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ABSTRACT

The recruitment and development of reviewers for the Academy of Human Resource Development's (AHRD) research journal, "Human Resources Development Quarterly" (HRDQ), was examined at an innovative session of the 2002 AHRD conference. The session was conducted by five members of HRDQ's editorial board. The session objectives were as follows: (1) provide background on HRDQ's content and role in the HRD community; (2) introduce selected members of the editorial board and their relevant roles; (3) allow key members of the editorial board to present what is important in a review; (4) explain the review process and its importance; (5) clarify the existing process and its rationale; (6) offer examples of good and bad reviews and ways of improving reviews; (7) encourage members of both academic and professional arenas to consider the opportunity of becoming an HRDQ reviewer; (8) facilitate a question-and-answer or discussion period; and (9) provide potential reviewers with the HRDQ's general guidelines for manuscript review and the name of a person to contact regarding becoming a reviewer. The innovative session included an introduction to HRDQ, a panel discussion of reviewers' roles and responsibilities, small group discussions of the principles of good reviews, presentation and discussion of the small groups' suggestions, and a wrap-up session. (Contains 8 references) (MN)

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Recruiting and Developing *HRDQ* Reviewers: Why You Should Do It and What You Should Look For

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The purpose of this innovative session is to recruit and develop reviewers for AHRD's research journal, Human Resources Development Quarterly (HRDQ). It will also serve as a refresher for current reviewers on what the process is and provide an opportunity for questions and/or comments about the review process.

Keywords: Peer Evaluation, Editorial Review

The need for talented manuscript reviewers is something that is always of importance and is especially important to the Editors of *Human Resources Development Quarterly (HRDQ)*. While *HRDQ* offers much to the Human Resource Development field, good quality reviewers can add even more by utilizing their expertise in the review of manuscripts submitted for publication. In order to bring the field forward and to have the journal cited more frequently, we need individuals from not only universities, but corporations as well. These two areas combined add to the value of our journal being applied in more areas and as a forerunner in research-to-practice literature. The notion of using both researcher and practitioner to review manuscripts has been suggested as having significance to the review process itself (Campion, 1993a).

Epstein (1995) proposed 10 guidelines to improve the journal review process. While these guidelines can be useful, some are not practical to the *HRDQ* review process. One of Epstein's (1995) suggestions was to reveal the identity of the reviewer to the author. This was met with more resistance than agreement (Fine, 1996; Rabinovich, 1996). The current system of blind review used by *HRDQ* may allow for more truthful reviews, although the argument could be made otherwise. Others (Cowen, Spinell, Hightower, & Lotyczewski, 1987) question the validity and reliability of the review process itself. While our goal is not to change the current review process or to debate its relative value, we do intend to educate potential reviewers and explain why the current method is used.

It should be clarified that the review process is not a place for reviewers to take out their aggressions on authors nor to focus on the negative, which has on occasion appeared to be the case (Fiske & Fogg, 1990; Levinson, 1996). Instead, the review process should provide constructive criticism and suggestions for improvement in addition to any negative critique (Bedeian, 1996; Rabinovich, 1996). Each manuscript does have some merit and should be respected by the reviewers and the editors. That said, reviewers and editors need to be aware of any biases they may have and have a way to manage them (Epstein, 1995). Manuscript review and journal publication is a way to further expand the Human Resource Development field and spark more research and even debate into it.

Session Description

The proposed session will address these issues among others. It will serve as a forum of how to review an article and what constitutes a quality review versus a weak review. It will offer potential reviewers and any current reviewers an opportunity to ask the Editorial Board questions and allow them to gain further insight about the review process. Issues such as why we review manuscripts, how the process works, how one does it and what is

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required of them, why academic and corporate reviewers are needed, and others that surround the review process will be addressed and clarified. Suggestions for improvements may be discussed including the pros and cons of the authors reviewing the reviewers. Most importantly, the value that an individual brings as a reviewer will be discussed and how that value adds to the greater good of the Human Resource Development field.

Presenters and Panelists

Five members of the *HRDQ* Editorial Board will conduct the innovative session, one of who will act as the moderator and facilitator for the audience. All members will discuss what reviewers should look for when reviewing a manuscript. More specifically, the Managing Editor will discuss the manuscript review process. The Editor and Associate Editor will discuss what the merits are for being a reviewer and why individuals from both the academic and practitioner worlds should consider the opportunity to contribute as a reviewer. To further develop reviewers, both the Qualitative and Quantitative Method Editors will discuss the methodologies often used to refresh potential reviewers and offer other relevant suggestions.

Session Objectives

In order to recruit and develop *HRDQ* reviewers, the innovative session will offer a 'developmental session' followed by a question and answer or discussion period to expose new and current reviewers on how to review a manuscript. The session will achieve this by completing the following goals:

- Give a background on what *HRDQ* is and does for the HRD community
- Introduce selected members of the Editorial Board and their relevant roles
- Allow key members of the Editorial Board to present what is important in a review
- Explain the role of the reviewer and its importance
- Elucidate the process that is in place and why this process is used
- Offer examples of 'good' versus 'bad' reviews, what can be done to improve them, and what constitutes valuable feedback
- Encourage members of both the academic and professional arenas to consider this opportunity and the advantages of doing so
- Facilitate a question and answer or discussion period
- Provide potential reviewers the General Guidelines for manuscript review and who they contact should they decide to pursue the opportunity

Session Structure

The session will be broken down into five sections as follows.

1. Introduction of what *HRDQ* is, how it contributes to the HRD community and brief introductions of select members of the *HRDQ* Editorial Board and their relevant roles and responsibilities. (Length: 15 minutes)
2. Panel discussion of the reviewer's role and responsibilities, the current process that is used and some important aspects in a review. (Length: 15 minutes)
3. Small group discussion: distribute examples of good and bad reviews; develop basic principles of what constitutes a good or bad review. (Length: 30 minutes)
4. Presentation and discussion of small group suggestions. (Length: 20 minutes)
5. Wrap up and further encourage audience members to consider the opportunity to become a reviewer; distribution of General Guidelines for manuscript review and contact information. (Length: 10 minutes)

Contribution

The innovative session is planned so participants will receive a background of *HRDQ* and the manuscript review process. Participants will hear from active Editorial Board members about why the review process is important and what they can do to further add value. The format has been designed so enough information is presented as to facilitate a potential reviewer into making a well-informed decision by the end of the session.

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