eon
editorial office news

Books to the Ceiling

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Do your bookshelves look like this? Books crammed into every nook and cranny, sometimes two layers deep? And these are just the shelves in my office; at home I have fourteen more shelves that have reached capacity. I used to read a poem to my children by Arnold Lobel that still runs through my mind at least once a week:

> Books to the ceiling,
> Books to the sky,
> My pile of books is a mile high.
> How I love them! How I need them!
> I'll have a long beard by the time I read them.

I definitely decorate with books. That's why being a Managing Editor and having the opportunity to work with words every day makes me so happy. What about you? How did you get your job? This month we are starting a new series of articles written by ISMTE members explaining how they ended up where they are, whether it was a straight route from an English degree or a more convoluted path that brought them somewhere unexpected. Let me know if you would like to contribute an article by emailing me at dbowman@asge.org.

Are your Author Guidelines as good as they can be? This month, Kurt Spurlock and Allison McMullen write about how to get them right the first time. Kristen Overstreet and Jason Roberts tell us about the Peer Review Congress they attended in Chicago in September. And ISMTE member Nijsje Dorman writes about her Editorial Office's email practices: How can we stay organized with the constant barrage of email we all receive?

Fall weather and earlier darkness make me want to curl up with a good book and a cup of tea. I'm hoping you will curl up with this latest issue of *EON*.

ISMTE
INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF MANAGING AND TECHNICAL EDITORS

A Few Guidelines for Author Guidelines: Helping Authors Get it Right the First Time

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At the ISMTE conference in August, panelists Brittany White and Jennifer Mahar described a journal's interactions with authors as an opportunity for customer service. We at American Journal Experts completely agree, and through our interactions with both customers and journals, we've learned that any impediment to service or publication can frustrate everyone involved. We want to help authors more effectively navigate the publication process, we want every journal to receive papers that meet its standards for quality and presentation, and we want the whole academic publishing industry to benefit from the vast amounts of time that can be saved when the right paper ends up with the right journal as quickly as possible. Any part of the process that slows down a paper's journey to publication is worth analyzing to see what, if anything, can be fixed, to everyone's benefit.

In working with thousands of our customers and in talking with some members of the ISMTE, we've seen a deceptively simple component of the author–journal interaction that nonetheless presents snags and frustrates both authors and journal managers: preparing papers according to a journal's author guidelines. Why authors sometimes struggle with or even resent what is usually one of the very last steps before submission isn't the issue here, nor is the frustration among journal staff upon encountering a particularly inventive use of font or reference style. The issue is time. Authors want submitting a paper to be easy, they want quick decisions about their papers, they want to be back in the lab working on the stuff for their next paper, and they don't want to hunt through hundreds or even thousands of words about what

their paper should look like as one last step in the grueling process of research and writing. That authors' time is valuable is at this point a truism, but a journal staff's time is incredibly valuable too, and rejecting papers at a screening step or cleaning up what the author submits takes time that can be spent on the thousand other things that go into running a journal.

How then can a journal manager make his or her author guidelines not only easy to follow but also more likely to be followed? A first step is to consider the purpose of author guidelines: creating standardization and predictability for everyone who will have his or her hands on the paper once it's submitted. Standardization and predictability, however, are just ways to save time, so author guidelines should be crafted with that in mind. Consider what's necessary, and consider what might be called a quirk or indulgence, and then consider how much time—yours and that of a vast pool of potential authors—will be required to make that quirk happen.

The second consideration is the audience, i.e., researchers. Researchers want the whole submission process to be as easy as possible. They're going to see author guidelines as a reference to consult, not as an important policy statement to pore over and absorb. A good reference is accurate and internally consistent, which means keeping the guidelines current with internal policy, ensuring that all links are live and accurate, and rooting out inconsistencies, especially those that can occur when altering a publisher's template. Vigilance on this point can prevent the confusing scenario several of our customers have encountered: a desk rejection for formatting issues even though the

guidelines, as they were shown publicly, were followed perfectly. A step beyond internal consistency is consistency among journals, especially those with the same publisher. Predictability for authors can help them meet a journal's needs at this step in the process. That's not to say that one journal's guidelines shouldn't ever differ from another's, but do weigh the benefits and costs of having requirements that are rare or even unique to your journal.

