READABILITY AND WRITING WELL

RONALD J. BAUERLY, Western Illinois University
DON T. JOHNSON, Western Illinois University
MANDEEP SINGH, Western Illinois University

Top journals such as the Journal of Marketing assert that readability is critical yet little attention has been paid to this topic. Using the Journal of Marketing as a proxy we examine its readability using the Flesch Reading Ease formula. The findings show that the articles have become significantly more difficult to read over the history (1936 – 2001) of the journal. A sharp decline in readability occurred during the period of 1966 to 1971. We explore a range of reasons for increased reading difficulty. We then provide a set of writing guidelines designed to improve readability.

INTRODUCTION

Journal of Marketing manuscripts are judged not only on the depth and scope of the ideas presented and their contributions to the field but also on their clarity and whether they can be read and understood. Readers have varied backgrounds. Hence, the following guidelines should be followed:

- Write in an interesting, readable manner with varied sentence structure. Use as little passive voice as possible.
- Avoid using technical terms that few readers are likely to understand. If you use these terms, include definitions. Remember: The journal is designed to be read, not deciphered.
- Keep sentences short so that the reader does not get lost before the end of a sentence.
  —Journal of Marketing, Manuscript Guidelines

“Too many marketing students are unable to speak clearly and can’t write a simple sentence. But then, neither can faculty.”
—Herbert Rotfeld (1994, p.1)

Has academic writing in marketing become too difficult to read? The Journal of Marketing (JM) asserts that it “is designed to be read, not deciphered.” But is JM too difficult to read, even for academics? Many professors no longer assign JM readings to undergraduates and few practitioners try to read it. When JM implores authors to write more readability and provides instructions to follow, what does this tell us about the state of readability in our discipline? We believe that the historic readability of JM can provide valuable insights about these questions. We treat the readability history of JM as a proxy for writing in academic marketing in general. We then examine the reasons why a decline in readability occurred.

Writing readability requires more than following a set of mechanical guidelines. A research report should be viewed as a story that interests readers, solves a problem, and then informs the readers of how they might apply the knowledge (Kover 2002). In our view, the problem for authors is that varied audiences require better, more readable writing. We offer a set of guidelines to help authors write more readable and with greater impact.

READABILITY

Measuring readability is a concern of diverse groups, such as educators, authors, publishers, and journals. Readability has been studied across a wide range of writing, including, business communications (Severin and Tankard 1992), government documents (Montondon and Lilley Marsh 2005), medical materials (Wallace...
and Lennon 2004), annual reports (Courtis 1998), mutual fund prospectuses (Johnson, Bauerly and Waggle 2002), textbooks (Spinks and Wells 1993), and journals (Crosier 2004). Readability has also been assessed in advertising (Chebat et al., 2003) and web sites (Leong, Ewing and Pitt 2002). The Plain Language Action & Information Network was formed to monitor and improve the readability levels of government documents. In 1998, President Clinton issued a presidential memo, requiring agencies to use plain language principles. States have passed laws that require certain types of documents (e.g., insurance contracts) to be written at a readable level, a level that is usually measured by the Flesch Reading Ease (Flesch) formula (whose minimum score is usually set at either 40 or 50). The Security and Exchange Commission has issued orders that mutual fund prospectuses be written in language that a typical investor would understand. The Emerald Publishing Group (2004) presents awards for the most readable academic journals. Major journal editors have also called for more readable writing (e.g., Kover 2002; Staelin 2002). The American Marketing Association Task Force on the Development of Marketing Thought (1988) declared that the lack of readability was a barrier to widespread dissemination of marketing knowledge. Even the Wall Street Journal has taken up the issue of the readability of its contents (Crossen 2000). For an excellent summary of readability formula research see Dubay (2004).

