Revising Your Paper

Once you have received feedback about your paper, your task is to evaluate the comments you received and to make appropriate changes to your paper.

Evaluate Comments

You need to evaluate the comments from the people whom you consulted about your paper because not all suggestions for improvement are good ones to implement. Sometimes, your editor will misread a passage. Or your editor might prefer that you wrote a different paper or had a different thesis than the one you chose. Others are ignorant about specific rules of grammar or structure and suggest you make changes that go against contemporary acceptable practices.

You might also find that two editors disagree on the quality of a passage. One might tell you that a specific example is great while the other one might suggest that a good way to improve your paper would be to change the example. As the author of the paper, you will need to decide which editor has given the best advice.

Make Appropriate Changes

Once you have decided on which suggestions for improvement are good ones to follow, it is time to make the necessary changes in your paper. As part of the revision process, you might need to do some additional research or re-write entire sections of the paper. Such significant changes are not uncommon—even among professional writers.

Read Paper Out Loud to Yourself

When we silently read our own writing, we have a tendency to read what is supposed to be in the paper instead of what we have actually written. Therefore, reading your paper out loud to yourself is a good strategy to use during the revision process. Often, you will be able to hear awkward passages that you cannot see while silently reading. Also, reading out loud slows you down which allows you to identify incorrect word choice, spelling errors, missing words, and grammar errors.

Repeat "Getting Feedback"

As you revise your paper you need to continue getting feedback on your revisions; feedback that will likely result in more revision.

Suggestion for Success

One of the most common problems I see among students is that they do not give themselves enough time for revision. After putting in time on your research and writing, don't give the revision process short shrift.

On-Line Resources

- Revise Your Paper
  http://writing.stevenlberg.info/research/step08.html

- Get Feedback
  http://writing.stevenlberg.info/research/step07.html