth on the continent overshadow the weak rates predicted for Europe and North America. However, the forecast is less optimistic about Africa's knowledge production, particularly publications in scholarly journals. Africa's share of published papers in the social sciences has been declining over the past few decades. According to experts, this decline does not reflect a decrease in the absolute number of papers but the inability to keep pace with global growth rates. This is worrisome because there is a clear link between knowledge production and the productivity and prosperity of nations. For Africa to take its place within the global knowledge system and ensure sustainable development there must be a sustained increase in both the quantity and quality of published research.

The advent of electronic publishing and the increasing ease of access to academic papers is a wonderful opportunity for research about Africa to gain visibility in the global community. Expectations for academic publishing are changing around the world and also in many universities in Africa. Bibliometric data provides a means for institutions to assess journal quality and the citation performance of academics. Additionally, successful publishing garners recognition for excellent scholarship and ensures dissemination of ideas and knowledge world-wide.

As President of the Africa Academy of Management (AFAM), I applaud Emerald's leadership in providing an excellent guide for African scholars. AFAM's mission is to advance and promote management knowledge about Africa. A corollary goal is to build research capacity among African academics. As an organization trying to build a network of scholars who research and write about management and organizations in Africa, we firmly believe knowledge from Africa can move from the margins to the center of the global knowledge system. The intent of the guide is very much in concert with this goal.

This guide is an invaluable resource to all academics in Africa. Understanding the publishing process goes a long way towards being a successful author. There are many aspects to successful publishing and this guide helps immensely with two very important ones. First, it offers insight into how to structure and write different types of academic papers, from empirical to theoretical contributions. Following these prescriptions is very critical to targeting the right journal. Second, the guide provides information on how to navigate the submission and review process of journals. My experience, particularly with young academics, is they are often unaware of how to manage these processes. Navigating the review process and learning how to respond to reviewer and editor feedback can determine whether a paper will ultimately be accepted for publication.

Emerald has an excellent collection of journals with a wide range of editorial foci. There are also a number of journals exclusively devoted to Africa. I encourage all academics to use this guide as it will certainly increase chances for successful publication. AFAM will certainly promote this guide among its network of academics.

Professor Stella M. Nkomo
President Africa Academy of Management
University of Pretoria, South Africa

2. Preparing an academic paper

Writing papers is an essential task for researchers, academic scholars and young postgraduate/PhD students who are seeking an academic career in higher educational institutions. For most academics, the key reasons for getting published are:

- *Recruitment to an academic institution* – this is particularly important for young researchers who are seeking an academic career in universities or research institutions
- *Promotional opportunities in academic institutions* for example – in the UK, because of the RAE (research assessment exercise) ranking, universities not only are seeking academics with a high volume of publication, but also encouraging their staff to publish in top journals (see *ABS Journal Quality Guide*, www.the-abs.org.uk/?id=257)
- *Establishing an academic profile* – it is particularly important for an academic to establish his/her international profile by publishing widely in reputable international journals
- *Institutional status building* – it is important that academics are published to help promote and develop their institution's status at a national and international level.
- *Self-learning and contribution to knowledge* – although enhancing one's personal academic profile is important, self-learning and contribution to knowledge creation are two of the key outcomes of getting published in top journals.

2.1 Understanding the publishing process

There are two major parts of the publishing process: writing (before submission) and revision (after submission).

1. *The writing process* includes: collecting ideas, deciding on research topics, defining research objectives; creating an abstract; writing the first draft
2. *The revision process* includes: analysing reviewers' comments and key points; revising relevant chapters/ contents; writing a cover letter explaining where changes are made and/or areas remain unchanged

The writing and rewriting process (review process) are dealt with in sections 3 and 4. However, it is important for authors to understand the complexity of the publishing process and the time and effort involved. Figure 1 shows the process of getting published:

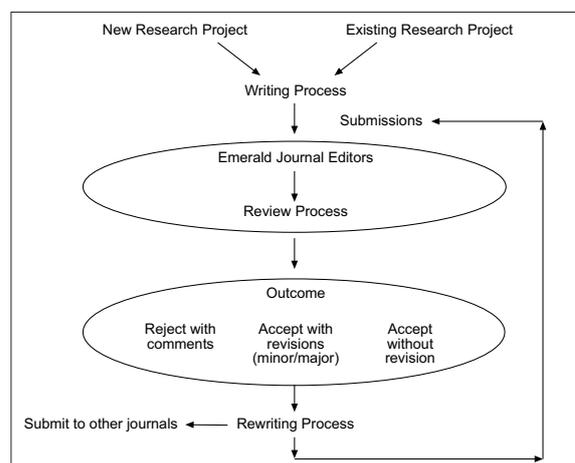


Figure 1 The publishing process

Although it may look simple from the flow chart, experience indicates that it usually takes one or two years to have a paper accepted by a reputable journal and get published finally in hard copy, as the Editors of these journals may receive many papers from around the world every day. It is not unusual for you to receive comments from the Editor three months after your submission. Therefore it is always wise to have a publishing plan for yourself including the following:

- How long will I spend on writing? – set a deadline for completing the paper
- When will I send the paper to the targeted journal Editor? – set a date for submission
- When should I remind the Editor if I don't receive a reply? – journal Editors are usually engaged with other academic responsibilities and sometimes your paper could be overlooked in their mailbox. It is always useful to set yourself a date of reminder if you do not receive an initial reply from the Editor(s) within three weeks of submission
- If the paper is accepted with (minor/major) revisions, how long will I spend on revision? When people have submitted the paper to the journal it is easy for them to mentally “switch off” from the project and devote themselves to a new task. Sometimes it can take a couple of months for people to “switch on” again and start the revision process. Therefore setting a deadline for yourself is critical in order to finish the project as soon as possible

- If the paper is rejected, will I continue submitting to the same journal (after rewriting), or target other journals? – it can be very disappointing when a “reject” decision is received after months of hard writing. However, a decision still needs to be made as quickly as possible as to how to proceed, rather than to abandon the paper.

