

# Transition to a New Editor and Editorial Operations: What Have We Learned?

*Chair:*

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Thomas Edison once said, “Genius is one percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration.” Moving an editorial office is a little like that. After a thoughtful and informed decision is made to move an editorial office, the real work begins!

Ann Marie Link, former director of periodicals for the American Gastroenterological Association, and Leslie E Neistadt, managing editor of the *Journal of Athletic Training*, presented a talk at the CBE annual meeting that covered the many details one must think of when moving an editorial office.

To begin, a timeline should be developed to add structure to the process. Cru-

cial dates should be set, such as the date to begin setting up the new office, the date the new office will begin to handle manuscripts, the date the new editor starts, and the date the old editorial office closes. If possible, a transition should be planned during the time of year when manuscript submissions are at their lowest.

As the transition continues, try to think of every detail and plan for it. Your human

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resources are your most valuable resources, so plan accordingly. The old staff should be provided with as much security as possible. Make sure that their job duties, termination dates, and severance packages are clearly communicated, but provide them with free time to job hunt as well. For the new staff, try to hire at least half your staff a month before the move date. During that month, schedule a training meeting for the new team conducted by the old team. The new

staff can also use this time for computer training.

While the new staff is being hired, there are many other details to take care of. This is the time to think about leasing or purchasing office space, if it is not already provided, and to assess your computer needs. If you use manuscript-tracking software, newly purchased computers should be compatible with your software. You will have to arrange for phone services, purchase or lease office furniture, create updated stationery and forms, stock the new office with supplies, and move files from the old office to the new one.

Let everyone know your new address, including authors, reviewers, your publisher, your vendors, and your readers. Besides noting the change of address on all outgoing correspondence, you can run a change-of-address notice in the journal, in related society newsletters, and on your Web site.

Finally, communicate frequently with the old and new editors. Preparation of a style guide and an editor’s manual can be a big help to the new editor.

When all is said and done, the goal you will have achieved is relatively uninterrupted, timely production of a quality publication. ■