A good reference is also easy to read. Though AJE's customers typically speak English as a second (or third or fourth) language, the struggles to follow or even understand author guidelines that we've witnessed cannot be attributed to language issues alone. Even though few author guidelines are poorly written—and many are lucid, thorough, and precise—they are also often very long, and working through a wall of text is not an easy task for a researcher who isn't likely to be familiar with a journal beyond its place as a home for a paper. A rarely used solution to this problem is arranging information in a table. The examples below are just hypothetical rearrangements of part of one journal's guidelines (thanks, *Journal of Investigative Dermatology*), but they show how easily a table can compress and emphasize essential information, including the very important contact request for one article type.

The table is a great layout for a reader to take in basic information quickly, and it's also easy to change or update. Necessary details can be fleshed out elsewhere, but what's "necessary" isn't always clear. One common instance of missing information occurs when guidelines include nothing on basic elements of formatting a manuscript (e.g., fonts, headings). In one respect, indicating no preference about what could be considered matters of taste shows a great appreciation for authors' time, but a counterintuitive problem can arise: many authors expect a requirement about line spacing or margins, and finding nothing on those matters can force authors, who do want to format their papers correctly, to reread guidelines just to be sure that they didn't miss something. Including information about those small but common details, even just to say that the journal has no preference, is a much better way to let the author move on to whatever the journal considers essential. A permutation of the above scenario is the intermediate solution: no official position, just the implication of one (e.g., "Choose a standard font, for example, 10-point, Times New Roman"). If you want to make sure that you don't get 14-point comic sans, just tell authors what you'll accept. Font size and the like can be important, and caring about such details isn't petty,

Article type	Description	Word limit*	Abstract word limit	References	Figures and tables**	Total printed pages
Original Articles	Present original research.	3500	200	No limit	6	7
Letters to the Editor	Report original data, discuss published articles, or present hypotheses.	1000	None required	15	2	3
Reviews	Comprehensive, scholarly, and balanced, presenting an expert curation of the literature in the topic of interest. Please consult the Editor at xx@xx.com before submitting a Review.	3000	100	No limit	2	N/A

*The manuscript word limit excludes the abstract, references, figure legends, tables, and supplemental data.

**500 words of text may be substituted for one ¼-page figure.

Element	Description
Font	12-point, Times New Roman
Line spacing	Double spaced throughout
Margins	One inch (2.5 cm)
Page size	Letter (8 ½ x 11) inches
Page numbers	Yes; start with the title page as page 1
Line numbers	Not required
Required layout	Title page, Abstract, Introduction, Results, Discussion, Materials & Methods, Conflict of Interest, Acknowledgements, References, Tables, Figure Legends, Supplementary Material
Heading style	First level: all caps, bold; Second level: Sentence case, bold

so just be explicit about what you want, and be explicit about what doesn't matter.

In this vein, useful examples go a long way toward making author guidelines clear and easy to adopt, especially for citations and references. For author-year citations, make sure to identify how to order citations in the same set of parentheses (alphabetically or chronologically), and make sure that the examples clarify whatever you choose. Similarly, for numbered citations, stating that the citations should be numbered sequentially is a start, but options remain: Do the numbers go in brackets, parentheses, or neither? Do they belong inside or outside punctuation? Examples external to the guidelines, such as style manuals and published papers, are also great supplements, but they shouldn't replace guidelines. The important points can get lost in the mass of information in a style manual, if the author even has ready access to the right edition of the right manual, and not every author is going to have the eye for detail, or the patience, to replicate every important feature of the example paper.

None of the suggestions above will produce perfectly formatted papers every time, but experimenting with them can lead to clear, readable guidelines that will help authors achieve their basic goal upon submitting a paper: meeting the journal's expectations. Getting this step of the process right the first time will serve both authors and editors and allow everyone to spend time on the most important part of the job, whether that's doing research in the lab or preparing the next issue of the journal.

Puzzle Over It

What literary connection does the number below have to New York's famed Plaza Hotel?

351073

Answers to last month's puzzle:

1. Julia Child
2. Pablo Picasso
3. Oscar Wilde
4. Yogi Berra
5. Susan B. Anthony

Summary of the Seventh International Congress on Peer Review and Biomedical Publication

By Kristen Overstreet, Senior Partner, Origin Editorial, LLC
Jason Roberts, PhD, Senior Partner, Origin Editorial, LLC

The intent of the International Congress on Peer Review and Biomedical Publication is to "improve the quality and credibility of scientific peer review and publication and to help advance the efficiency, effectiveness, and equitability of the dissemination of biomedical information throughout the world" (www.peerreviewcongress.org). It is a lofty aim, and an important one.

