

Practical Strategies for Graduate-Level Growth of Emerging Academic Writers

How do we know how expert writers write?

A lot of knowledge sought by the emerging writers is tacit knowledge. It is hidden and unspoken. To make this knowledge more explicit, one should ask good questions to the right people.

- Create a list of questions about writing for publication. Include the names of colleagues and mentors who might have answers to these questions.
- Review studies into successful academic faculty writing habits: stories and quantitative data. See the list at the bottom.
- Review publishing histories

The following table summarizes some differences in how emerging graduate-level writers and experts write. The summary is based on these sources:

(1) Driscoll, D. (2025). Becoming an expert writer: A holistic guide to writing for publication. The WAC Clearinghouse, UP of Colorado; (2) Tulley, C. (2018). How writing faculty write. UP of Colorado; (3) NIM. (2023, July). NIM Distinguished Speakers – Larry McEnerney: The problem of creating value with words (Highlights) [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/3_ITELjWqdY

What do emerging writers and expert writers do differently?	
Knowledge crafting	
Emerging writers	Expert writers
Rehearse existing knowledge or engage in deeper thinking for themselves	Articulate clear contributions relative to the field = create value through words
Focus on the writer; write to discover knowledge	Focus on the audience; write to change the readers' views

Tipp: Use this heuristic to articulate your contributions better.

- What is the problem? Why is this a problem?
- Why is it a problem now?
- Is it a local problem or does it have broader ramifications?
- So what? How serious is the problem? What happens if the problem is not addressed?

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- How does your idea connect to a broader field? What is the added value? What does your work offer that has not been offered?
- Does your idea align with what is current in the field? Is it an “urgent” idea?

JPC Letters publishes work across all areas while maintaining the highest quality. The journal editors strive to publish high-impact work that meets a strict standard of urgency.

Subject Categories



JPC Letters Author Guidelines: https://researcher-resources.acs.org/publish/author_guidelines?coden=jpclcd#manuscript_submission_requirements_checklist

What do emerging writers and expert writers do differently?	
Time management	
Emerging writers	Expert writers
Regular daily writing sessions of 15 to 30 minutes	Intensive and long blocks of writing time of several hours, scheduled several times a week
Daily or weekly word count: 500-to 2500-word goal	Expert writers use word count goals to return revisions when meeting the deadline.
Not all emerging writers set clear goals for each writing session	Expert writers set clear goals for each writing session

Concluding comment:

There are no shortcuts for experience. One needs to get through the beginner experience first to transition to the next expert stage. Yet, understanding the direction and challenges will help you get there.

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