



What *JOE* Reviewers Want in *JOE* Submissions

The *Journal of Extension (JOE)* <www.joe.org> is a refereed journal for U.S. Extension professionals. *JOE* reviewers take *JOE* submissions seriously, and they want you to do so, too. Here are some of the things *JOE* reviewers look for in articles (and some of the things they find, instead).

- **Article Quality:** *JOE* reviewers can't review your research or project, itself. They can only review what you have written about it. So ask several colleagues to read your article for clarity and correctness before you submit it. Make sure they evaluate it as a journal article. For instance, don't just submit a truncated version of your thesis. Enlist the help of at least one colleague unfamiliar with your project. Supply these colleagues with copies of the *JOE* Submission Guidelines <<http://www.joe.org/sub1.html>>.
- **Content Relevance:** Some articles are too technical or specific to be relevant to many *JOE* readers. Make your article relevant to as broad an audience of Extension professionals as possible. Answer readers' "so what?" question. Clarify how your article enhances Extension's knowledge base and/or helps U.S. Extension professionals do their jobs better. Good places to accomplish this are your introduction, implication section, and conclusion. If you can't do this, consider submitting your article to a more specialized journal.
- **Focus:** Some articles ramble because authors try to include too many ideas. Stick to one point or theme. A good way to clarify focus is to use a clear heading hierarchy.
- **Rigor:** Some authors don't follow sound sampling and statistical procedures. Don't try to make your article seem more "research based" than it is. Nobody's fooled, and unsound methodology can obscure good ideas and information.
- **Grounded Findings, Recommendations, & Conclusions:** Some authors treat personal opinions as findings or fact. Include personal opinions or values only when appropriate and necessary, make their personal nature clear, and make sure they are based on clear, sound reasoning. Also, separate your findings from your recommendations.
- **Appropriate Graphics:** Some authors include numerous photos and over-elaborate, multicolored charts and tables. This interferes with clarity and presents problems for reviewers (who receive articles for review electronically), Extension staff responsible for formatting and posting *JOE* articles, and readers trying to download articles. Include only graphics that serve an informational rather than aesthetic purpose, and keep your charts and tables as simple as possible. With graphics, less is often more.
- **Effective Titles & Abstracts:** Some titles are dull and too long, and some abstracts are exhaustive recapitulations. Write attention-getting, interesting, and to-the-point titles and abstracts.
- **Submission Guidelines:** Some authors don't follow the *JOE* Submission Guidelines <www.joe.org/sub1.html>, or they have followed an outdated version. Consult the guidelines as you write and just before you submit your article.