This year's meeting in Chicago was well organized and well attended, attracting approximately 500 attendees, including about 30 Managing Editors. Having the opportunity to focus on the state and improvement of peer review, hearing the cutting edge research on peer review, hearing the thought leaders in the industry discuss the research, and networking with peers was beneficial to me as a Managing Editor.

So what can a Managing Editor gain from attending the Congress?

As a Managing Editor, the presentations on Sunday afternoon and a large number of the 63 displayed posters were of most interest. These focused on peer review and ethical issues and misconduct.

Presentations

Deborah Levine presented a study on behalf of her co-authors that concluded an editorial triage process can reliably identify papers that will not be successful in peer review, reducing reviewer burden ("Editorial Triage: Potential Impact." Abstract available at http://www.peerreviewcongress.org/2013/Plenary-Session-Abstracts-9-8.pdf; page 5). Based on conversations at ISMTE meetings, many of our journals struggle to find enough reviewers to meet the demands of increasing submission rates. Pre-screening papers may be a viable solution. Critically, however, it is essential the screening process is based upon appropriate designed, and properly validated, criteria and managed consistently by each of a journal's Editors assigned to this task.

Elia and colleagues, in another study, examined 88 articles that warranted retractions due to ethical concerns to determine whether they were indeed retracted and, if so, if the retractions were completed according to published guidelines. The researchers concluded that guidelines are not followed routinely and that the role of publishers in this process needs to be clarified. ("Fate of Articles That Warranted Retraction Due to Ethical Concerns: A Descriptive Cross-sectional Study," Abstract available at http://www.peerreviewcongress.org/2013/Plenary-Session-Abstracts-9-8.pdf; page 8).

"Implementation of Plagiarism Screening for the PLOS Journals" was presented by Elizabeth Flavall on behalf of her co-authors. This particular research team studied "…the quantity of submitted manuscripts with potential plagiarism issues along with the staffing requirements and optimal procedures for implementing plagiarism screening…" They found that staff spent an average of 7 minutes (range 2-60 minutes) screening each manuscript and most papers with major issues of plagiarism were rejected for reasons not related to plagiarism. Despite the apparent burden upon staff, the study authors recommended that plagiarism screening be implemented for the PLOS journals. (Abstract available at http://www.peerreviewcongress.org/2013/Plenary-Session-Abstracts-9-8.pdf; page 9).

Former ISMTE Board of Directors member, Irene Hames, presented on behalf of her co-authors a study of "Publication Ethics: 16 Years of COPE." They developed a new taxonomy to assign classification categories and keywords to cases brought before the COPE committee for discussion and advice. These researchers found that "cases in a number of categories are increasing" and cases are becoming more complex. (Abstract available at http://www.peerreviewcongress.org/2013/Plenary-Session-Abstracts-9-8.pdf; page 10).

Posters

There were many extremely informative posters presented, several of which were able to translate an academic research question in to practical strategies, or at least present outcomes that possibly merit further consideration from those that engage in peer review management. I have listed a few of my favorites below, and you can find the abstracts here: http://www.peerreviewcongress.org/2013/Poster-Session-Abstracts.pdf

Ethics in Practice: Improvements in Ethical Policies and Practices in Wiley Health Science Journals Following a 2-stage Audit Cycle

Chris Graf, Alice Meadows, Allen Stevens, Elizabeth Wager

Authors' Awareness of Publication Ethics: An International Survey

Sara Schroter, Jason Roberts, Elizabeth Loder, Donald B. Penzien, Sarah Davies, Timothy T. Houle

Facilitating Rapid Peer Review: A Study of *PLOS ONE* Reviewer Timing

Rachel Bernstein, Krista Hoff, Emma Dupin, Damian Pattinson

Effect of Training Workshop on Quality of Students' Peer Reviewing of Research Abstracts: A One-Arm Self-Control Educational Intervention

Seyed-Mohammad Fereshtehnejad, Hamid Reza Baradaran, Maziar Moradi Lakeh

Systematic Review of the Effectiveness of Training Programs in Writing for Scholarly Publication, Journal Editing, and Manuscript Peer Review

