

## HINTS FOR PREPARING AN ARTICLE FOR PUBLICATION

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Generate an idea or topic that is either original or adds a new dimension to a previously published/discussed topic. If the paper presents a case study, consider whether that study is relevant and widely applicable. In other words, does it pass the "so what" test? A paper may also report on original research or replicate earlier research in order to test the applicability of the methodology at a new site or under different/changed conditions.

In the introduction, clearly state the theme/purpose/objective of the program/innovation described in the paper. It is important to keep the paper focused.

Consider the readership of *the journal* when preparing the manuscript--this will be the primary audience for the paper and will influence the kind of background information and level of explanation that should be provided. It may also influence the choice of terminology employed.

Develop an outline that follows a logical sequence and uses headings and subheadings to guide the reader through the paper; use transitions between sections of the paper. A research paper should include an introduction, a methodology, results, a discussion, and conclusions. The methods section should fully explain the methods or procedures the researcher(s) used so that readers can judge the validity of results.

Put the paper into context by providing a solid review of relevant literature. Make sure citations are accurate and complete and follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*, latest ed. (or style guide specified by the journal).

Describe the setting in which a case study or research project took place; as with the literature review, provide context for the reader.

Highlight important findings; be evaluative; explain to the reader why research or the presentation of a case study is important to serials practitioners.

If the paper describes a research study that uses statistics, consult with a statistician to make sure that the statistics are handled correctly.

Consider providing illustrations, tables, figures, or sidebars that will enhance or illustrate the points/concepts presented in the paper.

Use informal peer-reviewers at your own library/institution prior to submitting a manuscript to *Serials Review*, where it will be subjected to a formal peer-review process. Select individuals with writing experience as informal reviewers; then ask them to read the paper and consider its organization, logic, clarity, and grammar, as well as its content.