

Commentary Guidelines

Purpose

The goal of the focal article-commentary format is to advance the field by providing a forum for varying perspectives on the topic under consideration. A commentary may be:

- a) a critical challenge to one or more aspects of the focal article, arguing for a position other than that taken in the focal article;
- b) an elaboration or extension of the position taken in the focal article, basically sympathetic to the position taken in the focal article, but pushing the argument further;
- c) a reflection on the writer's experiences in applying the issues addressed in the focal article in particular organizational settings;
- d) a comment on applicability of the issues raised in the focal article to other settings, or to other cultures;
- e) a comment with a focus other than those listed above.

Length

We envision comments as one to five journal pages in length, which sets 10 manuscript pages as a rough upper limit. A discussion with the editor is called for if an author sees a need for a longer commentary.

Review

Commentaries will be peer reviewed; it is expected that some will be accepted and some rejected. Criteria for acceptance include clarity and coherence of the position espoused, technical soundness, and reviewer judgment as to the degree to which the commentary contributes to greater insight and understanding of the topic.

One issue meriting special attention is redundancy. It is possible that two authors may submit highly similar commentaries. This creates difficulties, as both may be of high quality. We will use a variety of strategies in such a circumstance. These include editing one section of a broad commentary to eliminate the section redundant with another commentary, and working with the authors to pool their efforts and produce a joint commentary.

Tone

While a commentary may be critical of a focal article, it is important to maintain a respectful tone that is critical of ideas, not of authors.

Timing

There is a relatively short time window for the preparation of commentaries; this will typically be 60-90 days. This is driven by journal production schedules.

Queries for the Editor

Authors should feel free to correspond with the editor prior to submitting a commentary if there are questions about any aspect of the commentary process. Authors may prepare a brief outline of the key points they want to make in the commentary and send it to the editor. While not in a position to commit to a commentary prior to peer review, the editor can comment on whether other commentaries have been submitted or proposed making the same points.