Your Editorial Career Path

What’s the game plan?

Plan A

Plan B

Plan C

Plan D

Help!

Lauren Fischer
Deputy Managing Editor,
The JAMA Network
There is no game plan!

The Brazilian Plan

... no comments. Even their coach get confuse .. too many joga bonitos on display!
You can advance your career in traditional ways.

AND

You can advance your career in nontraditional ways.
Traditional Methods of Career Advancement

• Professional Organizations
• Continuing Education
• Keep up with technology
• Build knowledge of emerging topics
• Hone project management skills

But what does it mean?
Professional Organization

• Council of Science Editors

CSE is a dynamic community of editorial professionals dedicated to the responsible and effective communication of science.

• If you want to make it meaningful, you have to be involved.
  – Attend a meeting
  – Join a committee
  – Prepare a meeting abstract
  – Attend a Webinar
  – Read Science Editor
  – Contribute to Science Editor
In 2011, I wrote an article for *Science Editor*...

- Mentioned on AMA Style Insider blog
- Mentioned on the Editor’s blog for *Science Editor*
- Most important, I learned a lot by writing it, and became the “corrections queen” at my office. For better or for worse.
Continuing Education Opportunities

• University of Chicago Graham School
  – Medical Writing and Editing course, online or in person

• BELS examination
  – Board of Editors in the Life Sciences

• BUT, don’t rely on continuing education credentials alone…

part to whole
Keep up With Technology

• If you don’t understand a technology, learn it (eg, social media, production tools, editing software).

• If you don’t see how a specific technology relates to your job, find out. BROADEST PERSPECTIVE is best.
Build Knowledge of Emerging Topics

• Learn the hard stuff, and your colleagues will think you’re a **GENIUS**.
  – Copyright, conflicts of interest, open access, permissions, corrections, statistics, ethical issues, legal issues...

**YOU be the expert.**

(You don’t have to be evil to be a genius. You don’t even have to be a genius to be a genius.)
One more note on becoming the expert...

Figure out the hard thing that nobody understands.
You will find OPPORTUNITY.
Hone Project Management Skills

**Good**
- Be a leader
- Guide others
- Organize meetings
- Contribute ideas
- Ask others for input
- Stick to a schedule
- Meet deadlines
- Get promoted!

**Bad**
- Be a follower
- Forget to attend meetings
- Check Twitter and Facebook all the time
- Text friends during meetings
- Ignore schedules
- Miss deadlines
- No chance of promotion
Nontraditional Methods of Career Advancement

• Get outside your zone
• Say “yes”
• Learn about other teams
• Change your perspective
• Mentorship
• Happy hour

But what does it mean?

Think
Get Outside Your Comfort Zone

• Volunteer your skills (writing, editing, production, design) in an entirely different field...you never know what it might lead to.

• On that note, people ALWAYS need good editors.

Really.
Say YES even when you don’t know for sure if you can. Chances are, you **CAN**.

- I got this!
- No problem!
- Right away!
- Will do!

Don’t be a pin.

Be the balloon.
Learn.  
• We’ve all heard this: “It’s not my job.”  
• But if it *touches* your job, having an understanding will *help* you in your job.  
• Find out what’s involved for every workflow step.  
• Organize informal roundtables with other groups and LEARN.

Be a resource.  
• Be the go-to person for colleagues with questions.

How?  
✓ Be open and listen  
✓ Give your undivided attention
Change Your Perspective

• Have a big-picture view.

• Look at tasks as your supervisor would look at them. Her goals are different from yours, and anything you can do to help will not go unnoticed.

• Opportunities evolve organically; having a broad perspective helps you to be prepared.
Find a Mentor... **BE** a Mentor

- You can be a mentor to your employees, or your teammates, or even your boss. We ALL have something to offer.

- Check out AMA Style Insider [https://blog.amamanualofstyle.com/](https://blog.amamanualofstyle.com/) for the Point of View series -- interviews of people with varied backgrounds and experiences in publishing.
Happy Hour

Organize a happy hour and invite EVERYONE.

People share more openly and easily in a nonoffice setting.

And you might even make a new friend.
THANK YOU!