

# Mentoring the Reluctant Writer

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## Abstract

*The time, effort, and frustration spent in the publication arena is documented as one of most difficult challenges faced by practitioners moving into the higher education arena. Yet, consistently there is an outcry for expertise from field to enter college and university classrooms. The dilemma, then, rests on how to attract experts from the field into the university realm and support them in the transition process. This article addresses this challenge from viewpoints of both the beginning professor and the senior mentor. Ideas, suggestions, and proven mentoring methods are presented for discussion and support in the hope of attaining mutual success for the transitioning expert and the master professor as they expand the body of knowledge for the field.*

## Situations in the Lives of Beginning Professors/Writers

For many senior professors, department chairs, or college deans, the following vignettes may sound familiar. In fact, these same scenarios may sound familiar for many beginning professors to whom similar situations may have occurred. The question is: How were the encounters resolved? Or were they?

- 1) Ken, a very able recent addition to your college department, comes to you with a letter of acceptance from a very prestigious journal edition in his field of specialty. The accepted article is from his dissertation research and is critical to his promising career. Enclosed with the acceptance letter is a bill for several hundred dollars for the publication of the manuscript.
- 2) Katy is a popular junior member of your department/college, but her publications are few and in state and regional journals only. In the area of service, however, Katy is outstanding. She chaired the search for the new Dean, was elected by the College as a member of the Presidential Search Committee, and is always ready to assist in quick, innovative ideas that will enhance student learning. You cast the deciding vote to elect someone else, rather than Katy, to the search for a new Vice President for Academic Affairs because you felt (and Katy agreed) that she is often too busy to focus on her research agenda, thereby making

it very difficult to achieve the publication record she needs for tenure. This is all said and done when Katy comes into your office with a letter in her hand and frustration written all over her face. She holds out her letter and you read the missive from the President of the University asking her to serve as an 'at large' member of the VPAA Search Committee. Have we mentioned that Katy is a minority in your university faculty?

- 3) Kase is a faculty member beginning his third year at your university. He is a tremendously talented teacher with student and peer evaluations that top the scales. He is always willing to serve on committees, step in whenever there is a shortage in the schedule, and organize activities for the department and college. What can be the problem? He's a dream faculty member! To date, he has one publication.

## Introduction

In looking at these scenarios, it behooves the reader to know that these vignettes were real and that they are realistic occurrences on many university campuses throughout the nation. A beginning assistant professor often finds him or herself in the professional quandary of trying to determine how the publication component of higher education actually works. Furthermore, the beginner's supervisor, department chair, college dean, or senior faculty mentor may have difficulty in knowing what information to share, what explanations to provide, and how to begin the process

of working with the professional who now finds him/herself in the position of rank amateur. A significant portion of these concurrent dilemmas includes questions about the often frustrating publish or perish paradigm or process which is incorporated within the competitive, almost contest-like atmosphere surrounding the scholarship component of higher education's promotion and tenure process.

The initial question for the beginner then begs: How can the beginning professor win in the publish or perish game when he or she often doesn't even know what the rules are? The second major question arises in the minds of the senior professors within the field who are willing to help respond to the beginner's queries. How can a senior professor assist the beginner in starting a formal research agenda while ensuring some modicum of success for the beginner and simultaneously maintaining his or her (senior professor's) own professional time table and work schedules? The final question addressed within this article ties the two focus questions together as it addresses pragmatic methods in which the mentoring and publication processes can work effectively while simultaneously benefitting both the beginner and the mentor, each of whom has strong professional and personal interest in the overall process. The following comments, supported by the literature and anecdotal data, offer suggestions and practical experiential successes that address this challenging, important, yet sometimes discouraging, aspect of higher education. The authors speak to these issues and extend the process further by offering points for discussion and suggestions which have had proven successful when mentoring the beginning professional writer in the realm of the professoriate.

### **Summary Review of the Literature**

#### *Research Expectations in Higher Education*

The challenges and demands for publication in the higher education arena are well-documented (Henson, 1999; Menges, (Ed.), 1999; Boyer, 1992; Glassick, Huber, & Macroff, 1997; Heeney, Gould, & DeSpain, 2000; DeSpain, Heeney, & Livingston, 1998; DeSpain & Johnson, 2001).

