The Librarian as Academic Author: Further Developing your Scholarly Writing: seminar
Maynooth University Library, 9th November 2017

PROFESSIONAL WRITING: LESSONS LEARNED FROM 30 + YEARS AS AN AUTHOR AND 12 YEARS AS A PEER REVIEWED JOURNAL EDITOR

Dr Graham Walton

Honorary Research Fellow, Centre for Information Management, Loughborough University Business School

Partner Assessor, Assessment Services
Lessons learned:

• Make sure you choose your right name from the beginning

• Service evaluations lend themselves to becoming publications

• Seek to publish outside the LIS sector

• Agree the politics when joint author from beginning
Lessons learned:

- Collaboration with academics can work well
- Choose the journal to publish your paper carefully
- Context can be the most important part of the paper
- Bring in ideas/theories from other disciplines
Lessons learned:

- Responsibility to disseminate when a publicly funded study
- Establishing the focus of the paper and its title is REALLY important
- Don't be embarrassed if do not write as much of a paper as a colleague. Your time will come
Lessons learned:

• Literature reviews are very powerful and VERY POPULAR

• This is even more so for systematic reviews but do not appear enough in LIS reviews

• Sometimes a paper has to be written around project management principles
2009

Lessons learned:

• Methodology can be the most important part of the paper
• Working with LIS students can be mutually beneficial
• Working with LIS academic staff can also work

Journal of Librarianship and Information Science
http://lis.sagepub.com/

Academic libraries and social and learning space: A case study of Loughborough University Library, UK
Joanna Bryant, Graham Matthews and Graham Walton
Journal of Librarianship and Information Science 2009 41: 7
DOI: 10.1177/0307080609349865
Class 4A
Dame Allan's Boys School
Newcastle Upon Tyne
1969
Lower 6th
Dame Allan's Boys School
Newcastle Upon Tyne
1972
Lesson learned:
• Use your network to identify collaborators – no matter how far back
• Face to face collaboration is a luxury
• Make sure you sort the politics out from the beginning
Academic writing for me has been about:

- Helping keep the day job interesting
- Developing new skills and working with different people
- Making a great contribution to the career climbing frame

Academic writing for me has NOT been about:

- Moving up the career ladder
- Wanting to become an academic
- Exploring the blue skies and impenetrable theories
Publishes reviews, research, critiques and exemplar case studies on substantive topics relevant to those providing library and information services to academic communities


Became Editor in 2009 (Previously Editor of *Health Information and Libraries Journal* (2001 – 2009))

In 2008, Editor was diagnosed with serious illness – resulted in issue not appearing and copy drying up
Strategy to take journal forward 1: collaborative practice

Develop close working relationships with individuals in Taylor & Francis

Create an Editorial Team with specific roles

Involve others when the opportunity arises

Involve and inform the Editorial Board
Strategy to take journal forward 2: make it international

No international journal covering academic librarianship

Look to recruit people from across the world to Editorial Board

Encourage and support papers being published from many different countries

Have international involvement in Editorial Team and as Guest Editors

Use one off themed issues to extend international coverage
Strategy to take journal forward 3: growth

When took journal on, it was a bi-annual publication

Now doubled in size and looking to grow it further

Bring in sponsorship when possible
Increase in number of papers published per year

Articles Published Annually

2004: 7
2005: 8
2006: 10
2007: 6
2008: 8
2009: 15
2010: 24
2011: 12
2012: 12
2013: 19
2014: 17
2015: 18
2016: 29
2017: 21
Growth in submission: 2011 compared to 2017

2011 Submissions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submissions</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Submissions 2017 YTD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submissions</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strategy to take journal forward 4: diversity

Journal in 2008 was very much aimed at University Librarians and

Changed the Editorial Board membership to have people from different backgrounds

Recruited people to Editorial Team from different backgrounds
Approaches have contributed to journal’s success as shown by annual downloads’ increase
What I do not enjoy about being NRAL Editor

Having to reject papers when people have worked hard on them

What I enjoy about being NRAL Editor

Establishing strategic direction and making the strategy work

Opportunity to work and collaborate with people from across the world

Contributing to the profession’s knowledge base
Main reason is for the “news, gossip, fun, entertainment, and enjoyable conversation”

i.e. the Craic

http://www_definitions.net/definition/craic