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**PARTNERSHIPS FOR PUBLISHING:
A NEW LOOK AT JOINT WRITING PROJECTS**

Henry R. Lehrer, Ph.D.

The need to "publish or perish" is a long and established tradition in college and universities in this country as well as abroad. For better or, in many cases, for worse, manuscripts are submitted for possible review and publishing in journals, newsletters, magazines, or any other well-accepted vehicle. The need to publish on collegiate campuses is a part of the promotion, tenure, and merit system which will probably change little in the future. However, what I would like to suggest to you is a slight variation on the publish or perish methodology which I have called "partnerships for publishing." Perhaps a short story will help your better understand what I have in mind.

I was the moderator of a "soap box" presentation at the Fall meeting of the University Aviation Association last year in Atlanta, and a truly exciting thing happened to me. For those of you that may not be familiar with a soap box presentation, it is a short speech about a subject that the author is interested in and may in the future develop into a more formal written paper. Each speaker has about 10 minutes to present his/her views, and a short question and answer session follows.

What happened was that one of the speakers was a high school teacher from Bakersfield, California, who taught a pilot ground school and an aerospace education class. Her name was Pat Church, and her presentation was about the career awareness project she had developed and used with her students. Pat asked each student in her class who was about to graduate whether he/she had considered a career in aviation or aerospace. What she found was that her students had little knowledge of what career opportunities were available. Furthermore, had the opportunities in aviation and aerospace been better known, many students would have chosen one of these fields.

Pat's findings are not necessarily new knowledge or earth shattering, but when I asked whether she had considered publishing her findings along with information about the survey instrument she used, she said she had not

considered it. I asked why not, and she said she was not sure how to proceed and since she had not been to graduate school, her writing skills were a bit rusty. We talked a little longer, and I promised to keep in touch. I am sorry I did not follow up on the contact, but I will in the near future. However, I did say to Pat that perhaps she should consider contacting a faculty member at the university she graduated from and perhaps form a partnership with that individual. They could jointly write about her experiences. Ladies and gentlemen, here is an idea that is ripe, in need of sharing with aviation and aerospace educators everywhere, and is what I'd like to talk to you about for a few minutes today.

As I mentioned previously, the "publish or perish syndrome" is alive and well at most colleges and universities. However, many fresh, innovative, and exciting ideas about aviation and aerospace education are dying for lack of a writer. The information we should be sharing with each other is in someone's mind and not on paper; this nation's young people in Sandusky, Ohio; St. Petersburg, Florida; and Newport, Oregon; need to know what you have to tell. Let me suggest two sets of things to do, or for lack of a better description (and I borrow liberally from my curriculum development courses) the Intended Publishing Outcomes or IPOs.

The first IPO is to get your ideas on paper. This may be a little frightening, but I've always tended to use a six-step approach and it may work for you. The six rather generic steps are to (a) select an idea, (b) outline your idea, (c) review the related literature, (d) adopt a formal writing style, (e) put your ideas on paper, and (f) edit, edit, edit. Let's look at each of these a little more closely.

The initial step in writing is to choose a topic. Remember, you are the subject matter specialist, and above all, you are the "expert in the field." Write about what you know best: your students, classroom activities that relate to aviation and aerospace, new and innovative curriculum programs, or just about anything that needs to be shared.

Once an idea begins to take shape, the old outline formula that we all learned so many years ago in Miss Schweinfurth's English class still works: sketch your ideas in outline form, and usually an internal logic for the order of a

writing piece starts to become clear. Also, you will be able to see if there are any obvious gaps in the outline.

Next on the list is a trip to the library. I am happy to tell you that, with the magic of data processing, the tedious hours spent searching through the card catalogue, various reference systems, and volumes of cross-reference sources is less painful than it used to be. Reference librarians are helpful with a wealth of information; making a good contact with the person behind the desk is extremely important. What you need to do is see if anyone has an idea closely related to yours and if so, what do they have to say that can support, modify, and perhaps enhance your work.

As far as adopting a formal writing style supported by a manual is concerned, there is little difference in any of them concerning questions of grammar. However, in questions of style, you will answer several questions about citations, reference lists, or any of the "nuts and bolts" items involved in preparing a manuscript for publication. Most educational and social science journals that I am familiar with use the Publications Manual of the American Psychological Association (the APA Manual). Some publications use the Chicago Manual of Style, while other journals have a style manual prepared specifically for their journals. If in doubt, ask the editor.

The last two steps are probably the most frustrating. Getting your ideas on paper and the editing process are difficult and challenging. Remember, there is nothing as exciting as seeing your name in print. I like to work at the computer screen. I gave up on the long, yellow legal pads a number of years ago. However, if you don't have a computer with word processing available, there may be a machine at school you could use or even check out for the weekend. Remember, sometime in this process you may wish to have someone else look at your work and give you an unbiased opinion. This brings me to the other major component of this process, the IPO for the partnership.

College and university faculty members have to write for a living and in many cases are quite good at it. This writing may be in the form of a research grants proposal, an article for publications, or a textbook. With this in mind, what you need to look for is a college or university faculty member who might like to form a partnership for writing. The express purpose of this partnership is

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to use the synergism of your ideas and their writing skills or vice-versa to produce a manuscript. Ladies and gentlemen, this is a win-win situation. Your fresh ideas, combined with the writing skill of someone with a proven track record of publication, can result in a whole much stronger than the individual parts.

The idea of publish or perish is accepted by those of us in academe, but the need to write has been felt little in the secondary or elementary school arena. However, the need to share our ideas with colleagues at all levels has become more important than ever before in the history of aviation and aerospace education. This is not a new idea but merely a reaffirmation of an old need. Perhaps this notion was captured best by Daniel Coit Gilman, the president of Johns Hopkins University, over 100 years ago when he said "It is one of the noblest duties of [an educational institution] to advance knowledge, and diffuse it not merely among those who can attend the daily lectures, but far and wide."