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Editorial

Facing the challenge of the desk review approval

Lidando com o desafio de ser aprovado na avaliação inicial

Dear RAUSP Management Journal readers,

Recently, RAUSP Management Journal has received many queries from potential collaborators about the determining factors for an article to be accepted for the blind-review evaluation process. These may have arisen because there is now a greater rigor in the evaluation during the desk review phase, what has led to the increased rejection of articles at the very beginning of the process.

These concerns derive from one of our journal's new policies: the desk review process now comprises three stages. The first is to check if the submission was made correctly: to verify if the authors have sent all the documents needed, according to the rules of our journal listed in our guide for authors. Of course, we also check the presence of plagiarism, which will result in the immediate rejection of the paper. The second stage is an overview evaluation performed by the editor-in-chief and co-editor. After passing this barrier, in the third stage, the article is sent to the associate editors, according to the area of knowledge and expertise on the theme of the article. Only after approval by the associate editors does the paper go out to the reviewers (carefully chosen by the associate editors), who will perform an in-depth evaluation.

This last stage is part of our current policy adopted to decentralize the decisions, reducing the concentration on the main editors and giving greater prominence to collective work, with emphasis on the work of the associate editors. This decision has taken into consideration our collaborators' expectations to have more accurate evaluations for their articles. By having a multidisciplinary body drawn from all the areas covered by RAUSP Management Journal, we can more fully appraise whether the article has the potential to continue the process or not. By doing this, we try to avoid having articles that lack potential for publication in our journal (due to several issues that we may discuss in another editorial) continue in the evaluation process for a long period before ultimately being rejected, thereby saving time and work for our reviewers and the authors themselves.

If the article is not considered for continuing along the evaluation process, the authors receive a letter with the main reasons for the rejection. Among the possible reasons, some stand out. Authors should carefully observe the RAUSP Management Journal guidelines regarding text elements, as well as graphs, figures, and tables. Moreover, our editors will ask themselves what the contribution of the article to the science is, what the key elements of the debate are, and how the idea of the article is "packed": in other words, how captivating it is. More specifically, authors should avoid vaguely-defined objectives and careless writing. An article should have a specific way-of-writing, different from dissertations, book chapters, and reports.

In this sense, more important than emphasizing "how to write an article," is to show why they are rejected. In general, we have the classic mistake of thinking "we send the article as it is now, and later, as we receive the critiques, we can fix it." This error is fatal in a desk review process like ours: the article will be rejected, promptly. Moreover, we have a policy to not accept resubmissions of articles which have been previously rejected (Elsevier, 2015).

Besides these "technical" reasons, some factors can lead the editors to reject the articles during the desk review. First, if an article does not fit the editorial line or scope of the journal. This is rarely the case for RAUSP Management Journal, given that it is a general management journal. However, sometimes authors forget this is a management journal; the article must somehow present themes related to management, or be rejected. Second, the editors will assess whether the theme is interesting, new, and relevant for management studies. Sometimes the papers are technically good but do not add anything to the field of knowledge. If an article can combine these attributes, it is more likely to attract readers and trigger more citations to the journal. The same happens with the third reason: editors will consider the impact of the article for a number of actors, not only scholars and graduate students. More and more, the social impact of the research has been emphasized. This new trend can benefit both the article and the journal, by having them cited and read outside

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the walls of the academia. As strange as it sounds, intrinsically good articles may be rejected if they do not pay attention to these criteria—adherence to the journal, research innovativeness, and potential social impact (Elsevier, 2015; Heron, 2016, Samuel, 2017; Stolowy, 2017).

Finally, if your article passes through this first and big challenge, congratulations! Otherwise, you should not quit. These setbacks are part of the learning process. Be patient and take all the important suggestions that you received into consideration, so that your next attempt at publication can be successful.

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