Understanding the publication process is useful in terms of establishing an overall publishing plan and managing the process of academic publishing. Often, the key issue facing academics is not only what to write, but also where to send the paper; therefore identifying and selecting the most suitable journal is also important.

2.2 Identifying the most relevant journal and content

Selecting the right journal requires some market research. Carry out an initial search by broadly reviewing the titles of journals – this usually gives an idea of the areas of topics/themes/specialists covered by the journal.

After selecting a number of journals that are broadly within your research interests, you need to read through in detail about the journal content and article style as well as the target themes sought by the Editors of the journals. By doing so, you will be able to concentrate your mind on the styles of articles you are going to write and general themes/topics for your research.

The screenshot displays the Emerald Research website interface. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links: Home, Text View, Mobile, Contact Us, Site Map, Support, Register, and Administrators. The Emerald logo and tagline "Research you can use" are on the left. A search bar and social media icons are on the right. The main content area is titled "Management Decision" (ISSN: 0025-1747) and includes a search bar, a "Full text online" link, and various information links like "Table of Contents", "Latest Issue RSS", "Journal information", "Editorial Team", "Author Guidelines", "Journal News", "Sample articles", "Events", "Sponsored Links", and "Recommend this journal". A "50th Anniversary" banner is also present. The left sidebar contains sections for "Login", "Search for", "Browse" (Books & Journals, Bibliographic Databases, Case Studies), "Product Information" (For Journals, For Books), and "Resources". The bottom section features "Unique attributes" and "Coverage" of the journal.

Figure 2 Screenshot

Just as you do not want to waste your time sending your article to journals that are not in your research areas, journal Editors also do not want to waste referees' time reviewing papers which are poor in quality. It is therefore important to read carefully the journal homepage which outlines the purpose of the journal and the broad thematic headings covered by the journal articles. An example of a journal's homepage is shown in Figure 2.

Understanding the general topics covered by the journal is not enough; you may also need to take time to read a couple of issues in order to identify the trends of research development and general writing styles associated with a particular journal. By reading the articles and research debates within the journal, you may also be able to identify the publishing intentions and research trends in the future. When looking for the most suitable journals, the following questions need to be considered:

1. Who are the authors?
2. What are the key research methodologies? – qualitative or quantitative or case studies?
3. What are the key areas of argument/debate?
4. Are the papers based on empirical data or theoretical opinion?
5. What are the key conclusions drawn from these papers?
6. What are the messages from the Editor in special issues (usually within the Editorial section)?

2.3 Planning and organization

It is very rewarding to publicize interesting findings when research projects have been completed successfully. However, before you start writing, there are several issues that need to be considered:

2.3.1 Choice of topics and supporting materials

All research-based qualifications are founded on the choice of appropriate topics and the selection of appropriate supporting evidence from numerous raw data collected from the research field. For a large research project funded by relevant research institutions or councils, it is not advisable to limit all your key findings or arguments to one journal paper. It is important that you divide the research project into a couple of sub-projects, each focusing on different thematic topics and empirical evidence to support the argument.

2.3.2 Single author or collaboration?

The decision whether to take on single authorship or collaborate with other academic colleagues will be subject to a number of factors. As a single author, you will be responsible for the whole research project, from conducting research to writing up. And of course you are the owner of the intellectual property and the knowledge generated from the research. However, the downside of being a single author also cannot be ignored. In particular, how you will ensure the quality of the paper and allocate resources, as well as organizing the writing process will become an issue. In addition, research is a process of reconstruction of existing theories and practice through critical and systematic thinking – innovative ideas are more likely to be generated through peer reviews, feedback and continuous interactions between academics. From this perspective, joint authorship through collaboration may be considered.

2.3.3 Joint authorship

For many African academics who are seeking to get published in an international journal, it will be a good opportunity to collaborate with an experienced author from a country such as the UK, USA, Canada, etc. Not only will you benefit in terms of improving the quality of your academic writing, but also your collaborators will gain experience of conducting a research project in another social, cultural and political environment. Collaborating with a Western author will also help you to:

- Access international academic networks
- Improve your international academic profile
- Enhance your knowledge of conducting different research projects
- Learn another academic culture.

There are no fixed rules for academic collaboration and individual academics tend to collaborate in different forms through joint research funding applications, conducting comparative research, or exchanging and developing research ideas. Although collaboration with a Western author sounds fascinating, there are still many challenges facing African scholars including joint-responsibilities, awareness of different cultures, communication barriers, disagreement on research issues etc.

2.3.4 The challenges of collaborative research

The challenges of collaborative research may be varied; however the fundamental issues facing the collaborative partners are based around trust and responsibility.

Trust means that you believe that the knowledge gained from such a collaboration will be much richer than from individual efforts. Therefore, you need to be active in sharing your own knowledge with others as well as accepting others' ideas. Developing a relationship of trust requires time as well as mutual understanding between collaboration partners.

Joint responsibilities require every author to contribute to the publishing process and the final version of the paper. It is often the responsibility of the first author to write, revise and submit the final version for review, and other contributors are responsible for collecting data and discussing the research content to ensure the quality of the final work. When academics collaborate in large research projects which may cover different themes/topics, different participants can take the responsibility of first author with the support and cooperation of other colleagues when developing journal papers based on the research project.