Research has consistently verified that research and publication are of paramount importance in promotion and tenure decisions (Boyer, 1992; DeSpain & Johnson, 2001; DeSpain, Heeney, & Livingston, 1998; Glassick, Huber, & Maeroff, 1997; Heeney, Gould, & DeSpain, 2000). Yet traditionally in the Teacher/Service/Scholar Model, it is a common recommendation that all three elements be given equal consideration in order to achieve maximum credibility and merit for performance within the professoriate. Studies reviewing the actual time and effort spent on each of the three major areas, however, offered a somewhat different perspective (Boyer, 1992; DeSpain, Heeney, & Livingston, 1998; DeSpain & Johnson, 2001; Glassick, Huber, & Maeroff, 1997; Heeney, Gould, & DeSpain, 2000; Henson, 1999; Menges (Ed.), 1999). Research in Colleges of Education suggested that research and publication under the title scholarship are typically given significantly more weight than the other two traditional areas of service and teaching in regard to retention, promotion, and tenure decisions (DeSpain & Johnson, 2001; DeSpain, Heeney, & Livingston, 1998; Gebhardt, 1997; Heeney, Gould, DeSpain, 2000; Huff, 1999; Menges, (Ed.), 1999; Moxley & Taylor, 1997).

#### *Beginning Professors' Expectation and Frustration*

In reviewing the scholarship expectation for the beginning professor, Menges (1999) suggested that most newcomers to the field of higher education assume there will be committed, experienced senior faculty to encourage, support, respond to questions, and collaborate. The beginners often come to the university expecting opportunity for stimulating discussion, collaboration in publication, and professional collegiality among department members. Many times they come to their new career from the practitioners' field having held positions of leadership and stature, or from graduate doctoral programs where the focus was on the research process, the knowledge base, and professional recruitment for indepth study (Menges, 1999). The novices typically do not expect the competition and isolationism present in some university settings. Frustration for the

newcomer may grow as the issues of merit pay, professional stature, and the ever-present competition for graduate assistant support interfere with the collegiality and collaboration he or she was expecting to find.

Menges (1999) cited additional areas of dissatisfaction or disquiet for the beginning professor. A major issue was the feeling of being hired for professional expertise in one's discipline while simultaneously experiencing the anxiety and treatment of being a rank amateur. Menges (1999, p. 3) captured these feelings of frustration with the dichotomous perspective of "valued specialist versus rank amateur." He suggested that this paradigm shift often creates complications for the beginner which result in less effective performance within their new profession. While past experiences and knowledge are valued (hence, the selection process ending in success for this candidate) there is often an equally strong element of competition and seclusion in higher education. As in many organizations of highly specialized professionals, each and every individual in the higher education program or university department is considered (to some extent) to be a consummate professional; in this environment of strong personalities and equally strong opinions, egos play a significant role in the interpersonal communication. The newcomer is joining an established organization, and often a well-defined hierarchy. The positioning and posturing that often occur throughout departments and university structures are new experiences to many practitioners turned professor who have played major leadership roles in their own professional past and are not accustomed to this unidentified, yet established organizational structure. The scholarship component in the form of publication is a part of this positioning for professional stature.

An additional adjustment for the practitioner turned professor is the pace at which change occurs or action is implemented. The bureaucratic structure of many college and university campuses is not the norm in either business or K-12 educational programs. Many of these practitioner-professors are used to decisive analysis and

decision-making procedures resulting in immediate action. They are not acclimated, therefore, to the speed at which change and progress does, or does not, take place at institutions of higher learning. As one beginning professor stated, "the speed of molasses moves faster in achieving change and adapting to needed innovation than does the hierarchy of higher education." This is also true in the publication arena. Not only does the beginning professor have to design, implement, and analyze the research project; then the time frame for submission, review, revision, and acknowledgment of publication (or not) is often several months to even years.

