

Beyond the Decision Letter: Editorial Insights for the Publication Journey

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Why Top Journals Accept Your Paper

- Straub, Detmar W. , 2009, “Why Top Journals Accept Your Paper,” MIS Quarterly, Vol 33, No. 3, pp. iii-x.
- This is an editorial paper.

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Why Top Journals Accept Your Paper

Table 2. Ten Reasons Why Top Journals Accept Your Paper

A paper is accepted at a top journal because...

Required Elements	1. Its basic idea is exciting (blue ocean strategy).
	2. Its research questions are nontrivial.
	3. It hits themes that are popular.
	4. It sufficiently uses or develops theory.
Enhancing Elements	5. It follows a recognizable formula.
	6. It covers the key literature sufficiently.
	7. It is clean (grammatically, typographically, appearance).
	8. It effectively uses or applies new methods.
	9. It does not vehemently contradict the work of major movers and shakers.
	10. It has a respectably large field sample (empirical, quantitative-positivist work).

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Avoiding Type III Errors

- Rai, Arun, 2017, "Avoiding Type III Errors: Formulating IS Research Problems that Matter," MIS Quarterly, Vol 41, No. 2, pp. iii-vii.
- This is an editorial paper.

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Avoiding Type III Errors

- Type III errors occur when a researcher answers the wrong question using the right methods.
- A lot of effort may be expended, a great deal of rigor may be applied, but coming up with the right answer to the wrong question does not create value.

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Avoid This Research Pitfall: When Reviewers Reject Your Core Topic First

- Research success hinges on getting reviewers to "buy into" your core topic/problem first.
- Avoid topics where reviewers dismiss your overall premise *before* evaluating methods (analytical models, econometrics analysis, surveys, experiments, etc.).
- If the front-end story fails to resonate, defending your research becomes an uphill battle—regardless of method quality.
- Prioritize validating your core problem/topic early to avoid wasted effort on unpersuasive research.

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Target Journal Alignment – Key Steps Before Submission

- Thoroughly research the academic journal before submission.
- Clarify the journal's **scope** and the type of articles it publishes.
- Analyze its recently published papers to understand requirements:
 - Does it emphasize theoretical contributions?
 - What standards apply to methodologies (e.g., econometrics, analytical models)?
- Cite at least several articles published in the journal – this shows basic respect for the publication.
- Never submit an unchanged manuscript that was rejected by another journal.

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How Can an Editor/Reviewer Easily Reject Your Paper

- Your paper is too short
- Your paper does not have up-to-date references
- Your literature review is not complete and comprehensive
- You do not have sufficient theory development
- Your paper's idea is too old
- Your paper has no contribution
- Your paper is not appropriate for this journal

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Avoid Critical Academic Misconduct – Self-Plagiarism & Multiple Submissions

- Never engage in **self-plagiarism**: Do not reuse substantial content from your own previously published work to create a new manuscript for submission to another journal.
- Strictly prohibit **multiple submissions**: Do not submit the same manuscript to two or more journals simultaneously.
- Such behaviors are serious cases of academic misconduct.
- Journals regularly receive alerts about multiple submissions, and violations will harm your academic reputation.

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Key to Revision Success – Respond Sincerely to Reviewers' Comments

- The top priority for revising your manuscript (after receiving a major revision) is to adopt a **sincere attitude**.
- Address every comment from reviewers – you don't have to agree with all of them, but a sincere response is mandatory.
- If you disagree with a comment, clearly and logically explain your reasoning.
- Never attempt to "cut corners" or make superficial revisions – such efforts will not lead to acceptance.
- Be willing to collect new data, conduct additional experiments, or perform further analyses as needed.
- Demonstrating sincerity throughout the revision process is the key to getting your manuscript accepted.

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Academic Publishing: Control What You Can

- Every manuscript has its unique publishing journey.
- Fortune: Open-minded SEs, supportive AEs, constructive reviewers.
- Editors/reviewers vary – feedback differs significantly (uncontrollable).
- Controllable: Manuscript quality + thorough revisions.
- Luck matters in publishing success.
- Guiding principle: Control the controllable; embrace the rest.

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Multiple Methods/Studies in Research: Value Over Quantity

- Not all research needs multiple methods/studies.
- Use multiple methods/studies only if each adds **genuine value** – avoid "methods for methods' sake."
- Many multi-method studies include redundant components that add no value.
- All articles and methods have limitations – perfection is unattainable.
- Editors (SEs/AEs) and reviewers should acknowledge this: Admitting and accepting limitations is essential.

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Prioritizing Methodological Inclusivity: Beyond Impact Factor

- As editor, I value IF – *Information & Management*: 11+ (peak) → 8.2 (current).
- Historically, Behavioral research focus (surveys/case studies) drove high citations/IF.
- Deliberate choice: Prioritize methodological inclusivity over high-IF methods.
- Welcome diverse approaches (analytical modeling, econometrics, design science, secondary data) – even with lower citations/potential IF impact.
- Strong journals need no methodological limits: Inclusivity > short-term IF gains.

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Thank You!

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