

# Who should be an editor?

*Muhammad Aslam \* Ph.D, FCPS*

Many individuals who become editors of medical journals have established scientific reputations as investigators and authors. Furthermore, they have probably served as reviewers and editorial board members. However, they may be unaware of many of the responsibilities and duties of editors and many aspects of the editorial process. This manuscript aims at assisting both potential editors in assessing an opportunity to be an editor and newly appointed editors as they prepare to assume the responsibility of editorship. The following criteria put together perhaps provide answer to the question i.e who should be an editor?

Any individual can be entitled to become an editor:-

- \* Who has inborn quality of curiosity
- \* Who possesses a kind of empathy, a bond with the reader
- \* Who is self-confident and strong enough not to be swayed
- \* Who is fearless whether dealing with pushy advertisers, pressurizing publishers, many-hungry investment bankers or his own staff
- \* Who has stamina to fill the grinding demands of the job.
- \* Who can learn about the needs and interests of the readers.
- \* Who can formulate policies for authorship and submission of manuscripts
- \* Who can formulate the process of evaluation and reviewing of the manuscripts
- \* Who can take the responsibility of the editorial contents (subject matter) of the journal
- \* Who can maintain the integrity and confidentiality of authors work
- \* Who can safeguard the rights of study subjects and animals
- \* Who can make decision and stand behind them but willing to reconsider whenever appropriate
- \* Who can work to improve the quality of research in the field.

---

\* Managing Editor, Pakistan Armed Forces Medical Journal (PAFMJ)  
Army Medical College, Rawalpindi, Pakistan. E-mail: maslam@nust.edu.pk

- \* Who is prepared to deal with error and allegations of misbehavior
- \* Who can plan for the future of the journal.
- \* Who can coordinate the training of the staff.
- \* Who can call and preside meetings of editorial board
- \* Who can ensure editorial freedom
- \* Who can serve as liaison between administration, faculty and the Law review forum
- \* Who cannot be misled with personal, financial or other relationship
- \* Who can handle academic or disciplinary problems
- \* Who has the authority to independently conduct editorial board business
- \* Who can surround oneself with people more knowledgeable and more talented
- \* Who has the capability to be a mentor
- \* The editor himself doesn't need to be an outstanding writer.

If one is a real editor, one serves as a teacher and a role model. Many staff members try to emulate him. They may even employ some of the lessons, principles and practices. However, often the combination of all such qualities becomes unexplorable.

## REFERENCES

1. Marshall Loeb, Qualities of successful editors. CJR Jan/Feb 2000 back issues [cjrarchives.org/year/00/1/10eb.asp](http://cjrarchives.org/year/00/1/10eb.asp)
2. Robert D, Uriger MD, A syllabus for prospective and newly appointed editor, 2005: <http://www.wame.org/syllabus.htm>
3. ACS Publications, High quality, high impact. Ethical guidelines to publications of chemical research, 2006 <https://paragon.acs.org/paragon/showDocServlet?ContentID=paragon/memu-content/new-to-this-site/eg-ethic-2000-part>
4. Davidoff F, Catherine D. De Angelis, Feffrey M Drazem, M. Nicholl J, JHoey J, et al. Sponsorship, authorship and accountability, JAMC, 2001;165 (6):786-8.
5. Craig R. A combination of qualities make good copy editors great, 2007: @ <http://www.islandpress.org/main.asp?sectionID=58&subsectionID=222&ArticleID=263>