James Galipeau, David Moher, D. William Cameron, Craig Campbell, Paul Hebert, Paul Hendry, Anita Palepu, Becky Skidmore

A Comparison of the Quality of the Reviewer Reports From Author-Suggested Reviewers and Non-Author Suggested Reviewers in Journals Operating on Open or Closed Peer Review Models

Maria K. Kowalczuk, Frank Dudbridge, Shreeya Nanda, Stephanie Harriman, Elizabeth C. Moylan

Are Reviewers' Scores Influenced by Citations to Their Own Work? An Analysis of Submitted Manuscripts and Review Reports

David L. Schriger, Samantha P. Kadera, Mickey M. Murano, Erik von Elm

Laboratory Investigation Editorial Internships: Peer Review Opportunities for Young Investigators

Catherine M. Ketcham, Robert W. Hardy, Brian P. Rubin, Gene P. Siegal

Overall Impressions

The content of future congresses would be strengthened by a focus on the global topic of peer review, making biomedical publication a subtheme. I heard grumblings throughout the meeting from those in other disciplines about the narrowness of the biomedical-specific interpretations and focus. Many of the themes discussed and topics to research are translatable to all fields of scholarly publishing, and it seems a shame to limit the focus to just one.

Editorial Office staff would benefit from a sister conference dedicated to the implementation of the findings shared at the Congress. How do we implement plagiarism screening for our journals? How do we ensure articles are retracted according to established guidelines? How do we improve ethical practices and policies for our journals? How can we help facilitate rapid, but high quality, peer review? How can we educate new peer reviewers? The Congress displays what's new in peer review and helps identify the standards we should all aspire to, but it's the *how* we achieve these standards that is our area of expertise. Essentially, what is needed is a meeting to consider how to translate all this research into practice.

Background

The International Congress on Peer Review and Biomedical Publication has been held every 4 years since 1989. It has been hosted in Chicago four times, including this year, September 8-10, and in Prague, Barcelona, and Vancouver. The dates and location for the next Congress have not been announced. The Congress organizers include *JAMA* and *BMJ,* specifically Drummond Rennie from JAMA who has been the Congress Director since 1989.

Future paper

In the next issue of *EON,* Jason will discuss the reporting guidelines research and workshop presented at this year's Congress.

A Lot of Funny (and Not So Funny) Things Happened On My Way to a Career....

Deborah Bowman, MFA
Managing Editor,
GIE: Gastrointestinal Endoscopy

I am sometimes asked how I got my position as Managing Editor. My road was rather circuitous; it included a BA in English Education, a marriage, two children, a divorce, another marriage, another child, another divorce, an MFA degree, and lots of scrambling in between to make ends meet. On my way to becoming a Managing Editor, I was a waitress, church organist, nurses' aide, stay-at-home mother, La Leche League Leader, bank teller, telephone solicitor, daycare worker, purchasing agent, YMCA Nautilus instructor, and substitute teacher.

I always knew I wanted to do something with language, though, ever since I discovered books and writing when I was a little girl growing up on a farm. I figured my path would be teaching English…until I actually tried teaching. Teaching was fun; maintaining discipline in the classroom, not so much. Finally I went back to college for my MFA degree in writing and worked in the college's Women's and Gender Studies Department, a position that was SO much fun, but didn't pay very well. After I got my MFA, I went out to look for a job where I could use my copyediting skills. I got two offers: one from a small insurance company that wanted someone to type and edit letters, and the other from Mosby Medical Publishing, whose managers only had an opening in their log-in department but who swore I'd have a good shot at a Journal Editor position as soon as one opened up. The insurance company manager tried to convince me to come with them by saying, "Would you rather be a small fish in a big pond or a big fish in a small pond?" I decided there was a third choice: I wanted to try for big fish in a big pond, so I accepted Mosby's offer.

After just a couple of months, I was promoted to Journal Editor (what Elsevier now calls Issue Managers) and then, a couple of years later, to Department Manager. About that time, Elsevier bought Mosby. We viewed this with great apprehension; was it good news or bad news? Turns out—bad news, at least for the St. Louis Journals Department. I'll never forget the January day that the suits from New York and Philadelphia came to St. Louis to tell us they were closing the St. Louis Journals Department and we were all being laid off. We all left that meeting feeling stunned, wondering what the future held for each of us. The good news was that they were laying us off in a staggered fashion over the coming year, and the three Department Managers didn't have to leave until the end of the year. That meant I had a full year to find a new job.

