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Editorial boards: realizing their potential

Introduction

The term 'editorial board' will mean different things to different people. Most journals have them, but their composition, what the individual members do, and how they operate will vary from journal to journal. The members may well have different titles – editor, associate editor, co-editor, communicating editor, and so on – and their number may vary considerably, from just a few to many tens. The composition of an editorial board may also be different at different stages of a journal's life. The requirements at the set up and launch of a journal are different to what is needed as a journal evolves and matures, and greater emphasis will be placed on certain roles.

Although the specific duties of the editorial board members of different journals and the way each of those boards functions as an entity will invariably differ, editorial board members are generally recognized as having certain central roles.

1. They should advise and decide on editorial policy and the future development of the journal.
2. They should promote the journal widely.
3. They should solicit and encourage the submission of manuscripts, and ideally be able to attract the best papers in their fields.
4. They should assess manuscripts initially for suitability for the journal and participate in the review of those manuscripts that do fall within the scope of the journal, either in the selection of suitable reviewers or by doing some of the reviewing themselves, or both.

This article presents an overview of one journal's experience of editorial boards over a decade, from its launch in 1990 to its present position of relative maturity.

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ABSTRACT: Most journals have editorial boards. Their composition, what the individual members do, and how they operate will vary, but they are generally recognized as having certain central roles. What makes a good editor? How can potential editors be identified and then persuaded to join an editorial board? Once on the board, what can be done to keep them happy, committed, and working productively for the journal? What sorts of problems can arise, and how can they be avoided? These are some of the questions dealt with in this article.



Irene Hames

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specific areas
of speciality*

The Plant Journal

The journal was launched with the aim of publishing novel and exciting science at the cutting edge of modern plant research, and its remit was to accept only work of the highest quality. The first issue was published in July 1991. Ten years on it is ranked second worldwide among the primary research journals in the ISI plant sciences category.

The journal is a co-publication between the Society for Experimental Biology and Blackwell Science, with shared ownership. A management committee made up of representatives of these two bodies meets twice a year to discuss business aspects and to monitor how the journal is doing. The editor-in-chief and managing editor attend the non-business part of these meetings to report on all areas of journal activity, to discuss future developments, and, if needed, to request additional expenditure or resources. The management committee does not provide any editorial input or direction – these areas are left to the editor-in-chief and editorial board. Both the society and the publishers are, however, very supportive and encouraging, and give the editor-in-chief and editorial board the freedom and independence they need to develop the journal so that it remains highly competitive and continues to meet the needs of the scientific community it serves.

How have the journal's editorial board members been chosen? How have they been persuaded to accept invitations to join the board? What makes a good editor? What do they do? How are they kept happy, committed, and working productively for the journal? What sorts of problems can arise, and how can they be prevented? These are some of the questions I hope to answer in this article.

Editorial board structure and function

The Plant Journal has an editor-in-chief, an editorial board of around 15 members, called editors, and a managing editor, who is in charge of the editorial office and is a member of the editorial board. The editors are based around the world and the journal is considered to be truly international. Although there are areas of overlap in

scientific expertise, each editor has specific areas of speciality. These are listed on the journal's website so that authors can identify the most appropriate editor for submission of their manuscripts.

The editors assess submitted manuscripts for suitability to ensure that they fall within the scope of the journal, namely that the subject area is appropriate and that the manuscript is of sufficient depth and not just a preliminary report. It is not a judgement of quality at this stage – that is left for the reviewers to evaluate. For those manuscripts that get past this initial assessment (around 90%), the editors suggest suitable reviewers, indicating whether reviewers of complementary expertise are needed and whether they should be asked any specific questions. They also provide any relevant information that could be important during the review process. The editorial office then contacts potential reviewers and obtains their agreement to review, and importantly to review within a certain time frame, before sending the manuscript to them.

