

Angela Thody

Getting into print Advice to academic authors on how to get published

Published in 2006: *Managing Education Matters*, 9 (2): 6.

Professor Thody writes about writing for academics. This is one of her research and lecturing interests.

For more information about the author

www.angelathody.com

Professor Angela Thody, Centre for Education Research and Development

University of Lincoln, Brayford Campus, Lincoln, LN6 7TS

Phone: 01522 886071

Email: athody@lincoln.ac.uk / angelathody450@hotmail.com

Keywords: publication; academic writing;

If you a university academic wanting to spread your research, you need to get your ideas published. I'm often asked if there's a foolproof way to ensure acceptance from those important academic journals like ISEA. Well – there isn't - but there are ways to maximise your chances. Try some of these suggestions.

- ☞ See getting published as a fun hobby. It will still take over all your spare time but you'll find it more bearable.
- ☞ Use every opportunity to practise writing. Send short articles to publications like this one and its web site; test yourself on electronic journals (currently less prestigious than those in print) before you launch a full-scale assault on the major journals.
- ☞ If a seasoned academic offers to publish jointly with you, grab the offer FAST.
- ☞ Network, network, network at conferences in your subject field. Look for journal editors amongst the delegates list. Find them and seek their advice. See if anyone is doing a special issue and needs your expertise.
- ☞ Try publishing in your own country first and then branch out into journals elsewhere. Then aim at journals that include 'International' in their title.
- ☞ Twin track. Theses, research reports and case studies always produce more information than will fit into one article. Use the rest for further publications. Write separate articles on the literature or methodologies used.
- ☞ Obey the contributors' instructions exactly. These help the over-worked and poorly paid editors to smooth the way for your article into print. You may want to exceed the words allowance but DON'T. You may not want to change all your citations to Chicago style but JUST DO IT. You can usually find the instructions on line.
- ☞ Read the journal you are targeting. That way you learn to write in the style most favoured by their readership.
- ☞ Your article is 97% sure to be returned for revisions even if it is accepted (figures from the USA eminent *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 2004). Even the most venerable academics have to make changes. SO MAKE THEM. Yes – you'll feel annoyed by the comments but you'll notice a distinct improvement in your article when you've done them.

AND SO – you're in print with your first article. Enjoy the triumph for just a few minutes but then get right on with the next article. Never stop writing.

Oh – you got rejected? That was only because you submitted to an unsuitable journal so alter it to fit another journal and recycle. See you on the road.

Angela Thody's latest book on *Writing and Presenting Research* is just out (London: Sage). Angela edited the British *Management in Education*, has published ten books and over 50 articles and chapters. Now semi-retired but still happy to travel the world lecturing.