Ways to Recognize and Retain Good Reviewers

Detra Davis, MS, Managing Editor, American Academy of Dermatology, Rosemont, IL

Objectives

- Inform Managing Editors how to retain good reviewers;
- Reduce Reviewer fatigue; and
- Acknowledge top reviewers

Purpose

The purpose of the research was to determine if reviewers would review more if they were recognized for their service to my journal.

Background

In 2015, I started a program to recognize our reviewers:

- Send letters of acknowledgement to the reviewer’s Chairperson informing them that their employee was one of the top 30 reviewers for our journal who did the most reviews within one calendar year.
- Send thank you letters to the reviewers informing them they were top reviewers for the journal.
- Send promotional items to the top reviewers.
- Acknowledge the top reviewers if your organization has an annual award ceremony each year.

Ways to recognize all reviewers:

- Offer CME credit for peer review.
- Publish each reviewer’s name in the journal of the last issue of your publication thanking them for their service each year.
- If it is in your budget, have a reviewer reception at your annual meeting to thank reviewers.
- Thank each reviewer individually by placing the thank you letter on letterhead and sending the letter out via email.
- Give reviewers a short break from reviewing for your journal (30 days or less).
- Display reviewers names on the wall at the annual conference each year thanking them for their service.

To reduce reviewer fatigue:

Consider starting a Peer Review Mentorship Program. We started one in 2014. This program teaches new members of the field how to peer review. Once you have the new members trained they can be added to your reviewer pool.

Results

REVIEWS PER YEAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reviews</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
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Conclusion

I took our top 30 reviewers over the past 4 years. Their reviews averaged approximately 10 reviews per year in 2015. After receiving reviewer recognition, our top 30 performing reviewers were averaging 17 reviews per year. In this study, reviewer recognition increased reviewer activity and reviewers looked forward to receiving recognition the following year. The reviewer program was effective.