The Plant Journal has a completely centralized editorial office. This holds up-to-date information on all areas of journal activity so its staff know the reviewing load of all potential reviewers, possible areas of conflict, the reviewing speed and past performance of various reviewers, and those reviewers who are currently unavailable. It also deals with all correspondence with authors and does all the chasing of reviewers for reports so that the editors are not burdened with this, freeing them to concentrate on the scientific aspects of the manuscripts they are handling. Once reports are in from reviewers, they are transmitted to the editor handling that manuscript. The editor evaluates them, provides a scientific assessment of the manuscript based on these reports and any other information available on the manuscript, and submits a recommendation to the editorial office as to whether the manuscript should be accepted or not for publication in the journal, along with the revisions that need to be carried out prior to final acceptance. If the manuscript is to be rejected, the editors will frequently advise authors as to the improvements and experiments that they consider would be necessary

for acceptance even by other journals, for which journals the work seems most appropriate, and also the possible directions in which the work could be taken. They will encourage the resubmission of work that has the potential, after further work, to reach the standards required by the journal.

The editors come together formally once a year for an editorial meeting. At this, all areas of journal activity are discussed, and changes recommended where required. Future developments are suggested and debated, and implementation strategies decided. The publishers of the journal are also present, and update the editorial board on areas such as production, circulation, marketing, and publishing advancements. Full annual statistics are made available covering all areas of manuscript submission, acceptance and rejection, manuscript processing and publication times, performance of reviewers over the previous year, and so on. It is crucial that editors are provided with comprehensive information and statistics prior to these meetings so that all decision making is informed and not based on perceptions or subjective opinions.

It is also very important that editors have up-to-date information available throughout the year, so that when they are promoting the journal and soliciting submissions they can use this to reassure potential authors about any concerns they may have and counter any negative comments they may receive, especially in areas in which the journal may have had problems in the past. It can take quite a while for some beliefs or fears to be dispelled. For example, *The Plant Journal* went through a period of very rapid growth a few years ago. Existing systems, staffing levels, and the page budget were at full stretch. Manuscript processing and publication times suffered and lengthened considerably. This had a very negative effect and people used to the journal's previously fast processing and publication times were disappointed. Despite the journal's loyal following, some authors understandably began to consider other journals for submission. The problem was resolved – staffing level was increased, systems were updated and restructured, and the journal moved from monthly to biweekly publication – but

it took a little while to turn things round. The backlog of manuscripts awaiting publication was cleared and rapid processing and publication returned. The perception of 'slowness' remained, however, for longer in some places, and our editors had to counter comments about this, which made some feel awkward. Our solution was to mount the journal's past and present processing and publication times on the journal's website. From these data, it was clear that rapid processing and publication had been restored – our editors were simply able to direct to the website any individuals who still had doubts, making things much easier for them when encouraging submissions and giving credibility to their claims.

What makes a good editor?

There are certain characteristics that are important and desirable in editors at all stages of a journal's life. If a journal is hoping to attract the best possible papers, then its editors need first and foremost to be highly respected in their fields and widely recognized as being sound and rigorous in judgement. They should not be individuals who are viewed with caution or suspicion by their community. The editors need also to be highly committed to the philosophy and aims of the journal, as the editorial board needs to act as a unit, in harmony, and not be, or appear to be, divisive. New editors therefore need also to fit in with and be respected by the existing members of the board.

Editors need to be confident enough to make unpopular decisions. If a journal is striving to attract the best papers, including those from the major players in the field, editors must be able to cope with these individuals and be of sufficient stature that distinguished authors accept rejection decisions, recognizing them to be based on good critical reviews and sound reasons, even though they may not be very happy about the decisions. A healthy objective is to have authors grateful for rejection decisions in those cases where flaws have been discovered because it means that they will not end up publishing inadequate or erroneous results and theories. This

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enhances the respect with which the editors are viewed within the community and is a good way of ensuring that those authors will be keen to submit future work to the journal.

In my experience, editors do need to be reasonably organized and fairly quick at responding and dealing with their editorial work. In modern plant science, things are moving very quickly and rapid publication is very important. Authors with ground-breaking 'hot' papers will submit only to high-quality, high-impact journals that will publish their work before that of their competitors. Persistently slow and inefficient editors lead to very unhappy authors, and ones who will take their best work elsewhere in future.

A good editor will be genuinely committed to the journal and will work to promote it among colleagues and at meetings. He/she will encourage people to submit their best work, and will not be interested in just giving friends an easy and preferential route through review to guaranteed publication. Once a journal is established and has a good reputation, attracting good papers is relatively easy. However, at the start of a journal things are much more difficult. How does an editor get authors to submit good work to a journal that has no track record and that might disappear without trace?