There can occasionally be a communication barrier as a result of different academic cultures. Though there is no short-cut in understanding different ways of working, there are a number of tips which may be helpful for African authors when collaborating with colleagues from other parts of the world:

- Be clear regarding who is doing what and reach an early agreement
- Negotiate and agree on the working timetable including task/deadline

Activities	January				February			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Week number								
Reading literature								
Draft abstract								
Draft literature review								
Research on methodology literature								
Define research approach								
Draft research strategy and data collection techniques								
Develop interview/questionnaires								
Pilot study/test research questions								
Initial analysis								
Revise research questions								
Conducting main study								
Summarize research notes								
Analyze data								
Writing findings chapter								
Updating literature chapter								
Writing conclusion								
Send to colleagues for review								
Revise and finalize format/references								
Submit to the Journal Editor								

Table 1 Gantt chart for a research project

- Be prepared to listen and accept different opinions
- Be straightforward with your own thoughts with reasonable justification
- Be strict on meeting deadlines
- Do not be over-sensitive.

2.3.5 Timing

Developing a research schedule is a useful tool in ensuring that research activities meet the publishing deadline. A Gantt chart (example shown in Table 1) is a very useful tool for researchers when monitoring the progress of the project.

2.3.6 Following the Emerald house-style guidance

Emerald has developed a house-style for submitted academic papers. The manuscript requirements include:

- Length of the article – usually between 4,000-6,000 words
- Font: 12 font with double line spacing and 25mm margins
- A brief autobiographical note including full name, affiliation, e-mail address and full international contact details
- Article title
- Author names and affiliations
- A structured abstract of no more than 250 words (see 3.3)
- Format of body text
- Reference style

- Appendices
- Tables/figures.

Further information on manuscript requirements can be found at:

www.emeraldinsight.com/ajems.htm

www.emeraldinsight.com/authors/index.htm

3. Writing an academic paper

A research paper is a piece of academic writing that requires a more abstract, critical, and thoughtful level of inquiry than that to which you may be accustomed. The purpose of writing a journal paper is to reflect the experiences of researchers in conducting both research activities and critical thinking processes.

Writing an academic paper is more a recursive than a sequential process. Not only does it take a lot of time to actually “sit down and write”, but also time is also needed to “continuously think” and “organize information and ideas”. This section will explore the process of writing an academic paper including how to start, differentiate between different types of research, what constitutes a good abstract, how to conduct a critical literature review, how to design the appropriate research strategy and develop valid arguments based on the empirical data or theoretical analysis.

3.1 Where to start

Before you start writing, always ask the “W” and “H” questions:

1. What is the paper about?
2. What is the key statement?
3. What is the research method?
4. What is the supporting evidence?
5. Where can I find the resources (primary, secondary)?
6. How is research conducted?
7. What is the contribution to knowledge?
8. What are the policy implications?
9. Who will be the readers for the paper?
10. How long am I going to take to finish the paper?
11. With whom am I going to collaborate/(or seek advice from)?
12. Which journal am I going to target?

You may not have the definite answers to all the questions, but as a useful technique you may write down any ideas, key words, information or issues needing to be solved on a piece of paper. You may also discuss your work plan with your colleagues in order to articulate your thoughts. It is also useful to know where you may find the relevant information and resources such as databases, research websites, newspapers, reports, conference proceedings, government publications, etc.

3.2 Different types of research and academic papers

Although journal papers may cover editorials, commentaries, book reviews and interview features etc., academic papers based on research still constitute the major content of the academic journals.

3.2.1 Different types of research

The types of academic papers are usually informed by different types of research. Easterby-Smith *et al.* (1991) classify research into three main categories: pure research, applied research, and action research.

The key nature of *pure research* is that it is intended to lead to theoretical development; there may or may not be any practical implications. Within pure research, there are three key forms. The characteristics of each form are illustrated in Table II.

The pure research (also called basic research) aims to

- Expand knowledge of business and management processes
- Result in universal principles relating to the process and its relationship to outcomes
- Generate findings of significance and value to society in general.

The second type of research is applied research, which is intended to lead to the solution of specific problems and usually involves working with clients who identify the problems. Sometimes the researchers may be paid as management consultants. The main aim of applied research is to:

- Improve understanding of a particular business or management problem
- Result in a solution to the problem
- Generate findings of practical relevance and value to managers in organizations (source: Saunders *et al.* (2007), *Research Methods for Business Methods*, FT Prentice-Hall).

The third type, called action research, typically starts from the idea that the researchers and/or participants would like to change or improve a situation; thus research is needed to provide justification or a formal account in order to impose changes. The benefit of action research lies in the fact that both researchers and participants are active learners during the process of research in order to address the issues, problems or deficiencies within the existing management and organizations

Forms of pure research	Characteristics	Examples of topics
Discovery	A totally new idea emerging from empirical research, which might revolutionize thinking on that particular topic	Hawthorne Effect Finding: social conditions have a major impact on productivity and work behaviour
Invention	A new technique or method is created to deal with a particular kind of problem. Based on the experience of practitioners rather than intensive field work	Scientific Management (Taylor, 1947) Total Quality Management (Walton, 1989)
Reflection	Existing theory, idea or technique is examined, possibly in a different organizational or social context	To what extent can Herzberg's motivation theory, developed in the US, be applied to the UK, or African companies? To what extent, can the Chinese Guanxi (relationships) be applied in the Western context?

Table II Different forms of pure research

3.2.2 Different academic papers

Based on different forms of research, the research papers may be classified broadly in two types: theoretical-oriented and empirical-oriented. The **theoretical-oriented** paper is driven by the researcher's own understanding, evaluation and interpretation of existing theories in order to develop his/her own stance on an argument or particular issues.

Theoretical-driven papers can be further classified into analytical and persuasive papers.