In July of that year (2005), the Managing Editor of one of our journals, *Gastrointestinal Endoscopy*, decided to quit, and I immediately applied. I had several points in my favor: (1) I had worked on *GIE* as the Journal Editor and then as the Manager of the Journal Editor for several years, so I knew the journal and had even met the Editor-in-Chief when he came to the St. Louis office to meet with the Publisher, (2) I was familiar with the online submission system, which was still fairly new at the time, because the man in the office next to mine had helped to develop and promote it, and (3) I had recommendations from actual people in publishing. Working against me was the fact that the Society office was located in Chicago and I wanted to stay in St. Louis. I am forever grateful to the ASGE's Chief Executive Officer for taking a chance on having a remote Managing Editor.

I am the living proof that what feels like devastating news at the time (Elsevier closing the St. Louis Journals Department) can turn out to be the best thing that could happen to a person. I love my job as Managing Editor. How about you? Do you have a story to share about how your career developed? Share it with us by emailing me at dbowman@asge.org.

I am often surprised, when I talk with Managing Editors and Editorial Assistants, by the variety of ways people made their way to those positions. Some traveled a direct route; others set out to do something else entirely and stumbled into publishing almost like an afterthought. Below is my experience; what path did you take? Share your story with EON readers. Email me at dbowman@asge.org.

Whistling in the Dark

Remember When...? One Journal's Email Archiving Solution
Nijsje Dorman
Managing Editor, *American Journal of Kidney Diseases*

Apart from the manuscript handling system, the software that houses the bulk of an Editorial Office's records is likely to be an email application. Accessing this information can help staff find precedents for dealing with prickly situations, produce a paper trail if questions are raised about a manuscript, or deal with the inevitable "didn't we discuss this issue with someone at Mayo in 2003?" questions of which editors are so fond. Unfortunately, for those of us sited at medical or academic institutions, IT departments usually aren't attuned to these sorts of needs, and the default email archiving process falls short. Here, I describe how our nontechie office found a simple and workable email archive solution.

Our office email setup is, I expect, typical: each of the 3 onsite staff members has 2 Outlook mailboxes perpetually open, one for our own institutional email address, and another a shared mailbox that gives authors, reviewers, and editors a single email point of contact with the journal. We conduct all our editorial correspondence within the journal mailbox, and thanks to Microsoft Exchange server, we all see exactly the same folder arrangement and can access any message, no matter who sent it. All is well until we hit our mailbox quota, which happens at least once per month, even though we recently wheedled 790 MB of storage out of our IT department (from a measly 50 MB to start!).

Outlook users will be familiar with moving emails off the Exchange server into local PST (personal storage table) files. Microsoft clearly sees PST as offline files; consistent with this, in our experience only one user can open a PST file at a time, and housing the PST files on a network shared drive invites corruption. Since we couldn't share the PSTs, I ended up being keeper of these files, but it didn't take long for all of us to find that going through me to look up an archived email was clumsy and inefficient.

I considered switching to a Gmail or GMX email address, so that we could take advantage of these services' much more generous online storage. However, our institution blocked access to these mail servers through Outlook. I briefly looked into hosted Exchange (companies such as 1&1 will provide subscription-based email and online storage services), but I wanted to find a more economical solution. For a while, I thought that porting the email into Mozilla Thunderbird local folders would do the trick, since we could open up this alternative email application in offline mode to view the archives. Despite the appeal of being platform independent (it has Windows, Mac, and Linux versions), Thunderbird proved impractically slow for manipulating local folders, perhaps because of the large size/number of folders in our archive.