At the start of a journal it is important that the editorial board has 'names' on it, i.e. very high-profile figures with substantial reputations and track records, generally from renowned, major institutions, who only associate themselves with projects and things they believe in and will support. Such editors give credibility to a new journal and inspire confidence. They will be, without doubt, people who are already heavily over-committed. They probably travel extensively and can be hard to communicate with if they choose not to be directly in contact when they are away from their laboratories and offices. They therefore will not be able to devote much time to the journal. However, at the set-up stage of a journal's life, the workload in terms of manuscript handling will not be heavy. By far the most important thing is to spread the word about the journal and promote its vision and aims,

which, because such editors travel widely and usually give talks at numerous conferences, they are able to do relatively easily.

Once a journal becomes established, the manuscript workload will become very much heavier. All members of the editorial board need to share the workload relatively evenly, otherwise editors with disproportionate amounts of work can become disgruntled and problems can arise. Over-busy, globe-trotting editors will generally be quite relieved to come to the end of their terms of office on the editorial board and to pass the baton on to perhaps younger, up-and-coming individuals. Once a journal becomes established and successful, it might find it starts receiving unsolicited offers from people volunteering to become an editor. Some of these offers may be genuine and made in the right spirit, but some may be being made in the cause of self-interest and must be judged accordingly. Declining such offers needs to be handled tactfully but firmly and consistently.

Journals need to develop and to continue to provide the appropriate forums for their communities. In this day and age, journals cannot afford to become complacent and stand still. Very early on, good editors will be able to recognize new emerging areas and to identify the talented individuals in those areas, those who are going to make an impression. Good editors also need to be adaptable, accepting that things need to change. They should certainly not have the attitude 'We've always done things this way, why change?'

How are editors chosen?

How do you identify suitable editors? Literature searches will show who is publishing actively and frequently in an area. However, do they publish in top-quality journals? Not many people can consistently publish in the very top journals. However, if a journal is aiming to attract the best papers, its editors need to be perceived by the community the journal serves as being of sufficient calibre to publish a certain amount in the top journals and so to be familiar with what is required by these journals. The existing members of the editorial board should be canvassed for

Journals need to develop

their suggestions for potential editors – they may well have come across rising stars at conferences who have impressed them and others. It is likely, however, especially in rapidly growing scientific disciplines, that a number of the rest of the board may not be familiar with the names suggested by the other editors, and so will not be able to put forward any particularly useful opinions.

Informally seeking personal opinions is a good way of finding out who is highly regarded among their peers or whether a specific person would be suitable. Perhaps they have some negative characteristics that would make joining the board undesirable. Might they agree to join solely in the cause of self-interest, just to further their own careers and reputations? Will they fit in with the existing board, or do serious rivalries or animosities exist? Such people are not generally wise additions to a board, however high their status.

It is very likely that a journal will already have come into contact with people suggested as suitable editors and have experience of them, either as submitting authors or as reviewers or perhaps as both. Have these experiences been good? How have these individuals treated various members of the editorial office staff? Have they been courteous and sympathetic when needed? How thorough and rigorous have they been in their reviewing? Looking over past reviews for the journal will show if a person has the critical skills, depth, and insight needed to be a successful editor. Are they fair and unbiased? Or do submitting authors frequently ask for them to be excluded from the review of their manuscripts? If so, it is very likely that a large number of authors may start to send their papers elsewhere rather than risk having their manuscripts rejected after a biased review process. This could seriously damage a journal's reputation.

The Plant Journal has an advisory board of around 80 members. These are people who are regular reviewers for the journal. The journal uses 700–800 different reviewers a year, and has around 8,000 potential reviewers on its database, but the members of the advisory board do more reviewing than other reviewers, and they have earned their

place on the advisory board for this reason. They are also occasionally contacted for general, or specific, advice, either individually or as a body. Quite a number of the journal's editors have over the years been promoted from the advisory board and this has been a very successful way of appointing excellent editors.

Geographical location is an important consideration when choosing new editors. An international journal needs to have a good spread of editors around the world, and not too many in the same country. In some countries, e.g. Japan, there seems still to be a tradition that authors submit to the editor based in their country if there is one. This can be one way of increasing submissions from certain countries if this is a problem, but one needs to be careful not to overload any one editor – there needs to be a mechanism in place to rectify this if it occurs.

How do you persuade someone to join the editorial board?

