Description

You've been working on the article for a while, you've even got a manuscript written. You're happy and you've done enough research, you've read your draft and made changes to the text. You ask yourself, *"Is my article ready to be submitted to a journal?"*

If you submit too early, the editor may reject the article because the argument is underdeveloped or the text is confusing. On the other hand, you may never submit if you are continually revising the draft. Eventually, you have to stop and submit, or the article and its exciting contents will stay on your hard drive forever. You have to remember that submitting your article is a win–win situation. If the editor accepts your article, everyone can finally read your research. Even if your article gets rejected you may receive reviews that give you valuable feedback to improve your article, increasing your chances of it being accepted by the next journal.

So, have you reached that point where the article is ready to be submitted? There's no simple answer, but if you are the one asking the question, you may feel the article is nearly ready, so I have two recommendations before you to click the submit button.

First, Ask for Feedback from Others in Your Field

We get so involved in the process of writing and research that it can be difficult to objectively assess our own work. You can improve your work with feedback from someone who has experience of publishing academic articles, such as your dissertation supervisor or a senior colleague. But anyone with experience of critically assessing academic work in your field can help by giving you an independent opinion about your article and how it compares with published work.

Alternatively, you could give a presentation based on your article at a conference, at your university, or even an informal presentation to a few colleagues. People who attend your presentation might mention new studies you could reference or ask questions that clarify your argument. Take time to consider all the feedback you receive, even if you do not agree with it all. Remember that the people giving you feedback are potential readers of your final article.

Second, Take a Break

Spend a week or two working on a new project, catching up on other tasks or take a holiday. Whatever you do, don't look at the article. After your break, you'll be less familiar with the text and may spot things you didn't notice before. Perhaps a there is a typographical error or maybe some sections need re-structuring.

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Although I recommend taking a break, you may not have the time. You can still get a fresh look by reading your article in reverse. Start with the last paragraph, and then in turn, read all the other paragraphs in reverse order. When we read and write, we usually start at the beginning and work our way through, so you may have given the beginning of your article more attention than the end.Reading in reverse can help you see your work in a new way.

Finally, proofread your article one last time, checking for spelling and grammatical errors, and ensure that it is formatted correctly as per your target journal's specifications.

Take a Big Breath and Submit

You will probably feel you could still improve the article, but you have to let it go. It's difficult to click the submit button, but if you've followed the steps above, I think you're ready to go!

Category

1. Publishing Research
2. Submitting Manuscripts

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Author
daveishan

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