Journal Readability

In a landmark journal readability study, Armstrong (1980) finds support for the proposition that high prestige publications are expected to have low readability. Passages from articles in ten highly ranked management journals were written to be more readable. Groups of faculty participants then read the different versions with varied levels of reading difficulty. The experiment’s results indicate that participants seemed to be more impressed with the less readable versions. Indeed, when the content of an article was poor, a lack of clear communication was especially helpful in obtaining a higher rating from the professors. In a similar vein, Metoyer-Duran (1993) studied the readability of accepted and rejected papers at College & Research Libraries. She found that accepted papers had worse readability scores than did rejected papers. This finding further supports the proposition that when an author writes more densely, the chance of his or her article being published increases. Together, these studies raise the issue that perhaps, for an author’s publication record, it is beneficial to write poorly or, at least, densely.

In contrast, Hartley, Trueman and Meadows (1988) review the results of ten readability studies, which examined the relationship between readability measures of journal articles and the journals’ prestige rankings. They find only limited evidence that prestigious journals are more difficult to read. Armstrong (1989) later disagreed with Hartley, Trueman and Meadows’ conclusions, advancing the “threshold hypothesis” as an alternative explanation for their findings. The threshold hypothesis posits that readers do not perceive simple writing as scientific writing. However, as the reading becomes more difficult, readers’ evaluations of the work increases until a certain level of reading difficulty is reached. Any further increase in reading difficulty beyond this level does not cause continued increases in readers’ evaluations.

In a recent cross-sectional study, Crosier (2004) examines the Flesch score of 475 articles taken from 14 marketing, international, and general business journals. The findings show a Flesch score of 57.0 for the Journal of Product & Brand Management (the easiest-to-read journal) and a Flesch of only 10.7 for International Marketing Review. The mean Flesch score across the 14 journals was 33.7; JM’s Flesch score was 27.8. Crosier concludes that journal articles should be as accessible (readable) as possible to their intended audiences.

In short, interest in readability has a long and varied history. While no measure of readability is perfect, the Flesch formula has been the one applied most often (Crosier 2004). In the next
section we define readability and explain how the Flesch formula works. We then explore the readability history of JM articles and abstracts.

**Readability and the Flesch Formula**

Klare (1963, p. 1) defines readability as “the ease of understanding or comprehension due to the style of writing.” The readability measure that we chose for the current study is the Flesch formula. Educators and researchers have used the Flesch formula, which was developed by Rudolf Flesch (1948), for several decades. It is commonly used as the readability measure in the analysis of government documents, and it is available in both the Microsoft Word and the WordPerfect word-processing programs. The Flesch formula accounts for average word length and average sentence length: The longer the words and sentences, the more difficult the passage is presumed to be. More specifically,

\[
\text{Flesch score} = 206.835 - [.846 \times (\text{number of syllables per 100 words})] - [.105 \times (\text{average number of words per sentence})].
\]

If the words and sentences are short, the resultant Flesch score will be high, indicating that the document is easy to read; conversely, if the words and sentences are long, the Flesch score will be low, indicating that the document is difficult to read. The Flesch formula uses a 100-point scale, where 100 represents the easiest reading level and 0 is the most difficult. On the Flesch scale, a score of 30 or lower means that the text is considered very difficult to read, and it is the lowest (worst) score possible on the Flesch scale.

**HYPOTHESES**

According to Roger Kerin (1996), JM evolved from a largely descriptive journal into a scholarly professional one. The early years of the journal were influenced by the inclusion of a substantial number of practitioner authors and editorial review board members. As we report in Figure 1, the editorial staff changed from 75 percent practitioners in 1966, to 75 percent academicians in 1971, to 100 percent academicians in 2001. The proportion of articles authored by practitioners declined precipitously from 42 percent in 1966, to less than 9 percent in 1971, to only 3 percent in 2001. Practitioner members of the editorial review board also fell dramatically. In 1966 they constituted 63 percent of the board but fell to just 37 percent in 1971. By 2001, their participation and influence as part of the editorial review board had further deteriorated to a miniscule 2 percent of the board. This dramatic change away from practitioners could be expected to lead to articles that are more scholarly and less directly applied to business. Articles that are written in an academic style may need to be diffused through other groups before they are likely to be directly usable by practitioners (Staelin 2002). Indeed, surveys of JM subscribers in the early 1970s found that many had come to view the journal as too “academic” and lacking in “marketing applications” (Grether 1976).