Scientists these days are generally over-committed and fully stretched, trying to do research while being given increased teaching loads and administrative tasks. They are pressured to maximize their research in order to be successful in grant applications and promotions, and to do things that 'count' for the various assessment exercises. Many will therefore naturally be hesitant about taking on any extra workload. Different journals expect their editors to do different amounts and types of work. It is therefore very important that any potential editor is aware of exactly what he/she is taking on. Some may have been editors for other journals where they may have been expected to carry out a large amount of work, e.g. finding reviewers themselves, mailing manuscripts to them, chasing them for their reports, and sending out actual correspondence. This constitutes a considerable administrative workload and may well deter many from accepting an invitation to join an editorial board if that is the workload they can expect. With a centralized system and an editorial office that carries out all administrative tasks, such as we have at *The Plant Journal*, editors are not expected to take

Geographical location is an important consideration

these on but are left free to concentrate on the science. We, very early on, reassure potential editors about this – it is a strong inducement in persuading them to join the editorial board.

Some potential editors may be reluctant to say ‘yes’ if they need to sign up for a specific number of years. Although it is generally a good idea to have pre-agreed set lengths of appointment, it is useful to have a degree of flexibility, especially if a journal is trying to attract specific and high-profile individuals. In my experience, an editor may be willing to come onto the board for a year in the first instance to see how things go and how heavy the workload is – they inevitably end up staying for longer. It goes without saying that accurate estimates of the workload an editor can expect should be given. If an editor is misled about this, he/she will soon become disillusioned, and will probably make this known among the community. It can be helpful for potential editors to talk to existing members of the editorial board. Suggest this to them – if you have a happy and content editorial board and a good relationship with its members, you have nothing to hide. All editors have certain idiosyncrasies and a preferred working pattern – prepare to be flexible and to accommodate what is possible within the editorial set-up.

There are very healthy positive reasons that drive already busy, very research-active individuals to say ‘yes’ to invitations to join editorial boards. They will almost certainly not be doing it for financial remuneration – members of most editorial boards receive only a relatively modest honorarium in addition probably to a free subscription to the journals. In science, many individuals feel very deeply and sincerely that they want to put back something into the community. They want to encourage the best possible science, help along the younger members of the community, and to drive forward the frontiers. They will generally be people who still have the basic curiosity that made them enter research in the first place, and they will still be asking the questions ‘How?’, ‘Why?’, ‘When?’ For these reasons, they will need to feel that the journal has similar aims and sympathies.

One should look to the future when thinking of potential editors. Try to identify whom among the younger generation looks to have the potential to become a future editor. Nurture these people, and establish good relationships with them early on. Use them as reviewers, encourage submissions from them, and promote a feeling of community.

Keeping editors happy

To keep a journal running smoothly and moving forward, its editors need to be happy. If they are not, problems can arise. What things can help?

1. Support and back-up

Make sure all the support and back-up the editors were promised before they joined the board are provided, and provided consistently and reliably. Failure to do this will result in unhappy and disillusioned editors. They must feel confident that the quality of support is high – they do not want to be receiving complaints and negative comments from their colleagues and others in the field when they are trying to promote the journal and encourage submissions.

2. Avoid work overload

Carefully monitor each editor’s workload and make sure no single editor is being overloaded. Patterns of manuscript submission frequently vary over the year, with heavy submission rates at certain times – a temporary heavy workload is generally fine and accepted as par for the course, but when the situation occurs for extended periods and involves a large number of editors, perhaps the size of the editorial board needs to be increased. If individual workloads are becoming onerous, reassure the board that you are aware of the situation and that steps are in progress to resolve things, and make sure you do sort things out.

3. Keep editors well informed

To carry out their duties properly, editors need to be kept well informed. At *The Plant Journal*, our editors are provided with regular reports on, for example, new manuscript

most editorial
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honorarium

submissions, accepted manuscripts, and manuscripts that have been rejected without review (and the reasons why). They are also sent biweekly individual status reports on the manuscripts they are handling and their outstanding decisions are listed. They are alerted to sensitive issues and potential problems as they arise, and courses of possible strategic action are discussed with them if appropriate. If they request specific information, e.g. the submission and review histories of certain manuscripts, they are provided with this as quickly as possible. A note of caution: there may be times when it is not appropriate to release everything an editor requests. If an author has submitted a manuscript and specifically asked for a certain editor not to be involved in its review, perhaps because of concern about conflict of interest, you need to be prepared to turn down that editor's request should he/she ask to see the whole manuscript. This is something that will need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Situations like this cause no problems if you have formed good relationships with the members of your board.