Adding to the frustrations of the publication paradigm, many universities also place significant emphasis on the other two components of Boyer's Teacher/Service/Scholar Model, teaching and service (Henson, 1999; Menges, (Ed.), 1999; Boyer, 1992; Glassick, Huber, & Macroff, 1997; Heeney, Gould, & DeSpain, 2000; DeSpain, Heeney, & Livingston, 1998; DeSpain & Johnson, 2001). The beginning professor then finds him/herself concerned not only with the publication mandate, but also simultaneously striving to maintain a balance between course preparation, committee work, service in the community, and then back to scholarship, research, and writing. Again, many of these beginning professionals in the professoriate have come to the university setting because of their superior ability to multi-task, to present and demonstrate competence and expertise in their personal knowledge, and to achieve in diverse settings. But, this is a new arena, and the time frame to produce substantial evidence of potential success for promotion and tenure is often three to five years. Some beginning professors have categorized this process as an analogy similar to stepping onto a playing field and new game with an unwritten set of rules. As can be seen by the scenarios presented above and the information cited in the literature, the beginning professor would benefit greatly from the knowledge of an experienced mentor.

This quandary leads to the second question addressed by this piece. How does the experienced mentor assist the beginner in ways which

will create success for both individuals, building independence and professional quality in the beginner and maintaining the intense time demands made upon both the senior research faculty and the beginner?

#### *The Mentor Professor's Dilemma*

As noted in the previous citations, there is a high expectation of scholarship at the university level. Obviously, this demand does not decrease as an individual moves through the ranks from assistant to associate to full professor; rather, the requirements increase. The senior professor concerned about assisting the beginner may also experience concern and/or frustration. The mentor must manage her/his own research agenda while simultaneously working with the beginner to formalize his or her program. In the course of this process, however, the senior professor is also faced with achieving professional merit and maintaining his or her professional stature. The element within each of these processes is easily identified—time. Yet, typically release time is negligible for neither the beginner to develop and implement the research process nor for the mentor who expends effort in the form of mentoring. Often, it is simply the high professional standards of a true educator who chooses to provide mentorship and support to a beginning colleague with little or no overt reward. It is the practice of mentorship, however, that is often significant in the success or failure of young professionals in a common field of endeavor.

The challenge for many concerned senior professors centers on how to assist the beginning faculty member while simultaneously sustaining his or her own professional performance level and research agenda. While senior faculty often identify a talented, young professor who values the suggestions and ideas that a mentor can provide within the research and publication process, integrating this type of collegial interaction into the professional demands of the professoriate can be quite difficult.

#### *Mentoring in Higher Education*

Review of the concept, mentorship, as it

relates to higher education does not yield substantial empirical research for the topic. The brief summaries of mentoring in higher education do indicate, however, that there appear to be specific benefits for the mentor-protégé relationship (Erdem & Ozen, 2003; Mullen, 2003; Rose, 2003; St. Clair, 1994). Therefore, the mentoring relationship as it relates to higher education and the publication process is still relatively nebulous.

A study reported by Erdem and Ozen (2003) suggested that post graduate doctoral students involved in a mentoring program perceived the mentoring functions to be constructive. Integrity, guidance, and relationships were noted by Rose (2003) as valued attributes of the doctoral student-mentor relationship as were communication skills and provision of feedback. These attributes would not be definitively different in the beginning professor and mentor professor relationship as the ingénue begins his or her work in the profession. Further noted in studies within the field (Erdem & Ozen, 2003; Mullen, 2003; Johnson, DeSpain & Fisher, 2003; St. Clair, 1994) were suggested benefits of mentoring including the socialization, professional integration and support, and modeled behaviors of expected performance at the college/university level. It is further suggested that the issues of recruitment, retention, and enhanced performance might benefit from the mentoring process.

At issue, therefore, is that while some universities are implementing programs and processes designed to assist the beginning professor, the research does not offer extensive documentation regarding the publish or perish aspect in the promotion and tenure process. Yet, when taken in context, mastering any new skill or establishing the foundation for a new (or second) career, the research on mentoring would appear to support this process as beneficial. Based on the need identified by the scenarios above, the three cumulative decades of experience from the authors, and anecdotal data gathered from across the nation, the process of mentoring a beginning professor in the publish or perish paradigm of higher education is introduced with suggestions and commentary provided to elicit further discussion.