Editorial policy changes that occurred during this period also continued shifting JM to a more scholarly focus. Merely descriptive articles were avoided in preference to articles that made a meaningful scholarly contribution; as Kerin (1996, p. 9) notes, this was “determined, in large measure, by logic in argumentation and thoroughness in documentation in both qualitative and quantitative terms.” At the same time, advances in theory testing and quantitative techniques, in addition to valuable contributions from the behavioral sciences, drove changes in the makeup of JM’s articles in the period from 1966 to 1971. As Figure 1 indicates, JM has witnessed dramatic stakeholder realignments over the years. For the purpose of this research, in Figure 2 we characterize the periods of realignment as practitioner influenced (pre-1971) and academician influenced (post-1971).

On the basis of the historical changes in JM’s editorial policies; in the makeup of its authorship, editorial staff, and editorial review board membership; and in contributions from the quantitative and behavioral sciences, we propose the following hypotheses:
FIGURE 1

**Editorial Staff Composition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Publication</th>
<th>% of Academics to Practitioners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>25% Academic %, 75% Practitioner %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>25% Academic %, 75% Practitioner %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>0% Academic %, 100% Practitioner %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**JM Author Distribution**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Publication</th>
<th>% of Academics to Practitioners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>58% Academic %, 42% Practitioner %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>42% Academic %, 9% Practitioner %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>3% Academic %, 97% Practitioner %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Review Board Composition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Publication</th>
<th>% of Academics to Practitioners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>35% Academic %, 65% Practitioner %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>37% Academic %, 63% Practitioner %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>2% Academic %, 98% Practitioner %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
H₁: *JM*’s readability is negatively related to academician participation and input (post-1971).

H₂: *JM*’s readability has been negatively affected by the stakeholder realignment (which occurred from pre-1971 to post-1971).

To summarize content, *JM* added brief abstracts in 1958. As such, the abstracts were written to make clear to readers what issue was being addressed and what findings were obtained. That is, the abstracts might then increase the likelihood that readers would be interested in reading the full article. In addition, the intent and character of an abstract should lead to greater readability than the associated article. The early abstracts were of insufficient length (less than 100 words) for us to analyze with the Flesch formula. Therefore, we base H₃ and H₄ on abstracts from the period 1986–2001.

H₃: The abstracts of *JM* articles are more readable than the corresponding articles.

The articles and abstracts are based on the same content and set of skills, writing habits, and styles of the authors. The sharing of common factors should lead to a correlation between the readability of the articles and their corresponding abstracts:

H₄: There is a positive relationship between the readability of *JM* articles and their corresponding abstracts.

**METHOD**

We took samples from the introductions of the first five articles in the first issue of *JM* in each five-year period, starting in 1936 and ending in 2001, which resulted in a total of 70 samples. The Flesch formula recommends a minimum sample size of 100 words; our samples ranged from 200 to 400 words. We took all samples from the introductory section of each article because sampling from the same section in each article increases comparability across articles and across time. In addition, sampling at this point avoids the most technical sections of the articles. In the articles, we do not address the difficulty of the methods (e.g., regression analysis, multivariate statistics) used, but rather attempt to examine how clearly the content of the article is conveyed to readers. Indeed, by measuring the introductory passages, we can assess the authors’ communication skills without the distraction of the technical aspects of the research methods. We sampled complete abstracts beginning in 1986, because this was the first year of our sampling periods in which the abstracts were consistently of sufficient size (more than 100 words) to allow for the use of the Flesch formula.