After these false starts, I eventually discovered that all I needed was an email conversion program to export PST files into a more cloud-friendly format. After reading some online reviews, I selected Aid4Mail Professional ($60 for an initial 1-year
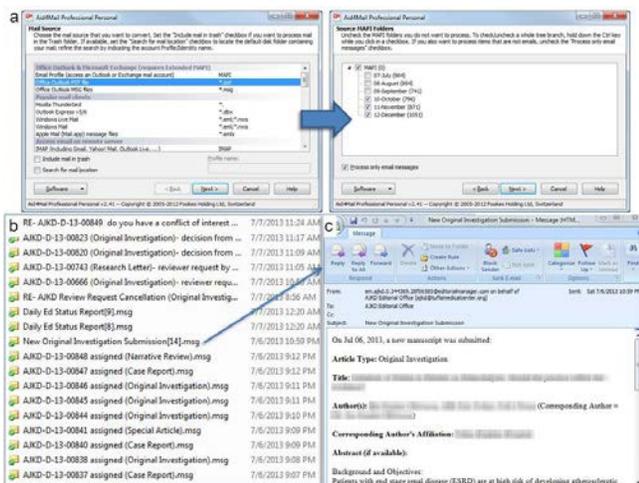

Figure 1. Aid4Mail workflow and output.

subscription, $30 per annum thereafter) and have found it works well for us. The process is simple: I choose the PST file I want to export and decide whether to process all or selected folders (Fig 1a). I then opt for Microsoft MSG files as the output, and ask Aid4Mail to restore the source email folder structure and preserve the full message, including attachments. The result is a file folder organized exactly like the original PST, with the individual messages named according to the subject line of the message (with numbers appended if there are multiple messages sharing a subject line), and the file date corresponding to the date the email was sent or received (Fig 1b). Clicking on an MSG file will open it right up in Outlook (Fig 1c); assuming that the full message option was selected, attachments can be opened directly from the message. Best of all, since I save the Aid4Mail output into our office's Dropbox folder, any member of our staff can search and access the entire email archive.

A few caveats are worth noting. First, because the archived message opens up in Outlook, it can be tempting to forward it or reply directly. However, this will change the file date, so the message will be out of order when sorting the archive folder by date. To avoid this, we've taken to copying/pasting the text in the message if we need to transfer the information. Also, the archive takes up nearly as much space as the original PST files, so it may require a paid Dropbox account (our archive spanning 7 years' worth of emails has 215,000+ files and takes up about 17.6 GB, which is nearly the whole of the free allotment offered by Dropbox at the time of writing).

Of concern to some users might be the output in MSG format, since this file type is particular to Microsoft Outlook running on Windows (it was a surprise to me that Outlook for Mac 2011 can't open up MSG files from its Windows cousin). However, Aid4Mail offers many other output options, from generic mail formats such as MBOX, to PDF, to MHTML versions that can open natively in Internet Explorer (extensions may allow viewing in other browsers). For fans of the powerful desktop search software dtSearch (pricey at $200, but well worth it to me after some disappointing experiences with Windows 7 Search), it bears mentioning that MSG files are fully indexed

by this text retrieval system, and the results can be viewed (albeit with minor formatting loss) directly in the program (Fig 2).

Despite the simplicity of the Aid4Mail workflow, there is some hands-on effort. Approximately once per month, I archive email folders from the shared mailbox to my locally saved PST files (based on anecdotal warnings from my institution's IT, I keep each PST under 500 MB, though according to Microsoft, these files can be 20-50 GB, depending on the Outlook version). Then I select the newly archived folders and run them through Aid4Mail. While conversion rarely takes more than a couple of minutes, batch processing is not available in the Professional version of Aid4Mail, so archiving of each PST (or subset of folders within a PST) has to be launched manually. I find that saving directly to Dropbox does not slow the process noticeably, but it does take a while for Dropbox to sync those messages. Dropbox users should also be aware that changing the folder name of the archive seems to trigger a resync of all the folders/files within, which can be a few-hour process if there are several tens of thousands of emails.

No doubt a more technically savvy user could find a more elegant solution, but for the purposes of our office, the Aid4Mail-created MSG archive is simple, robust, and useful. It's also a bit of insurance in case anything goes amiss with the original PSTs. Best of all, it gives us the confidence to know that whenever an Editor asks us about some email chain from the distant past, it's right there on the cloud, and retrieving the messages is just a few clicks away.
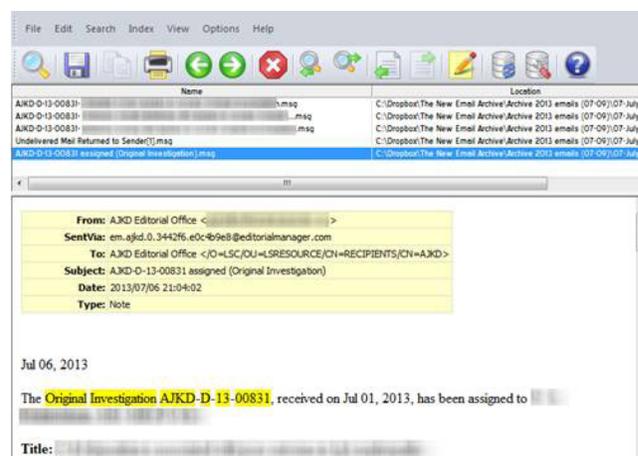

Figure 2. dtSearch of Aid4Mail-archived messages.