4. Treat editors as individuals

Editors are individuals, so take note of their likes and dislikes. Get to know their strengths and weaknesses so you can take advantage of the former and compensate for the latter. Inspire trust and confidence so that they will let you know about any problems they are having and any mistakes or errors of judgement they may have made. You do not want them to hide these from you, hoping they will go away. Help them through the difficult times, and always respect their confidences. I have an email address that our editors can use for sensitive and confidential matters – it is opened only by me, even when I am away, so editors can send messages they would rather were not seen by others. All editors will have crises in their lives at some time – make allowances for this and steer work away from them when necessary. Accommodate them during their sabbaticals, making whatever arrangements are necessary to allow them to keep working from their new address. However, if

they really want also to take a sabbatical from their editorial duties during that time, see if you can accommodate this. Encourage editors to keep you informed, well in advance, of any times they are going to be away, committed to an intensive work programme, expecting babies, and so on, to allow you to plan ahead and make sure their work is well under control or delegated to another editor during those times if necessary, and no disruption is caused to normal journal working.

5. Feeling of community

Work to achieve a sense of community, both within the editorial board and within the field the journal serves. This can be enormously beneficial and creates a sense of purpose, well being and satisfaction. The editors need to feel the journal is respected and valued by the community – this will make them also feel respected and valued, and proud to be associated with the journal.

6. Discuss proposed policy changes

Involve the editors fully in discussions on possible policy changes and take their comments into account. In a large editorial board there will probably be a range of opinions, and some decisions will inevitably go against the recommendations of some editors. The editors should feel, however, that their views have been considered, and that all decisions are being made for the right reasons and with justification. Tactful handling is needed when an editor begins to feel that all decisions seem to go against their recommendations – they may start to feel undervalued and begin to wonder what they are doing on the editorial board.

7. Make things fun!

Try and make things as enjoyable as possible for the editors. Introduce a lighter note and form good relationships with them. Make the editorial meetings as enjoyable as possible as well as useful and constructive. Help the editors with their travel and accommodation arrangements. Be understanding.

*Encourage
editors to keep
you informed*

Problems that can arise

There will be times in any journal's life when an editor becomes unhappy or problematic. There may even be threats of mass resignation from the board in an attempt to drive through or prevent certain changes. Problems can arise for a number of reasons.

1. Inadequate guidance or 'mentoring'

It generally takes about 6 months or so for a new editor to become totally familiar with how the journal works and to feel confident in decision making. It will take that time for an editor to experience some of the unusual or difficult cases that will bring in-depth knowledge of how the journal deals with these and the stance it takes on certain issues. During the early months, new editors should receive strong support from the editorial office staff and they should not feel afraid to ask questions or seek advice, even on what appear to be very trivial matters. Encourage two-way discourse. Rather than providing new editors with lengthy and detailed instructions, we take them through all stages step by step, guiding and prompting them, and introducing them to all the possible routes of action/decision and to all the potential pitfalls. It is a good idea to avoid taking on too many new editors at any one time – space them out if possible so that you can give each one the time they need for proper induction. It can be helpful to pair up a new editor with an established one with whom they can check decisions, ask advice and so on. If you lay strong and sound foundations, you will end up with a very strong board. If you don't, you may end up with a weak and divided one.

2. Accusations of bias or misconduct

Authors whose manuscripts are rejected are naturally going to be disappointed. Some may question decisions in an open way and a discussion with the editor responsible for the decision may ensue. This can all be healthy and constructive, and it is not unknown for decisions to be reconsidered or reversed in some cases. However, sometimes an author may make serious accusations of bias or misconduct against an editor. Such situations

need to be handled with great care and sensitivity, and a good deal of critical judgement needs to be employed. In general, the editor involved does need to be made aware that an accusation has been made and its basis. It may be wise not to pass on the actual piece of correspondence from the author – this has been written in confidence and may well contain strong and very subjective statements. In some cases it will be appropriate for an editor to see the communication – indeed, some authors may request it be passed on to them. As in all delicate areas, it is hard to generalize about recommended courses of action – each needs to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Editors may, understandably, feel unable or not want to handle any future manuscripts from authors who have levelled serious accusations against them. Their wishes should be respected and another editor should be assigned for any future manuscript submissions from these authors.