The **empirical-oriented** paper tends to focus on the particular real-world issues or specific problems in order that new knowledge can be created and added to the existing body of knowledge. Empirical research papers usually start by challenging the assumptions underlying existing theories, followed by the design and implementation of empirical data collection to support/verify hypotheses. Empirical-oriented papers may even be further divided into qualitative and quantitative approaches based on the different research design and data collection methods (see 3.5).

3.3 Creating a structured abstract

The abstract or annotation enables a researcher to distil and articulate the research project into a concise and clear summary. Emerald has specific requirements on how the abstract should be constructed. In order to complete the abstract, the following sections are mandatory:

- The aims and objectives of the paper
- The research strategy and methodology employed
- The statement of the findings
- The originality/value of the paper.

Abstracts should contain no more than **250** words. Table III is an example of a structured abstract.

The shaded areas (Research limitations/implications, Practical implications) are sections which may be used but which are not mandatory.

Further information on creating a structured abstract can be found at:

www.emeraldinsight.com/authors/guides/write/abstracts.htm

3.4 How to write a literature review

The purpose of conducting a literature review is to develop a thorough understanding of, and insight into, previous research that relates to your research question(s). The literature review will:

- Enrich your knowledge in the research subject
- Define your research boundaries
- Put your research into context
- Provide background and justification for the research undertaken
- Identify the gaps/arguments/opposing views in the literature
- Identify research methods that are relevant to your research
- Avoid reinventing the wheel and repeating other researchers' mistakes
- Move forward from the point other researchers have reached.

By critically reviewing existing literature, you will be able to draw out the key points and present them in a logically argued

Heading	Abstract text
Purpose	This study aims to investigate perception of ethical and moral conduct in the public sector in Swaziland, specifically, the relationship among: money ethic, attitude towards business ethics, corruption perception, turnover intention, job performance, job satisfaction, and the demographic profile of respondents.
Design/methodology/ approach	The study was a survey using self-administered questionnaires. Using stratified sampling technique in selected organisations, usable data were collected from 83 public sector employees in Swaziland.
Findings	Results indicated significant relationship among money ethic, attitude towards business ethics, turnover intention and job performance. The importance of money as a motivator was also demonstrated. Respondents hold that Civil Servants' involvement in corruption is high and that bribery and corruption are widespread in Swaziland.
Research limitations/ implications (if applicable)	The sample size was small and hence limits generalisation of findings, but provides preliminary information for a larger study. The need to enrich future studies with in-depth follow-up interviews was noted.
Practical implications (if applicable)	The respondents' perception of widespread corruption calls for a reinvigoration of government anti-graft efforts and the need to promote ethical consciousness in the country.
Originality/value	The paper has demonstrated the importance of ethical awareness, the importance of money as a motivator and the state of corruption in another cultural setting – Swaziland.

Table III Example of a structured abstract

way, and also highlight those areas where they will provide fresh insights. Though there is no one correct structure for conducting a literature review, Saunders *et al.* (2007) suggest the following when planning the literature review:

work of organizations.

However, practical implications from the research need to be developed based on well-defined research issues, the appropriate research design and strategies, critical analysis of data, logical lines of reasoning and valid conclusions.

It is strongly recommended that authors who intend to choose **sensitive topics** for research in relation to Africa issues carefully consider the areas of research and make an initial enquiry by e-mailing the research proposal or abstract to the journal Editor(s). The journal Editor will inform you whether the topics you have chosen would fit into the themes within the Journal and will provide you with further guidance on the selection of appropriate topics.

4. Submitting an academic paper

Writing a paper does not guarantee publication in the Journal. There are a number of important tasks that you need to consider and follow when submitting your papers.

4.1 The cover letter

When sending the revised copy to the Editors, it is also important to list all changes you have made in a cover letter with reference to where/what changes have been made. This will speed up publication of your paper and avoids the possibility of getting into protracted correspondence between yourself, the Editor and the reviewers (also see section 4.3).

When submitting the final version of the paper, the author must also submit a completed Journal Article Record form (which can be downloaded from www.emeraldinsight.com/jarform), explaining the transfer of the copyright of the paper. By completing and signing the form, you agree that Emerald can publish your work legally.

4.2 Communicating with Editors (reviewers)

4.2.1 Role of Editors

In short, journal Editors are responsible for deciding and maintaining the quality of editorial content in the journal. Editors are also concerned with the balance of articles and the journals as a whole. Communicating effectively with the journal Editor is an essential part of the publishing process. This process may take two or three months or even longer. Whilst most of the authors expect a quick decision on whether the paper is acceptable or not, it would be wise to plan your communication process step-by-step, as illustrated below:

- Send your final copy of the paper with all required documents to the Editor, along with an e-mail requesting a notification of receipt. Most Editors will reply to your e-mail in one or two days.
- It usually takes two to three weeks (sometimes even longer, depending on the academic responsibilities of the Editors) for the Editors themselves to review your paper and provide initial feedback. The suggestions could be one of the following:
 - o Thanks for your contribution to the Journal. However, your research topic does not fit in the scope of our Journal, so we therefore recommend that you submit your paper to other journals
 - o Thanks for submitting your research paper. Having reviewed your work, we felt that the paper needs to be

further developed in the following areas. We therefore would recommend you to revise the paper and submit again, once it is completed.

- o Thanks for submitting your work. Your paper will be passed on to our Journal reviewers. We shall get in touch with you again, once we receive the comments from the reviewer.
- The review process can take between one and three months. However, Editors will usually set up deadlines for receiving feedback from reviewers. If you do not receive a reply within three months, do request an update.