Truths Universally Acknowledged: Book Review

Four–step Process to Make Better Decisions

Meghan McDevitt

Editorial Assistant, *Gastrointestinal Endoscopy*

The third book by brothers Chip and Dan Heath, *Decisive: How to Make Better Choices in Life and Work*, offers new strategies and practical tips on making better decisions. Using pertinent decision-making literature, applicable case studies, and their own observations, the Heath's present a four-step process to help you make better choices. They dub this process WRAP—**W**iden Your Options; **R**eality-Test Your Assumptions; **A**ttain Distance Before Deciding; **P**repare to Be Wrong.

Widen Your Options

The Heath's first recommendation is to avoid a narrow frame of mind. Too often, we make "this OR that" decisions instead of asking ourselves "Could we do this AND that?" forcing us to see our decisions in binary terms. Instead, focus on widening your perspective in order to find more options. To help widen your view, they introduce the Vanishing Options Test—tell yourself that you *cannot* choose any of the current options you're considering. What else can you do? The Heath's relate that when people imagine they cannot have an option, they are forced to consider other choices, thus widening their options and helping to make better decisions.

Reality-Test Your Assumptions

To test your assumptions, the Heath's delve into one of decision-making's biggest enemies: confirmation bias. We generally hunt for information that confirms our initial assumptions, which for the most part, are self-serving. It is important to thoroughly analyze our decisions by gathering information, even if the research disconfirms what we initially think is right. The Heath's offer two ways to help analyze your options: Zoom Out, Zoom In and Ooch. We must consider both an "inside view," which spotlights our own impressions and assessments of the situation we're in and the "outside view," a summary of real-world experiences, rather than a single person's impressions.

They introduce the concept of "ooching" as a way to test our theories rather than jumping in head first. For example, a student deciding on what career to pursue might ooch by job shadowing or completing an internship to see if a certain career path is the right one.

Attain Distance Before Deciding

Human emotions can get in the way of making an important decision and it is necessary to attain distance so as not to lose perspective. Sleeping on a decision is a good way to create distance, but sometimes a decision needs strategy. The Heath brothers recommend downplaying short-term emotion in favor of long-term results by following the 10/10/10 rule. This requires you to think about your decision in different time frames: How will you feel about your decision 10 minutes from now? How about 10 months from now? And how about 10 years from now? This way of thinking can help keep our short-term emotions in check, enabling us to make better choices.
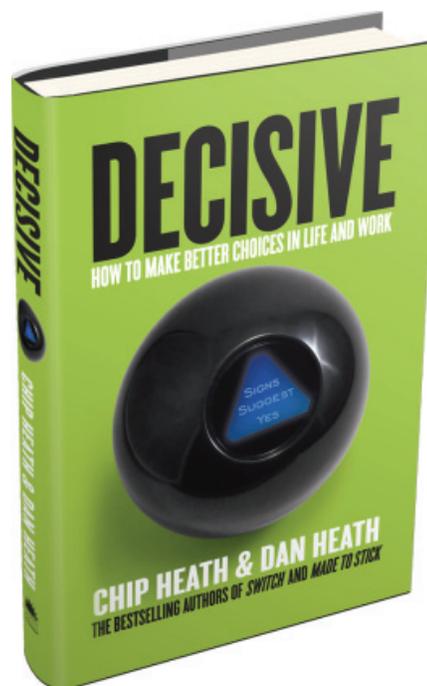
Prepare to Be Wrong

Another villain of decision making is overconfidence—people think they know more than they do about how the future will unfold. To compensate for this, the Heath brothers provide two solutions: Bookending the Future and creating a tripwire. Instead of thinking of the future as a specific scenario we must predict, consider the future in terms of a range of outcomes from very bad to very good. Prepare for both sides of the spectrum by anticipating problems and considering how you might react to different situations. We make many daily decisions on autopilot but setting tripwires can help jolt us to reconsider a decision or make a new one. Tripwires provide a realization that we have a choice to make.