3. Editors wanting to 'do their own thing'

Each journal will have its own way of doing things. Some procedures and guidelines will have a certain degree of flexibility, but others will not, and should not be over-ridden except by majority agreement of the editorial board. If certain editors start to act independently and contrary to what has been agreed, they will need to be steered in the right direction and brought back on course as skilfully and tactfully as possible, without causing offence or making them feel their judgement is being questioned. Frequently, certain procedures have been developed to protect editors against accusations of bias as well as to make things as fair as possible for authors. In the case of *The Plant Journal*, we do not allow editors to accept manuscripts on first submission without going out for in-depth peer review. Editors can in cases of split decisions side with one of the decisions, rather than going for a third review, based on their knowledge of the field and the weighting they give to the two reviewers' relative expertise. They cannot, however, generally override two negative reports and recommend publication. Decision making must be transparent

*new editors
should receive
strong support*

and the reviewers, as well as the authors, must feel that decisions to publish or not have been reached fairly, consistently, and for the right reasons. As a courtesy and as an educational exercise by which they get to learn exactly the standard and scope required for the journal, all our reviewers are sent the outcomes for manuscripts with whose review they have been involved, along with all the reports, any relevant correspondence, and the authors' response to the reviewers' comments. If reviewers' opinions and recommendations are continually overridden, they may begin to feel unhappy and start to wonder whether they are wasting their time reviewing for the journal. Also, a journal should reassess whether it wants to keep on its reviewing panel individuals who regularly come in with evaluations and recommendations that run contrary to those of other reviewers and the editors.

4. Editors submitting their own work to their journals

A high-impact journal is likely to have high-calibre people on its editorial board who would most likely normally be submitting manuscripts to that journal. It is up to each individual journal to develop a policy on editors submitting their own work, and new editors should be made aware of this. At *The Plant Journal*, we are happy to encourage our editors to submit their best work to us rather than lose this to rival journals. We understand, however, that some editors may prefer not to do this during their time on the board in case it is perceived externally that they may have had privileged or more lenient treatment. These decisions should be respected, and editors not feel pressured to submit to the journal. Submissions by editors are handled by the most suitable editor on the board, and total confidentiality is maintained on reviewer selection. Care needs to be taken when preparing general reports and statistics for the board that reviewer identity for manuscripts that editors have submitted is not accidentally revealed. Submissions from editors are treated scrupulously fairly and according to the journal's normal standards.

Manuscripts that are not of sufficient standard, or not suitable for the journal for any reason, are rejected. As in all rejection cases, tact is needed, especially if the reviewers have been very negative or forthright.

5. Spot potential problems early on

Be alert to any changes in the behaviour of editors, or if they start acting out of character, and find out as tactfully as possible what the problem is. It may be nothing to do with the journal, but if it is, sort it out before it festers and becomes serious. If an editor is becoming disillusioned or dissatisfied, find out why before the dissatisfaction spreads to other members of the board. Develop good one-to-one relationships with the editors so that you can have honest discussions with them. Sometimes problems arise with editors that cannot easily be resolved. In these, hopefully infrequent, cases, it may be in a journal's best interests to part ways with an editor. Not having fixed terms of appointment can make it easier to bring this about more quickly, but if there is a fixed term and it is close to the end of this time, it may be diplomatic to ride out the remaining period. In some cases, editors may be struggling or having difficulties with their editorial work and be grateful to leave the board sooner than originally planned. If this can be arranged by mutual and amicable agreement, without either party losing face or being damaged, then so much the better.

editors need to be highly respected in their fields

Conclusions

The composition and quality of editorial boards are crucial to the success of any journal. The members need to be chosen carefully and wisely. If a journal hopes to attract good papers and establish a position of significance, its editors need to be highly respected in their fields and widely recognized as being sound and rigorous in judgement. Once in place, they need to be supported and nurtured so that they will work for the journal enthusiastically and with commitment. The editors are the journal's ambassadors, promoting and obtaining support for it. Their aims and vision should

be in sympathy with those of the journal and they should be able to guide its future development so that it moves forward and fulfils the needs of the community it serves. Their time on the editorial board should be an enjoyable experience – and, hopefully, fun!

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