**RESULTS**

Of the 14 periods we sampled, seven had Flesch scores (see Figure 2) in the “difficult-to-read” range (a score of 30–50), and seven periods had scores of “very difficult to read” (less than 30). The samples’ scores ranged from 41.2 to 12.6, with an overall mean of 27.1 (“very difficult”) and a standard deviation of 9.6.

To test H₁, we compared samples from the academician period (1971–2001) with the cutoff for “very difficult to read” (a score of 30) in the Flesch system. All samples from the academician-influenced period were less than 30, indicating that the readability level of *JM* over the past 30 years has been very difficult. Furthermore, a one-tailed t-test indicated that the readability scores were significantly worse than the “very difficult” cutoff level of 30 at p < .01. We tested the relationship between readability and academician-influenced articles, as H₁ expresses, by comparing the mean of the readability scores (19.6) for this period with the Flesch benchmark of 30. The results reveal that academic influence and readability were significantly negatively related at p < .001. This result indicates a poor readability level during the academician-influenced period, as H₁ postulates.

That all the readability scores were classified as very difficult to read suggests that *JM* poses a reading challenge for its stakeholders. Despite
the explicit instructions that JM provides prospective authors, readability has clearly suffered since 1971. Does having all scores lower than 30 on the Flesch scale make JM’s readability efforts a failure? Not necessarily, because the Flesch scale is but one measure of an article’s readability. However, the scores bring the readability problem into relief and raise the suggestion that JM should examine whether its current efforts to encourage readability are sufficient.

A separate student t-test of the practitioner-influence period mean (34.6) versus the academician-influence period mean (19.6) showed a significant difference at p < .001, in support of H2 (see Table 1). The readability levels changed suddenly and dramatically over a short period rather than slowly and gradually over many years. Such changes appear to reflect the large and rapid cultural changes that were occurring at JM. Although JM emerged as an academician-influenced, prestigious scholarly outlet, the results were costs in readability and almost certainly in accessibility, particularly among readers who were not academicians.

To test Hypothesis 3, we compared the readability levels of articles with the readability levels of their abstracts (for the period 1986–2001) using a one-tailed t-test. Of the abstracts, 80 percent were easier to read than their corresponding articles. The abstracts and articles had readability scores that were statistically different at p < .05. Table 2 displays the results of the comparison.

Finally, although the articles and abstracts were significantly different from each other, they were also correlated, as Hypothesis 4 postulates. A simple regression using the articles’ readability level as the independent variable had an R² of .18 and was significant at p < .10. The results appear in Table 3.

It is not surprising that the articles and their corresponding abstracts were related in levels of readability. Two of the most important factors influencing readability are the subject matter and authors’ writing skills. We expect readability of the articles and the abstracts to be related because they share both factors and are produced in the same crucible at the same time. However, that the abstracts are easier to read suggests that authors can control readability. If authors can write more-readable abstracts, it is possible for them to write more-readable papers.
**TABLE 1**  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Professional Influence Era</th>
<th>Academic Influence Era</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesized Mean Difference</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees of freedom</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t-statistic</td>
<td>2.18*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.001

**TABLE 2**  
A Comparison of the Readability of Articles and Their Abstracts (1986-2001)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Article Readability</th>
<th>Abstract Readability</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>54.0</td>
<td>198.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesized Mean Difference</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees of freedom</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t-statistic</td>
<td>2.4*</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

*p<.02

**TABLE 3**  
Correlation Between Abstracts and Their Articles  
Abstract’s Readability = α + β (article’s readability) + ε.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis of Variance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coefficients</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>t-statistic</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Marketing Management Journal, Spring 2006*
REASONS FOR DIFFICULT READING

We contend that JM, as are many other academic journals, is suffering from a “difficult-to-read phenomenon.” Why? Reading difficulty stems not from a singular cause but from a confluence of factors. The history of higher education in business is one factor. Two reports from the Carnegie (Pierson 1959) and Ford Foundations (Gordon-Howell 1959) had great impact on business education. The reports criticized both the lack of doctorally qualified faculty and a focus on training workers rather than managers. In a ten-year period following these reports one new doctoral program in business was opened every 73 days (Benson 2004). Business colleges began to focus on rigorous research and theory development. New professors had to be properly degreed. The evolution of business education has meant an increased complexity of the discipline. Marketing has become quite specialized by subdiscipline. An increasing array of specialized journals has created a challenge in writing for ever more diverse target audiences.

