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CPD & Writing for the professional literature

Nick Joint
Editor, Library Review
Head of Reference and Information
Strathclyde University Library
n.c.joint@strath.ac.uk

IFLA CPDWL; Satellite Meeting, Oslo, Norway, 2005
Outline

• Link between writing and professional development
  – Insight.
  – Career prospects.
• Tips on how to approach writing.
• Types of writing.
• Where to publish?
Sources:

1) Nick Joint
“Writing for publication in a library journal”
SCONUL Newsletter - Number 28
Spring 2003 pp. 61-66.

2) Ideas from Linda Ashcroft, editor
New Library World.
CPD, writing and publication (1)

- Becoming a ‘Reflective practitioner’
  - you think about your practice by writing about your practice.
- Idea of ‘Reflection’:
  - Writing as a form of creative dialogue with yourself
Reflection involves cultivating:

- “the desire to understand your practice in a new and compelling way”

- “the need to pin down a truth about your practice and thus clarify an issue for yourself and the community of practice”
CPD, writing and publication (3)

• Connect with your ‘community of practice’
  - Writing as dialogue with other professionals

• Putting your practice ‘on display’
  - means shaping your work more, thus improving your professional development.

IFLA CPDWL; Satellite Meeting, Oslo, Norway, 2005
CPD, writing and publication (3)

• Writing and career development:
  – Your material is disseminated across a wide audience.
  – You lay claim to your achievements.
  – You gain recognition for your work.
  – You build your reputation and develop your career.
Think: what have you achieved (1)?

- Have you completed a project which concluded satisfactorily?
- Do you have a case study of good practice?
- Have you worked in an advisory or consultancy capacity?
- Have you undertaken a piece of research?
- Are you working on a doctoral or masters thesis?
- Have you given a speech or conference paper?
- Do you have an opinion or observation on a topical issue?

(Thanks to Linda Ashcroft, Editor, New Library World)
What have you achieved (2)?

If you find these questions hard to answer, then this is a spur to improving your professional development!
What have you achieved (3)?

- “The ability to write is a sign of good practice…"
- “If you spurn the challenge of authorship, you may also be spurning the challenge of improving your professional development.”
Which type of journal?

- Before writing decide which journal is most relevant for your topic
- Difference between
  - Research journals
  - Practitioner publications
  - “Practitioner research” journals
Journal quality criteria

- Highly cited journals:
  - High academic prestige, better for *researchers*
- Journals with wide readership:
  - Arguably better for *practitioners*, especially for CPD point of view.
- Ideal of practitioner research:
  - Highly *cited* and *widely read*!
Types of writing

Research - Impact

• Refereed articles
  - research reports (experiment)
  - case studies (before and after)
  - review articles (literature-based)

• Feature articles (descriptive)

• Commentary/opinion pieces (subjective)

• Conference reports

• Reviews - of books or electronic resources

Practice - Visibility
Outlets for publishing (1)

- Emerald has a very wide range of library and information journals
- Mix of *practitioner* and *research journals*
- *Refereeing process*
- As well as hard copy journals, articles are available electronically via the Emerald database
  - *which means very wide international dissemination*
Outlets for publishing (2)

- Professional association journals
  - Eg National Library Association - Prestige plus circulation to all association members: UK, CILIP Library + Information UPDATE.
- Journals of other professional societies
  - Prestige plus access to members of the society: UK SCONUL FOCUS/Newsletter.
- Perhaps less emphasis on refereeing process
Library Review
http://www.emeraldinsight.com/lr.htm

• "links researchers, educators and library professionals"

• No pure research, refereed articles, viewpoint articles, book reviews (3 issues open access next week)

• Editorial objectives:

  ...editorial links with the Centre for Digital Library Research at Strathclyde University.
New Library World
http://www.emeraldinsight.com/nlw.htm

- "charting new developments for the information profession"
- refereed articles, feature articles, conference reports, book reviews
Library Hi Tech News
http://www.emeraldinsight.com/lhtn.htm

- much more a news and alerting focus
- shorter feature articles, conference reports, regular columns
Getting started with writing

Nick Joint

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