### **Proven Methods of Integrating Support within the Publish or Perish Paradigm**

As stated, the three primary questions addressed by this particular piece included the concerns of the beginner who needs information about the publish or perish paradigm, the senior professor who desires to assist his or her inexperienced colleagues, and the challenge of providing equal effort to the Teacher/Service/Scholar model within the existing higher education merit system as it is currently implemented in most research-driven institutions. The information provided below addresses each of these questions providing suggestions, which have proven successful in overcoming the ever-present dilemma of time management versus collegiality. The goal of sustaining strong teaching, service, and scholarship within the reward system is necessary but within that process it is hoped that a method can be devised which allows for senior professors to provide support for beginning colleagues as the beginners simultaneously create and stimulate opportunity for new perspectives in senior faculty members. This model will enable the profession to benefit from past experience of senior professors and gain new insight from new professionals entering the field.

#### *The Beginner's Concerns and The Mentor's Experience: Ensuring Professional Success*

Anecdotal data from ingénues in the field, assistant/associate professors working through the promotion and tenure process, and senior professors or superiors in charge of working with beginning professors, brings to the forefront concerns and suggestions for managing the writing process in the promotion and tenure game. Specifically, this conversation focuses on the mentor professor and methods by which senior faculty can assist and support beginning professors who are entering the publish or perish competition.

### **Voices of Experience**

#### *The Beginner*

Entering the professoriate is an exciting experience encompassing challenges and opportuni-

ties. Obviously, the individual who holds a terminal degree has substantive knowledge regarding the university setting. This informal knowledge base obtained during the completion of professional training provides a foundation from which the beginner enters the professoriate. Typically, even the beginning professor has proven writing skills which allowed the individual to attain said terminal degree. There is no surprise with the presumption that he or she is expected to utilize abilities and methods for integrating this knowledge into professional forums. Additionally, the beginner expects challenges in his or her new career. The aspects of the professorship which often create the greatest frustration, however, are traditionally the very skills by which the beginner entered the field—the ability to think, to research, and to write. There may have been little or no conversation in the training program regarding the intricacies of writing for publication and even less discussion regarding the publish or perish mentality. While the beginner is accustomed to having his work critiqued, he or she is also expecting a level of professional courtesy and opportunity to remedy the concerns. So, it is a severe shock to one's system when the professional educator enters the new field and finds his or her thoughts, ideas, and written concepts reviewed, critiqued, and strongly criticized with comments such as "irritating and annoying" (cited as a direct quote from a recent rejection letter). Typically, the beginner expects a level of professional courtesy that, far too often, is not afforded. Under circumstances such as these, the beginning professor who has earned a terminal degree, a professional reputation, and a professional position might wonder about the professionalism of the publish or perish paradigm.

The beginning professor can be compared to a young athlete—eager, dynamic, and ready to forge ahead with enthusiasm. What a tragedy for the first few writing experiences to be devastating, rude rejections without the beginner adequately understanding the process or having an opportunity for remedy. Frequently then, the beginners' initial questions center around issues regarding the rules or expectations of the publish or perish

paradigm. How can the beginning professor win the publish or perish game when he or she doesn't know the rules? This is where the senior faculty member or mentor can begin his or her support.

#### *Understanding Institutional Expectations and Empirical Research*

Reviewing the actual situations at the beginning of the article, Ken and Kase both would have substantially benefitted from a strong, knowledgeable mentor. In Ken's case a discussion of journal selection and the procedures regarding financial support for publication might have saved him from the dilemma in which he now finds himself. Likewise, Kase is an asset to any university program; the college and department obviously will not wish to lose this talented, capable educator. Yet, there is significant danger of an unsuccessful third year review and/or tenure/promotion effort if he or she doesn't meet the standard requirements set forth by her/his institution. While there are remedies and possibilities for dealing with each of these scenarios as presented, had there been effective leadership and strong professional mentorship at the inception of their careers, these two beginning professors and their respective programs would never have found themselves in these situations.

As stated previously, upon taking a position at a higher education institution, the beginning professor should immediately start work on the scholarly research process. Whether doctoral degree granting, a regional university, etc., each institution has its own set of standards regarding the publish or perish paradigm. It is imperative that the junior professor not only identify the departmental expectations, but also gain an understanding of the college, the university, and the broader professional writing standards for the field. This is where the mentor professor's knowledge is invaluable.