4.2.2 Role of reviewers

Reviewers have expertise in the research areas covered by the Journal and are trusted by the Editors to make assessments and recommendations on the papers submitted to the Journal. All high quality journals adopt a double-blind review process to provide authors with an independent and fair assessment on the intellectual merits of the work. In general, reviewers seek the following areas when considering whether the paper is publishable:

- **Relevance of the themes:** is the content of the paper relevant to the editorial aims and scope?
- **Originality and contribution:** does the paper demonstrate originality of theory, practice, viewpoints?
- **Clarity of thematic focus:** is the research clearly focused? Does the paper address the key research issues cohesively and systematically?
- **Understanding of relevant literature:** does the paper demonstrate sufficient understanding of the existing theories and conduct critical analysis of the key argument?
- **Research design and data:** does the author explain clearly the research design, research strategies adopted and data collection techniques?
- **Clarity of conclusions:** are the conclusions of the paper clearly stated and synthesized?
- **Policy implications:** does the paper have practical value and implications for decision makers, and/or business practitioners?
- **Attraction to international audiences:** will the statement/ argument presented in this paper attract international audiences? Does the paper have values that are recognized widely?
- **Quality, style and presentation:** does the paper have a sound writing style with a high standard of English language and well-organized structure?

Although authors do not have the opportunity to communicate with reviewers directly, addressing the points above will help improve the chance of obtaining positive feedback from the reviewers.

4.3 Responding to reviewers and resubmission

The decision received from the Editors (and reviewers) is usually in two categories: Accept (or with minor/major corrections) and Reject. Whether the decision is positive or negative, there is always something which can be learned from the comments provided by reviewers.

If you have received a **positive decision**, it will increase the likelihood and speed of publication if you follow the steps below:

1. Thank the Editor, expressing your appreciation of their effort and assistance.
2. Set yourself a deadline for resubmission of the revised paper.
3. Read through the comments from the reviewer carefully and check each point against the relevant part of the paper. Make the amendments and then review again the points which you do not intend to change.
4. In a cover letter, list all the changes you have made and note where they appear in the revised paper. If you have decided not to follow the reviewer's point, explain why.
5. Making changes according to the reviewers' comments is important; however, you do need to keep the balance between improving the quality of the paper and changing the paper to a different one in order to satisfy the reviewers.

You may occasionally receive contradictory advice from reviewers. One reviewer might say that a particular idea is not central to the paper and should be deleted. Another reviewer might say the opposite. As the author, you need to take each reviewer's comments very seriously and try to revise the paper with a view to improving its overall logic and coherence. If you decide to follow one reviewer and not another, you need to explain this clearly in the cover letter sent to the Editor.

However, not all academic papers get published, regardless of how worthy they are; they may fail to meet sufficiently the high standards of presentation or academic content. At least 50 per cent of papers in business management do not get published. Dealing with rejection itself is a learning process and the most important thing is what you can learn from the comments. This can help you improve your paper and increase the chance of getting published in the future.

One of the best ways of dealing with rejection is to have a fallback plan – this is why identifying and selecting a number of target journals is important. You may send the revised paper (even though it is rejected by one journal) to another target publication. Most papers get published eventually in one form or another as long as the author is not too despondent about the "reject" decision.

5. Author's check-list

Authors should review the following points before final submission:

- You have written a structured abstract, including
 - Clearly stated purpose of research
 - Well-defined research strategy and approach
 - Brief summary of essential findings
 - Theoretical/practical implications
- You have conducted a wide literature review with focused and critical analysis of key issues
- You have formed a research framework that guides research questions (or leads to hypotheses being examined) based on the literature review
- You have explained the rationale of research strategy and detailed research process and data collections (research scope, sample size, reliability and validity tests or other measures). Quantitative research needs to include clear descriptions of the instruments used and the types of intervention employed in the study.

You have presented and interpreted the key research findings and provided discussions and analysis on how the research findings relate to current research/theory and concepts in the

field. (For quantitative research, authors need to discuss how the assumptions underlying the research design were met.)

6. Emerald A-Z of academic journal writing guide

Autobiographical note (also see submission): a brief autobiographical note should be supplied when submitting your final paper including full name, affiliation, e-mail address and full international contact details.

Abstract: the abstract should be structured to include the purpose of the paper, research design and methodology, key findings and originality/value. The abstract should be no more than 250 words.

Apostrophes: learn how to use them. An apostrophe is used in one of two ways: to represent missing letter or letters (e.g. is not becomes isn't); or to indicate possession (e.g. the organization's structure). For the exception to this latter rule, see its/it's.

Bullet points: can be useful but should not be overdone. Useful as a presentation device but should not be used in place of judgment or analysis. Presenting points only as bullets suggests that they are all of equal importance.

Case study evidence: be aware of the uses and limitations of case study evidence. Case studies should be used as illustrations and investigation of the research questions rather than as proof. On the different types of case study and what we can get out of them, see Yin, R.K. (2003) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 2nd ed., Sage.

Conclusions: the conclusion is a very important part of the paper (see also **introduction**). The precise form it takes will vary according to the nature of the academic paper and your research questions, but it can be used for one or more of the following purposes:

- To summarize your main argument in the academic paper.
- To provide an explicit statement and answer to your research questions.
- To suggest implications for the analysis, limitations of current research and indicate directions for future research.

There are some types of conclusion that should be avoided.

Among these are:

- **The uneasy compromise.** This involves a conclusion which, having seen merit in both sides of an argument, claims that the truth must lie somewhere between. This might be the case but it is not self-evident. The argument has to be made.
- **The unsupported contingency.** Here, a writer unwilling to commit him/herself to one side or another, will argue along the lines of "what suits one organization will not necessarily suit another: it all depends". Again, this might be a valid argument but the case has to be made. What aspects of the organization are important in determining suitability? And, just as importantly, is this a theme that has been developed in the body of the paper?

