

Editors, how to avoid their discouragement

Selling Your Work · By Simon Townsend · 1 min read

Editors: how to avoid their discouragement

You point out that your target publication has rules that preclude you sending-in an article on-spec.

You must have the courage, determination and tenacity to ignore this.

IF (I emphasise IF) your article is right for your target publication, then it WILL (it WILL) be published.

Editors of prestigious or popular publications are overwhelmed every day by submissions of dud articles.

Freelancers who have never read the publication send in articles that are totally inappropriate.

This wastes editors' time and puts them to irritating trouble. So rules are set up to discourage freelancers, and the rules work: those who can be discouraged are discouraged.

Those who can't be discouraged are often the freelancers who have read every issue of the publication for maybe years, certainly the last six issues.

They have compared their article to articles in the target publication and found that, "Yes! MY article could easily replace THIS article and fit in perfectly!"

These freelancers have really STUDIED the needs of their target publications and shaped their articles to these needs.

So they are confident that the article is RIGHT for the target publication.

If it is right, it WILL be published, because when a right article arrives unannounced, the editors forget their "rules for discouraging time-wasters", grab the article and publish it, pay the freelancer and invite him/her to submit again.

Are you one of my few students who took up the challenge to copy-type an article or articles from your target publication? This gives a real "feel" for the kind of material needed. This is a more thorough way, rather than just reading.

Finally, if you're not sure about your target publication, and you're just tossing your hat in the ring and waiting to see what happens, your article is likely to be rejected, or worse, never returned and no acknowledgment ever made.

You MUST -- absolutely must -- be sure your article is perfect for your target publication.

When you are sure, forget "the rules", and send it in after studying my article "How to sell your article". Ask for it by email.

Reprinted from The Wonderful World of Journalism. Written in the spirit of Simon Townsend's journalism craft advice. Visit simontownsendjournalist.com for the full archive.