Revised Manuscript Evaluation Criteria

On this page in the November/December, 1980 issue, I listed the criteria that our Editorial Committee members then used to evaluate manuscripts. Since then, that committee revised those criteria and added a definition for each. They continue to be classified into two sets—content and readability. Here they are.

CONTENT CRITERIA
  Audience: Written primarily for Extension professionals involved in
direct programming.
  Focus: Central idea controls the entire manuscript.
  Development: Central idea is sufficiently, logically, and consistently
presented.
  Usefulness: Helps Extension professionals improve their performance.
  Importance: Makes significant contribution to the field of Extension
education.
  Documentation: Cites references as necessary.
  Innovativeness: Presents a new approach.
  Methodology: If based on research, the results are valid and reliable.

READABILITY CRITERIA
  Clarity: Uses easy-to-understand language.
  Organization: Appropriately sequences and constructs paragraphs and
sentences to support the central idea.
  Interest: Is a lively and imaginative presentation.
  Mechanics: Uses accepted standards of spelling and grammar.

The weighting of each specific criterion will vary depending on the nature of the manuscript. For example, methodology would be considered when evaluating a manuscript describing research.

It's obvious that these criteria have been developed specifically for the Journal. With minor adaptations, they should also be useful in evaluating most of our written communication.