Critical evaluation: critical evaluation means that the authors should draw on a range of existing literature, sources and previous research studies to situate their own written work. As a useful preliminary it is helpful to consider different theories, models, studies, sources and/or viewpoints, and to compare (identify the similarities) and contrast (identify the differences) their relative strengths and weaknesses with a clear line of reasoning.

Definitions: the meanings of theoretical concepts need to be clearly defined within the academic paper, especially in areas where there are differing opinions on how the concepts are associated with different meanings.

Figures: these should be used when they make it easier for a point to be understood. What the figure shows should always be explained. In presentation terms, figures can also be used to break up text. They should be large, clear and uncluttered. If you are using more than one figure, give them numbers and refer to the number in the explanation in the text.

Evidence: always try to support your arguments with evidence. This will take a variety of forms, but can include case study evidence, figures and secondary references.

Figures (charts and diagrams) should be used sparingly throughout the article text. They must be produced in black and white with minimum shading and numbered consecutively using Arabic numerals.

Footnotes: now little used. If using the Harvard method (see referencing) there is no need to use footnotes as well.

Introduction: a very important part of the academic paper (see also conclusions). The introduction should be used to:

- engage the reader by demonstrating the significance of the topic
- help readers understand your assertions
- set up the context for the research topic
- provide an account of the contents of the paper including its main arguments and conclusions.

As with conclusions, there are a number of introductions that should be avoided. Prime amongst these is one that begins along the lines of: "We live in a world of unprecedented levels of competition and rates of technological change". How relevant is this to the question being answered? And what in any case is the evidence to support it?

Internet (also reference electronic sources): exercise care when using web sites rather than material derived from books and journals. In particular, ask yourself what purpose is served by publication of the material. For example, does a consultancy firm have a vested interest in publishing stories of its success? This does not mean that you should not use such references, only that you should be clear about why you are using them.

Its/it's: the one exception to the rules on **apostrophes**. When indicating possession, no apostrophe is required in this case: "the organization and its environment".

Length: observe the word limit (see words) strictly. Doing this forces you to make decisions about what you consider most important in making a sound argument.

Mis-used words: sometimes words do not mean what you think they mean. For an example, look up "turgid" in the dictionary.

Page numbers: always include. Begin page numbers on the first page of the body of the assignment. The title page should be unnumbered.

Paragraphs: within **sections** these are the most important component unit of the papers. The general rule is that each paragraph should make one **main point**. This might be expressed in the **first sentence of the paragraph**. All the rest of the material in the paragraph should relate to the **main point**, either supporting or qualifying it. Also very important is how paragraphs follow from one another. Very short paragraphs (especially those of one sentence) should be

avoided: if the point is important it should be developed; if it isn't, it should be omitted.

Plagiarism: claiming somebody else's work as your own. Don't do it. The Editor may make use of iThenticate or other software to check the originality of submissions received.

Presentation: the submitted paper should be word-processed, double-spaced in **12 pt type and 25mm margins**.

Punctuation: important as a way of conveying meaning. Interest has been revived by the publication of Lynne Truss's *Eats, Shoots and Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation* (Profile Books, 2003).

Quotes: when quoting from sources you should observe the following rules:

- Use quotes that express something in an interesting or original manner
- Always give the source of quotes, including the page number for direct quotes. If you are taking the quote from other than its original source, you need to cite both the original source and from where you are drawing the quote. On the whole, you should try and consult the original source, but if this is not possible you can use the form: "... (Storey and Sisson, 1993, p. 73, cited in Procter and Redman, 2001, p. 240) ...". See also **referencing**
- Avoid both the excessive use of quotes and the use of quotes of great length
- If you must use a long quote (over around 20 words), give it its own paragraph, single-space it, and indent it from the margin.

Readability: good written work uses a good range of vocabulary and sentences with a clear construction, avoiding ambiguity. It uses paragraphs sensibly, to lay out a complete idea, concept or description. Good written work deploys argumentation styles which make the chain of reasoning clear, and descriptive styles which provide a good picture or understanding for the reader. The best written work will flow easily, with grace and style, and will lead the reader effortlessly through the text. It will deploy the full capacity of the written word to convince the reader through both argument and evocation.

References: a reference is any piece of information (e.g. book, journal article, or video) to which the writer of an essay or dissertation refers directly either by quotation or by the author's name. A reference gives information about the source (usually an original source) from which the writer of the essay or dissertation has taken or used material. The purpose of a reference is to enable the reader to locate that information as easily and quickly as possible. Individual references used in the text are, in addition, compiled in a list at the end of a piece of written work.

Referencing: Emerald adopts the **Harvard system of referencing**, which uses the author's or authors' name or names and the date of publication. In the text this should appear as: "As Thompson and Wallace (1996) point out, how groups of people work together is of longstanding interest ..." or as "How groups of people work together is of longstanding interest (Thompson and Wallace, 1996) ...". If there is more than two authors, use "*et al.*" to indicate "and others". Thus rather than "Procter, Rowlinson and Hassard (1995) ...", use "Procter *et al.* (1995) ...".

For direct quotes (i.e. where you are taking the exact words used) you should also include the page number: e.g. "... Procter and Ackroyd (2001, p. 220) claim that "Flexibility is a concept that can be understood in many different ways and at many

different levels ...". See **quotes**.

The sources referred to in the text should then be listed alphabetically at the end. The form in which these references are presented should be along the following lines:

For authored books:

Kamoche, K. (2001), *Understanding Human Resource Management*, Open University Press, Milton Keynes.