Initially, the senior professor should explain, or re-emphasize, the need for a focused research agenda and assist the beginner in investigating the possibilities. In that same discussion, departmental, college, and university expectations should be clearly outlined. The beginner must

understand standards for professional performance in the research and publication arena, i.e. which professional journals are valued, what type of research is expected, and what number of publications are expected in a given time frame. While one institution or dean may value practitioner-oriented articles, another institution, a vice president, or the institution to which one may apply will only accept original, empirical research published in Tier I research journals. If the senior professor will share his or her knowledge of the institution's expectation and response to the publish or perish standards, the beginner will have a far greater opportunity for success in the research arena. While taking care not to overwhelm the beginner, it behooves both the mentor and the beginner to have a distinct understanding of the goal. These beginners are still professional people; they will hit the mark if they know where to shoot and at what to aim.

#### *The Mentor's Support*

If the savvy, experienced professor is ready to assist the beginner with research and writing projects, success will not be assured. One should contemplate, however, as stated in Eastern philosophy, when the student is ready, the teacher will come. In other words, if the beginning professor is ready and willing to improve his or her publication efforts, the mentor's support will ensure that learning will occur and success will be far closer than without the support and assistance of a strong guide.

The experienced professor should be ready to monitor, mentor, criticize, and build confidence in the beginner's early writing attempts. These skills must be done with compassion and professionalism, but as Dr. DeSpain states, the mentor should critique "with no holds barred." He (DeSpain, 1998) accurately suggests that editors and reviewers do not gently address the problem areas of the research article, so the mentor must also be willing to thoroughly critique the beginner's work. Then quickly and carefully, the mentor must follow up on that critique by offering suggestions, ideas, and support as the beginner corrects and strengthens the areas of concern. A senior profes-

sor who is willing to read the work, edit, review for errors and clarity, *and* acknowledge when the work isn't up to standard is absolutely critical to the success of any beginning writer in the field of successful publication.

### **Suggestions for Mentoring the Beginning Researcher/Writer**

#### *Co-authorship*

From the perspective of the experienced professor, helping the new professional begin the writing process can be as simple as offering to co-author an article. Selecting a topic that will address research interests of both authors assists the beginner in 1) learning the process, 2) discovering his or her own writing style, and 3) orchestrating and navigating the publication process. Obviously, the mentor writer takes the lead in the writing process while simultaneously discussing the intricacies of researching, writing, and publishing. The consistent interaction necessary for co-authored material encourages the beginner in several ways including learning the writing/publication process, building confidence in his or her own style, mastering the research reference style, and navigating the hard-core editing process.

This co-authoring process also provides an opportunity for the experienced professor to gently edit the beginner's work without appearing punitive or derogatory. The constant, consistent reinforcement throughout the research and writing process provides a strong support system that is essential for the beginning writer. After initial success (the first, second, or even third publication) the roles and performance expectations should reverse. As the beginner gains in confidence and ability, the primary author can begin to take a back seat and let the beginner take the majority of the workload in repayment for the mentor's guidance and support while still giving the mentor an ever important line on the vitae. The experienced writer has provided support, constructive criticism, and knowledge regarding the publication process. From this process and from the modeled behaviors of the senior professor, the beginner has gained confidence and

knowledge; at that juncture the mentor should encourage (insist) that the beginner step out on his or her own into single authorship. Individual style and talent will determine how much involvement the mentor retains at this point. He or she may choose to continue the constructive feedback process, or the beginner and the mentor may decide to let the assistant professor work alone through the writing process. Rejection letters should have been discussed as a part of writing for professional publication, thereby discounting the feeling of failure if that is the result obtained from the first publication effort.

When working with a beginning colleague or an experienced author, an essential ingredient to a successful co-authorship experience is the performance outline. Clarity, perspective, and mutual understanding in role responsibility must be clearly delineated up front. As the collaboration process is initiated, *be certain* to establish timelines, subject matter, responsibilities for each author, and expectations for completion (Arnold & Harris, 2002; DeSpain & Johnson, 2002). This early clarification of expectations will ensure mutual success and avoid potential disaster.

