

Using Published Articles as Models for Formatting Your Journal Submission

ACADEMIC AND SCIENTIFIC PROOFREADING AND EDITING SERVICES / RESEARCHERS AND SCIENTISTS - HOW TO GET A JOURNAL ARTICLE PUBLISHED / USING PUBLISHED ARTICLES AS MODELS FOR FORMATTING YOUR JOURNAL SUBMISSION

Using Published Articles as Models for Formatting Your Journal Submission

🕒 July 10, 2016 📁 Researchers and Scientists - How to get a Journal Article Published 👤 Rene Tetzner

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Although most academic and scientific journals provide guidelines for authors who are preparing their papers for publication, some of those guidelines are a good deal less detailed than authors would like, and some journals provide virtually no author instructions at all. As an alternative to formal guidelines, a scholarly journal may suggest that authors make use of articles already published in the journal as models for formatting their own work, and if the author guidelines do not provide enough information, consulting articles recently published in the journal is a good strategy even if it is not recommended.

If the journal to which you hope to submit your writing offers a sample article for the use of authors, you should definitely take a close look at it, but one paper is rarely enough to demonstrate all aspects of formatting. It is therefore wise to consult a few or even several published articles as you format your own, and it is best to choose papers that are as similar as possible to yours in terms of content,

approach and the types of sources cited. Such articles will prove the most helpful when you are trying to determine exactly how to present specific elements of your work.

There are many different elements of formatting to watch for while consulting published articles and these will vary depending on the nature and content of the paper you are preparing for publication, but one of the most obvious and important is structure. Pay careful attention to the order in which the articles you have chosen present the material they contain and the way in which information is divided into sections and subsections. Compare and contrast the organisation in the different papers and use what you discover to present your own research in the clearest and most accessible manner. Do not forget to consider and emulate the format of headings and subheadings, as well as the spacing that appears around them. If you make use of tables and figures in your paper, notice how these are laid out, labelled and positioned in the sample articles so that you can format and present yours in similar ways.

The referencing style used in the model papers you choose from the journal is also vital. Are the references to sources provided in a parenthetical author–date format, via a numerical system or in footnotes or endnotes? A scholarly journal generally uses only one style for the papers it publishes, so your decision here should be relatively easy, but it is essential to pay careful attention to every detail as you format your own references. How are in-text citations positioned and punctuated in the sample articles? Do they appear anywhere in a sentence or only at the end of sentences or perhaps paragraphs? What information is provided for the complete references in the bibliographical lists and how is that information arranged? You may not be able to discover exactly how to document the most unusual references, but the examples you do find should establish patterns that can be adjusted slightly to accommodate the sources you use.

You may also want to check the sample articles for stylistic issues such as punctuation and spelling patterns. For instance, if every paper you consult is written in British rather than American English, it is likely that those spelling patterns are a journal requirement and should be adopted in your own paper. If, on the other hand, the use of the serial or Oxford comma varies among the papers, chances are that the journal leaves that matter up to authors, so you will be able to choose whether to use the serial comma or not depending on your own preference and the effective presentation of the information in your paper. You will be doing both yourself and the journal editor a favour by attending to such stylistic details prior to submitting your work for consideration.

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