For multiple-authored books:

Cully, M., Woodland S., O'Reilly A. and Dix G. (1999). *Britain at Work: As Depicted by the 1998 Workplace Employee Relations Survey*, Routledge, London.

For edited books:

Edwards, P. (Ed.) (1995), *Industrial Relations: Theory and Practice in Britain*, Blackwell, Oxford.

For books in more than one edition (if possible, use the most recent):

Bach, S. and Sisson K. (Eds) (2000), *Personnel Management: a Comprehensive Guide to Theory and Practice*, 3rd ed., Blackwell, Oxford.

For journal articles:

Guest, D. and Conway N. (1999), "Peering into the black hole: the downside of the new employment relations in the UK", *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, Vol. 37 No. 3, pp. 367-90.

For chapters in edited books:

Buchanan, D. (2000), "An eager and enduring embrace: the ongoing rediscovery of teamworking as a management idea", in Procter, S. and Mueller, F. (Eds), *Teamworking*, Macmillan, Basingstoke, pp. 25-42.

For electronic resources:

A www page with no date:

Hine, C. (n.d.), CO3436S *The Social Dynamics of Information and Communications Technologies*, available at www.brunel.ac.uk/~xxctcmh/socdy97a.htm (accessed October 11, 1999).

An electronic journal article

Coffey, A., Holbrook, B. and Atkinson, P. (1996), "Qualitative data analysis: technologies and representations", *Sociological Research Online*, Vol. 1 No. 1, available at: www.socresonline.org.uk/socresonline/1/1/4.html (accessed October 11, 1999).

Spelling: needs to be thoroughly checked, even if you possess a spell checker.

Structure: it is important to have in your mind an idea of the overall structure of your assignment. The structure should reflect your concern to **answer the question** and should be set out in the **introduction** to your assignment.

Tables should be numbered consecutively with roman numerals and a brief title. In the text, the position of the table should be shown by typing on a separate line the instruction "take in Table IV".

Sub-headings: use sparingly. Sub-headings can be used to indicate the main **sections** of the paper, and are thus useful in providing a guide to the overall **structure**. Within each main section, however, the use of sub-sub-headings gives a disjointed feel to the assignment.

Submission: once accepted for publication, the final version of the manuscript must be provided to the Editors as an MS Word

e-mail attachment. At this point, the author should supply a completed and signed Journal Article Record form, a blank copy of which is available from the Editors or from www.emeraldinsight.com/jarform

Title page: this should be a separate (unnumbered) page containing the following information: title, name, affiliation, contact details and word count.

Word count: different journals have different required word counts. Information on this can be found on the "author guidelines" webpage.

7. Key references and further reading

Bourner, T. (1996), "The research process: four steps to success", in Greenfield, T. (Ed.), *Research Methods: Guidance for Postgraduates*, Arnold, London.

Cooper, H.M. (1989), *Integrating Research: A Guide for Literature Reviews*, 2nd ed., Sage Publications, Newbury Park, CA.

Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R. and Lowe A. (1991), *Management Research: An Introduction*, Sage Publications, London.

Hart, C. (1998), *Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Social Science Research Imagination*, Sage Publications, London.

Page G., Campbell R. and Meadows J. (1987), *Journal Publishing: Principles and Practice*, Butterworth & Co., Oxford.

Saunders *et al.* (2007), *Research Methods for Business Methods*, FT Prentice-Hall, Hemel Hempstead.

Yin, R.K. (2003), *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 2nd ed., Sage, London.

8. Emerald Research Awards for Africa

To support and encourage African research, Emerald, in conjunction with a number of African associations, has established a programme of research awards. Organizations with which Emerald has previously worked include Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society (ALCS) and International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP). These awards include the Management Research Award, offering a grant for research contributing to the development of management research in Africa, and run in partnership with the International Academy of African Business and Development (IAABD). Emerald also runs an annual Engineering Research Award in partnership with the African Engineering Education Association (AEEA), offering a grant for the development of research in engineering disciplines in Africa. The funding grant should address the dissemination of knowledge for social good with a specific focus on the benefit for Africa. In addition to the research grant, the winners have the opportunity to receive the assistance of an experienced Emerald editor or former editor to help them write a high quality article which has a high chance of getting accepted for publication. It is hoped that once the research is complete that the paper will be submitted to one of Emerald's management or engineering titles.

Eligibility

At least one member of the research team must be of African origin or be based in Africa.

Judging criteria

Applications are judged, by a panel of experts, on the five following criteria. The research must:

1. Be of significance, particularly illustrating how it will benefit the social good.
2. Demonstrate originality and innovation.
3. Make an outstanding contribution to theory and its application.
4. Illustrate the appropriateness and application of the methodology.
5. Demonstrate sound implications for theory and practice.

If you are based in North Africa you are eligible to enter the Emerald/EFMD-MENA Management Fund Award. See the following for more information: www.emeraldinsight.com/research/awards/mena_man.htm

8.1 AABS – Emerald Case Study Competition

Emerald also runs a case study writing competition in partnership with the Association of African Business Schools (AABS). Authors are afforded the opportunity to submit their work for an initial review, to be conducted by an Emerald-appointed mentor. This allows authors to make any revisions felt necessary, prior to the final deadline.

Submitted case studies should be suitable for use in management education and should be related to managerial issues faced by organizations and individuals. Cash prizes will be awarded to the top three submissions.

Applicants who submit to Phase 1 of this competition will receive comments from mentors who will help authors to improve their case studies before submitting to the final stages of the competition.