Additionally, scheduled meetings on a consistent basis will teach the need for continuous progress. Many beginning authors fall into the habit of working on their writing when time allows. As too many senior professors can attest, that time will never come. In the hectic schedule of teaching, advising, reading for personal growth, and providing service to the University and surrounding community, finding time to research and write is challenging at best. If one has family obligations in addition, the time for prolonged thought and focused writing can be shifted to a non-existent priority. By scheduling regular meetings, the beginner creates a time frame to meet the shared responsibility as well as learning the vitally important time management skills necessary for professional research and writing.

#### *Presentation into Paper*

A second extremely successful method used by experienced professionals with their junior

faculty is the presentation into paper process. Using this technique, the beginning professors worked with senior professors, their mentors, or another junior colleague under the direction of a senior professor with similar research interests. The co-workers designed a research investigation or worked with an existing project developing a formal presentation/paper for delivery at a professional conference. The team then reworked the paper to address a particular audience and journal. This turned the presentation notes into a succinct, professional journal article.

Additionally, as many senior professors can attest, the beginner may not realize the value of his or her dissertation research. Often the dissertation chair and his or her student researcher may wish to revise the formal dissertation to match the interest levels of a particular audience and/or a more practitioner-oriented viewpoint; this will provide at least one opportunity for the new professor to assimilate the three phase process, 1) research, 2) conference presentation, and 3) culmination into the publication, a journal article. The mentor professor, by supporting and critiquing along the way, gains a publication while teaching and encouraging the beginner.

#### *Start Simple – Build Success*

The authors always suggest to beginning faculty that they start with simple projects and progress to the more complex. This is often the best way to encourage the reluctant, beginning writer. The senior professor must clarify if publication efforts such as book reviews, highly pertinent abstracts, and shorter practitioner-versed articles are valued at his or her institution; if so, these are excellent ways for the beginner to start. The concept is similar to that which many professors teach in classrooms encouraging students to build from past experience and personal knowledge then advance into more sophisticated realms. If the senior professor can assist the beginner is attaining even a modicum of success, the publication process becomes much less intimidating.

#### *Share with the Mentee Methods to Determine Understanding of Audience Need*

Suggestions from the mentor relative to writing for specific journals will significantly improve the beginner's publication efforts. Ideas which seem so simple to the mentor are not the processes encouraged in formal dissertation development nor those used in the field; therefore, the while it may seem like common sense to the experienced writer, these brief suggestions will aid the beginner immensely. Ideas such as these might be included:

- 1) use one idea for each article,
- 2) make it clear what the article will cover, and
- 3) be aware that the reader needs to know up-front if this article meets his or her needs, i.e. a clear abstract or opening paragraph which states the overall purpose of the article.

The mentor should encourage the beginner to remember the readers' busy schedules, thereby working to provide the information quickly and succinctly, supplying a summation of the topic immediately and elaboration in the body of the article. The final suggestion for the mentor to give the mentee can never be overstated: Know your audience, know the journal editor and his or her style, and know the professional standards for the journal for which you are writing. This ensures a good match for the article, the subject area, and the audience reading this work.

#### *Building Beginners' Confidence — Slowly, Surely, Successfully*

*Rejection and revision – just a part of the process.* Most professors come to the university setting as highly competent professionals accustomed to success, not failure. When the process of writing begins, the idea of offering one's work—one's *personal* ideas—only to be rejected as unacceptable is a very uncomfortable feeling. The mentor professor's role in explaining the process to his or her



mentee is essential. If the mentor fails in this arena, the beginner may fail to understand that the rejection notice from a journal or magazine is not a personal issue. Matching the writing style, topic, and audience is the journal editor's task. It is the responsibility and privilege of the senior professor to assist the beginner in moving from the objective world of the practitioner into the somewhat subjective world of the professoriate. Nowhere is the subjectivity of the university more obvious than in the realm of professional writing, and it is one of the areas which may require significant adjustment. This is a reality that the mentor must be sure the beginner accepts *prior* to presenting his or her work for review. A statement made in jest by a senior colleague, but containing a great deal of truth suggested, "Don't take the first fifteen rejections as positive evidence that the article isn't good." She was encouraging one of her junior colleagues with excellent advice which said, "Review, revise, and re-submit to another journal with a different focus." The writing that a beginner does has value; it may just be a matter of learning the style, locating the correct audience, or finding one's voice in this new professional arena.