Another factor affecting the reading level is the authors themselves. The authors (who are mostly professors) are trained in doctoral programs where great attention is paid to developing research skills and less attention is given to writing skills. New professors are indoctrinated further into the academic profession through the interactive research process. Professors read published articles and tend to mimic what they read. Many authors believe, justifiably or not, that unless they write in the same style as the articles that are published in the target journal, their work will not be accepted. Armstrong’s (1980) work adds credence to the argument in his findings that professors rated more-difficult-to-read versions of identical papers more highly than the easier-to-read versions. Metoyer-Duran’s (1993) finding that accepted papers had worse readability scores than rejected papers is also consistent with this belief. Finally, some authors develop a “taste” for writing difficulty and continue to write densely even though they know that such a style forces readers to work harder to benefit from the material.

If a journal’s reviewers and authors are predominantly academic a possible disconnect with other audiences may ensue. But editors and reviewers can encourage or even require better writing. Unfortunately, some of them seem to give readability a lower priority, or they simply find the language problem too overwhelming to fix. This viewpoint is understandable given the other problems that paper submissions often have. Conversely, reviewers and editors may simply be personally comfortable with a paper that is written in “professorese.” Roberts, Fletcher and Fletcher (1994) find evidence that the editing and review process improves papers’ readability so it is possible for editors and reviewers to influence the readability of journals. Journal editors commonly suggest that authors engage the services of professional copywriters to improve the style and readability of their submissions.

DISCUSSION

We know there are a number of reasons why academic writing can be difficult to read. One indicator of difficult reading is a low Flesch score. It is analogous to the canary in the mineshaft. If the canary keels over (due to poisonous gases) you’d better get out of the mine. If the Flesch score for your paper heads below 30 or 20, it might indicate that poor writing is sucking the life from your paper. A clear avenue for each of us to take is to commit to better writing. The following guidelines are not exhaustive, but if they are applied consistently, it can lead to writing that readers want to read.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING WELL

Writing is hard work and writing well is even harder. If research is to have real impact, its findings must be important, but it must also be written well. LaRocque (2003) urges writers to use the Flesch score as a good early test of readability. But achieving readability is not just a question of having a strong Flesch score. Writing with shorter words and sentences makes sense but it’s not enough. Even well published writers must engage in rewriting to achieve accuracy and clarity. The following
guidelines are based on a variety of sources. Some are from top marketing scholars (e.g., Mick 2005; Staelin 2002), while others are from psychology (Bem 1995) or classic books on writing (e.g., Williams 2003; Zinsser 2001). Taken together, this set of guidelines provides a set of tools that can improve reader understanding.

David Mick (2005) believes that the very best research is written by a field’s best writers. He shares a variety of tactics and viewpoints for high quality writing. Here are three key features of excellent writing:

1. “Excellent writing reflects excellent thinking” (Summers 2001)
2. “Excellent writing also balances accuracy and clarity with ingenuity and panache.” (Mick 2005) but accuracy and clarity must take priority (Bem 1995)
3. Excellent scholarly writing (ideally) means choosing the right word (le mot juste), a philosophy espoused by French novelists of the late 19th century (e.g., Flaubert, Zola). This also means philosophically choosing the one best sentence length, voice, grammar, punctuation, etc. (Mick 2005)