Contact

For further information on current awards, please direct all enquiries to:

Emma Stevenson, Service Development Executive
Tel: +44 (0) 1274 785198
Fax: +44 (0) 1274 785200
E-mail: estevenson@emeraldinsight.com

9. Emerald new launch

African Journal of Economic and Management Studies (AJEMS)



Emerald is proud to launch its first journal on African studies: *African Journal of Economic and Management Studies (AJEMS)* in 2010.

Our first Africa-focused journal, *AJEMS* aims to advance both theoretical and empirical research, inform policies and practices, and improve understanding of how economic and business decisions shape the lives of Africans. The design and implementation of

pro-growth and anti-poverty policies and strategies remain a major challenge in all Sub-Saharan African countries. It is widely acknowledged among African policy makers, business leaders, donor organizations and the academic community that private enterprise-driven economic growth provides a greater promise for absolute poverty reduction. *AJEMS* places management and leadership at the centre-stage of business and organizational research in Africa. It aims to support growth-oriented economic policy and business strategy formulation and implementation on the continent through the wide dissemination of the best and latest research in the area.

If you would like to find out more about the journal and related news-items, please visit www.emeraldinsight.com/ajems.htm

If you are interested in contributing and/or reviewing papers or being an Editorial Advisory Board member, please get in touch with the Editor, Professor John Kuada, at kuada@business.aau.dk

Other titles of interest include:

Meditari Accountancy Research (MEDAR)



Meditari Accountancy Research is a double blind refereed research journal. "Meditari" is a Latin word meaning to think, contemplate and exercise the mind. Hence, *Meditari Accountancy Research* serves to enhance our understanding of accounting, finance, and related issues. We aim to publish research articles that examine questions of interest to the greater accounting community

rigorously. The journal originated at the Department of Accounting of the University of Pretoria in 1993.

For more information about this journal and related news-items visit www.emeraldinsight.com/medar.htm

Journal of Accounting in Emerging Economies (JAEE)



The *Journal of Accounting in Emerging Economies (JAEE)* is the sister publication to the Research in Accounting in Emerging Economies (RAEE) book series. The general papers published in *JAEE* will complement the more thematically-based paper collections in the annual book series RAEE. Together, *JAEE* and RAEE are intended to provide an authoritative overview of

accounting research and progress in emerging economies

JAEE's inaugural volume was published in 2011. The journal will showcase empirical research papers which are based on diverse methodological and theoretical approaches and which highlight the policy and practical implications of the research. Reviews of current debates will also be considered for inclusion.

For more information about this journal and related news-items visit www.emeraldinsight.com/jaee.htm

Journal of Agribusiness in Emerging and Developing Countries (JADEE)



The *Journal of Agribusiness in Developing and Emerging Economies (JADEE)* showcases research about the agriculture and food value chains and their implications for economic and societal development and public policy in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe.

Value-adding activities in agribusiness require substantial investments for agricultural inputs and practices, methods of transport, cold chains, processing, retail distribution and so forth. These farm-to-fork agri-related activities in turn have a profound impact on nutrition, employment, education, poverty reduction, and the maintenance of a sustainable environment. Agribusiness firms along this value chain, both in developing and emerging economies, currently face opportunities for substantial growth due to factors such as: the rising aspirations of domestic customers, increasing investment and the opening up of government economic policies. There is now the opportunity to develop service offerings as well as new products for domestic and global markets. *JADEE* is the vehicle for publishing research exploring the challenges, opportunities, and avenues available to emerging and developing economies in the agribusiness sector, which is projected to experience continued and significant growth.

For more information about this journal and related news-items visit www.emeraldinsight.com/jadee.htm

The Management of a Student Research Project



John A. Sharp, John Peters and Keith Howard

Gower Publishing

3rd edition, published June 2002

ISBN: 978-0-566-08490-4

The third edition of this popular book has been extensively revised to reflect the changes that have affected student research in higher education in recent years. The ability to carry out research successfully has come to be seen as a “key transferable skill”

required of all higher education students - and *The Management of a Student Research Project* addresses directly the skill element of this. For more information, visit the Gower website:

<https://www.ashgate.com/default.aspx?page=295>

Key Contacts

For Editorial enquiries, please contact Zoe Sanders, New Launch Publisher,
zsanders@emeraldinsight.com

For more information, please contact Emerald's Business Manager – Sub-Saharan Africa

Sibu Zondi, szondi@emeraldinsight.com
Business Manager – Maghreb, Egypt & the Palestinian Territories

Eric Broug, ebroug@emeraldinsight.com

Or visit Emerald at www.emeraldinsight.com

Call for Teaching Case Studies



Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies

In response to increasing demands from business educators for quality-controlled teaching cases focused on emerging markets, Emerald has developed the Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies collection.

As the balance of global economic power shifts towards developing and emerging markets, business schools are turning their focus to understanding management in these nations and regions. This quality collection from Emerald aims to be the resource of choice for management educators worldwide.

We are now seeking authors, associations and experienced case teachers interested in contributing to Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies.

Teaching case studies with a focus on management issues in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe and Latin America are welcome. We are also considering cases focusing on diasporic communities and ethnic minority groups. Cases from *all* management disciplines are welcomed, including but not limited to:

- Human Resource Management
- Entrepreneurship
- Strategy

- Marketing
- Operations and Logistics
- Management Science
- Accounting and Finance
- Tourism and Hospitality
- The Built Environment
- Public Sector Management.

If you are currently lecturing at undergraduate and/or postgraduate level and have written teaching case studies for your students focusing on developing and emerging markets, why not share these with an international audience?

Detailed guidelines on how to write and submit a teaching case for potential worldwide publication in the collection are available at: www.emeraldinsight.com/products/case_studies/index.htm

All case submissions should be made via ScholarOne: <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/eemcs>

For further information contact Anna Young
E-mail: ayoung@emeraldinsight.com