Senior professors should always recommend that their mentees carefully read and analyze the editor and/or reviewer's comments. In this manner, the mentor can assist the beginner in crystallizing what he or she does well, what needs to be adjusted, and how to better select a journal match. The ultimate goal in professional publication is, of course, to provide substantive information to one's audience, to find a good match for topic, and to share knowledge with the journal's readership which can then be used to benefit students (or the selected constituency) and address a specific need.

Revision of an article is a strong teaching point for many mentors. If a beginner receives a rejection letter but with an invitation for revision, the mentor has a great opportunity to enhance the beginner's publication efforts. While the revision may eventually still result in a rejection, it may also culminate in a successful publication. More importantly, it can be a learning opportunity

directly related to the publish or perish process. This is an opportunity for the mentor to explain and assist in (hopefully) turning a rejection into a publication. With critical assessment and assistance from the mentor, the article may be accepted if the revisions meet the standards requested by the journal's editorial or review board. Additionally, this is a great opportunity for the mentor to emphasize the importance of time frames; if revisions are requested, the mentor must ensure that the beginner is certain to complete those revisions in a timely fashion and return the manuscript as soon as possible (usually within one week). The beginner can be taught that the editor may be holding a spot for the article, but if the manuscript isn't returned quickly, holding that space becomes impractical. Also, the topic of the article may fit a certain series of journals, but the topic will become moot if it doesn't arrive in a timely fashion.

#### *Managing Teaching, Research, and Service*

At this juncture, two additional questions may be asked of the mentor. First, how does one manage research, writing, in review, and in press manuscripts all at one time? Second, how does one have time for committee work? The professor's answer is really rather simple—good time management and organization. A suggested process might be: 1) have one article in press, 2) have one article in review, 3) have one article upon which you are writing and, 4) have one article/research project upon which you are working. Multi-tasking is not something new to many of us in the field of higher education; this forum just presents it in a different level. The mentor/chair can assist greatly in the committee placement for the beginner. He or she can share information regarding those college and university committees that require minimal time which is important early in the beginner's career when the transition is at its most critical. The mentor can then begin to assist the beginner in moving toward the more prestigious committee work (and the more political) after the research agenda and publication standards are met. In this manner the beginner has an opportunity to learn the structure and

interaction format throughout the university program while he or she is also learning to maximize his or her teaching and scholarship skills.

In the introductory vignettes Katy and Kase were caught in this dilemma. Each individual was a valued member of their program, and each provided significant contributions to the university. Within the promotion and tenure model, however, they were being caught in a professional dilemma not of their making. The department chair or other senior mentor should have noted early on that these individuals were not being offered the opportunity to grow in the scholarship area. When a department leader, chair, or senior professor sees this occurring, it must be the professional expectation that remedy will be made. An assistant or beginning professor will not typically refuse to serve the department, college, or university, much less the larger community which often places additional demands for service. The senior faculty must prevent these occurrences from prohibiting young professors from growing and achieving in the teaching and scholarship arenas.

#### *Personal versus Professional – The Mentor's Role*

It is vital that the mentor ensure that the beginner's ego does not enter the publication process; otherwise, many outstanding contemporary authors would never have continued their publication efforts and a great deal of wisdom would have been lost. The senior professor has the responsibility to convince the beginner that one's ego should never be a part of the publication process; rather, the purpose of writing for publication should be to serve the readership and enhance knowledge in the field. Keeping this perspective in focus is crucial to successful publication.

#### **Conclusions**

Finding success in the publish or perish paradigm is vital if the beginning professor is to attain professional stature in the higher education arena. The urgency to attain peer-reviewed publications is well-documented, anecdotally, empirically, formally, and informally. Learning how to

achieve this goal, however, is not as well-established. It is critical for established faculty, the department chair, and college dean to provide support and to ensure that every effort is made in assisting the neophyte navigate the rough spots between initial attempts and ultimate success. The pool of quality candidates for the needed positions in higher education is far too small to waste even one raw talent. This waste becomes even more tragic with the realization that simple attention to these basic elements would ensure many beginning writers' success. Learning what the game is all about is the responsibility of the beginner; but the ultimate responsibility for playing the game well is truly a team effort.

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