Mick provides a short list of books that we found quite valuable including: Gopen (2004), LaRocque (2003), Strunk and White (2000), Williams (2002), and Zinsser (2001). Summers (2001) provides useful advice on how to conduct and publish research. He believes that poor writing comes from the writer’s lack of clear thinking. Authors often consider their writing sufficient if it embodies their ideas, but Summers (2001) argues this is too low a standard. We should instead apply R.L. Stevenson’s standard: “Don’t write merely to be understood. Write so that you cannot possibly be misunderstood.” You should get feedback from a colleague with proper reviewing expertise, one who will challenge what is written, and one who will question your assumptions. Then, when you think you are ready to send the manuscript off for review, revise it again. Ask yourself if your students could understand what you have written. If not, revise it again.

Gopen and Swan (1990) argue that even complex thoughts can be accessible if authors follow a set of structural principles that focus on reader expectations. The following principles focus on the structure of a sentence. Using these principles can help the author achieve some level of control over the reader’s interpretive process.

1. Follow a grammatical subject as soon as possible with its verb.
2. Place in the stress position the “new information” you want the reader to emphasize (at the end of the sentence or independent clause).
3. Place the person or thing whose “story” a sentence is telling at the beginning of the sentence, in the topic position.
4. Place appropriate “old information” (material already stated in the discourse) in the topic position for linkage backward and contextualization forward.
5. Articulate the action of every clause or sentence in its verb (use active rather than passive verbs).
6. In general, provide context for your reader before asking that reader to consider anything new.
7. In general, try to ensure that the relative emphases of the substance coincide with the relative expectations for emphasis raised by the structure. (p. 557)

These guidelines should also be used as organizing principles to form paragraphs, sections, and manuscripts as a whole (see Bem 1995; Sawyer 1988; Summers 2001). Over time you should be able to write drafts that honor these guidelines, but they will still need revision. Followed consistently, these guidelines will help the reader trust in your writing because they will know what to expect.

Richard Staelin (2002), editor of Marketing Science, believes that academic writing needs serious improvement. He offers a number of suggestions to improve the readability and impact of research.
1. Start by truly considering your target audience, their knowledge and interest in the subject. Be sure you emphasize data and findings that matter most. Make clear the action you want readers to take as a result of reading your paper.

2. Don’t forget the importance of your paper’s introduction. The title really does matter; make it clear and provocative. The title should tell readers why they should read your paper and what they can expect to learn. Your paper should unfold like a well-written story. If you can, use an anecdote or pose a set of challenging questions.

3. In the main body be sure to explain the logic behind your research. Use headings and subheadings to guide the reader and pique interest. Check your punctuation. Beware of overwriting because longer is not always better.

4. The conclusion should state what has been learned not what has been done. The reader should be able to comprehend the concluding material without having to carefully read the main body of the paper.

5. Your paper is not ready for submission until you have rewritten it several times. This is true even if you are a good writer.

Williams (2003) argues that when writing your first draft, forget about writing advice - just write. Zinsser (2001) says you must write for yourself. But both agree that rewriting is critical. This is where the guidelines and principles for good writing must apply. Your concern for the reader is then reflected in clear and concise prose.

SUMMARY

It could be argued that journals are simply written to the level of their audience, a complicated task when the audience is diverse. Despite their education level, even academic audiences prefer easier reading levels (Larocque 2003). The historical readability of JM shows a decline to a difficult reading level that persists. While a number of top journals profess a dedication to readability, Crosier (2004) found many top journals have low Flesch scores. Many writers pay too little attention to readability and the result is reduced impact.

Clarity of expression is desirable for many reasons; therefore, authors must make readability a higher priority. If researchers hope to influence marketing practice we must honor our craft as writers as well as we honor our science as scholars. Journal editors and reviewers can help authors embrace this mindset. In addition, writers and readers must realize that easy to read does not necessarily mean dumbed down. As authors, editors, and reviewers, we can and must make more concerted efforts to get the story of our research more readable.

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Readability and Writing Well


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