Dan and Chip Heath do not guarantee that the WRAP process results in a perfect decision every time, but they hope that by using the WRAP process, one will have considered all available options, reviewed the facts, and make a smart decision. By shifting perspectives, considering all outcomes, and going against confirmation bias, we can escape the cycle of agonizing over decisions and make better choices.

Literary Tipplers

Sometimes writers drink. Are you shocked? Of course not. Here are some examples.

Ring Lardner was sitting at a bar on evening when a flamboyant actor with a wild mane of hair walked in. Eyeing him up and down, Lardner said, "Tell me, how do you look when I'm sober?"

Samuel Johnson was once reputed to have drunk 36 glasses of port during the course of an evening.

Lord Byron once drank burgundy from a human skull.

Edgar Allan Poe was an alcoholic and a laudanum addict, but he still joined the local Temperance Society and lectured others on the evils of the demon drink.

Dylan Thomas often, when drinking, got down on all fours and barked like a dog. Once day in a hotel he pretended he was rabid, chasing guests around the lobby, nipping at their feet. He finally stopped when he went outside and chipped a tooth on a lamppost.

NEW FORMAT FOR RTP LOCAL GROUP: 21 NOVEMBER

We are delighted to announce a meeting of the RTP Local Group that is a bit different than our previous get-togethers. Research Square in Durham, NC (the company that owns Rubriq and American Journal Experts) has kindly agreed to host our lunch meeting at their new offices in downtown Durham (601 West Main St., Ste. 102, Durham, NC 27701). Keith Collier, VP, Business Development at Research Square will give a short presentation on the "Future of Peer Review" on November 21st at 11.30am. Following that seminar, lunch will be provided courtesy of Research Square with us finishing at 1.30pm. We hope this will give us a different opportunity to socialize and network with ISMTE members (or future members!)

If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Jan Higgins at gim@acmg.net so we can estimate numbers for lunch.

Charting Chuckles

Healthcare professionals aren't English majors, and sometimes their charted notes aren't exactly grammatical…or even logical. These bloopers are taken from actual medical records.

Patient has chest pain if she lies on her left side for over a year.

By the time she got to the hospital, her rapid heart had stopped and she was feeling much better.

On the second day, the knee was better, and on the third day, it had completely disappeared.

She is numb from her toes down.

When she fainted, her eyes rolled around the room.

Rectal exam revealed a normal-sized thyroid.

She stated she had been constipated most of her life until 1989, when she got a divorce.

Patient complains of indigestion since last night when he ate a stake.

Patient was seen in consultation by the physician, who felt we should sit tight on the abdomen and I agreed.

Discharge status: Alive, but without permission.

Examination of the genitalia reveals he is circus sized.

The baby was delivered, the cord clamped, and handed to the pediatrician, who breathed and cried immediately.

Because she can't get pregnant with her husband, I thought you might like to work her up.

She has no rigors or shaking chills, but her husband states she was very hot in bed last night.

The patient lives at home with his mother, father, and a pet turtle, who is presently enrolled in day care three times a week.

Patient was in his usual state of health until his airplane ran out of gas and crashed.

Calendar of Events

The Future of Peer Review
November 12, 2013
London, England
http://www.alpsp.org

Understanding eJournal Technology
November 13, 2013
Oxford, England
http://www.alpsp.org

Getting the Most from Journal Publicity
November 20, 2013
London, England
http://www.alpsp.org

RTP Local Group
November 21, 2013
Durham, North Carolina
gim@acmg.net

Advanced Journal Development: Strategic
Development for Journal Managers
December 4, 2013
London, England
http://www.alpsp.org

Editorial Manager User Group Meeting
January 17, 2014
London, England
http://www.editorialmanager.com/
homepage/conferences.html

Publication Ethics: Fraud & Misconduct
February 12, 2014
London, England
http://www.alpsp.org

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A note on English: ISMTE *aims to be a truly international society. English will represent our lingua franca, but we would like to stress that, in materials published in* EON *or online, variations in idiomatic usage and spelling should reflect the origins of the author. No one version of English is preferred over the other.*

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