

A Guide for TQR Authors
By
Ronald J. Chenail, Dan Wulff, and Sally St. George

Introduction

At *The Qualitative Report* (TQR) we have developed an efficient and effective process to assist authors in the improvement of their submitted manuscripts. To accomplish this goal we endeavor to keep the manuscript as our centerpiece, that is, the focus of our attention throughout the process from initial submission to final publication. We think this juxtaposition of the review and the text reviewed makes the reviewing and revision functions a more contextualized process and it keeps all of us focused on making the paper better.

In the manuscript development process, we, the editors and reviewers in partnership with authors, focus on embedding the collective manuscript improvement efforts into the manuscript itself. In other words, the manuscript is the centerpiece of the entire reviewing, editing, and revising enterprise. Instead of producing separate reviews and response documents that can move us all away from the manuscript, we work together with the authors to weave all our collective comments and responses in the manuscript to create an evolving audit trail that ultimately produces the published paper. To do this we ask reviewers to act more in the role of consultant and mentor by offering both editing and revising suggestions and recording them for author's use via some special features of Microsoft Word. This creates an audit trail that we think eases tracking and addressing changes in revising and improving manuscripts.

We also believe this technology solution speeds up the reviewing and revising enterprise. Instead of producing individual review documents that require authors to go back and forth between the different reviews and the text of the paper as they work on their revisions, we now weave all reviewers' and editors' comments and edits within the submitted paper itself. To accomplish this, we use the Review features of Microsoft Word such as Track Changes and Insert Comment. In the returned manuscript authors will find two types of feedback in the right-hand margin: One type consists of basic edits for grammar, APA corrections for compliance, spelling changes, etc. The other type involves "text balloons," connected to particular passages of the text, which contain suggestions for clarification, expanded explanations, and additions to what has been written.

When authors read over their papers with the reviews interwoven, they are able to appreciate the reviewers' points better by seeing them within the context of the paper itself. We also see this juxtaposition of text and comments about the text helps authors as they revise their manuscripts since they do not have to go back and forth from the paper and the reviews—they are now all found in one document!

In the submission of the revised manuscript to the journal, authors make all of their changes to the attached file that contains the paper and its review by also using the Track

Changes feature of Microsoft Word. This allows the editors to easily see what steps the authors have taken to revise their papers. Authors also use the Insert Comment tool to juxtapose their responses to the questions and observations made by the reviewers. Lastly, if authors have any questions of their own, they use the Insert Comments feature to include them in the revised text. By placing all of the edits and commentary in one document we eliminate the challenge of going back and forth from multiple documents (i.e., the initial submission, the initial review, and the revised submission).

In the next section we include the software steps authors take to view and make the changes to their paper that allow us to track the entire sequence upon resubmission.

Using Microsoft Word to Edit and Review Manuscripts

The following are the steps authors use to edit and review the reviewed papers they receive:

1. Click on the View menu and click on the Print Layout tab. This will enable you to view the changes you make in the manuscript.
2. Click on the View menu and click on Tool Bar tab and then click the Reviewing tab so that the Reviewing option is selected. This will enable you to use the Track Changes and Insert Comments tools with the manuscript.
3. Click on the Tools menu, click Options, and then click the User Information tab. In the Name and Initials boxes, type the name and initials you want to use in the changes and comments you make in the manuscript.
4. To begin to track the changes you make as you edit the manuscript, move your cursor to the Reviewing toolbar and click on the Track Changes icon. The Track Changes icon appears as a white document page with red lines with a bright star or asterisk on the upper right hand corner and yellow pencil located at the lower right hand side. When the Track Changes feature is turned on, you will notice the TRK letters in the box at the bottom of the computer screen appear in a black colored font. Once this option is turned on, every deletion, insertion, and correction you make to the manuscript will be recorded. This will allow you to create an audit trail for the editors and authors to read and review.
5. To turn off the Track Changes feature, move your cursor to the Reviewing toolbar and click on the Track Changes icon again. When the Track Changes feature is turned off, you will notice the TRK letters in the box at the bottom of the computer screen no longer appear in the black colored font. With the Track Changes feature turned off, you can then delete changes that had been made in the manuscript by using the Delete or the Backspace key.
6. To insert a new Comment, place the cursor on the position in the manuscript to which the Comment is being directed, then click on the Insert Comment icon located on the Reviewing Tool Bar. The Insert Comment icon is a picture of a yellow folder with a bright star or asterisk on the upper right hand corner of the yellow folder. Depending on the version of Word you have, you will have the option of writing your comment in a Comment Balloon that appears in the right hand margin of the manuscript or in the Comments windowpane that appears at

- the bottom on the computer screen. In some versions of Word, you can use both display options.
7. To delete a Comment of your own, you can place your cursor on the Comment in the text or on the Comment Balloon located in the right hand margin, then click the right button on your mouse and then click on the Delete Comment tab. In older versions of Word, the Comment will appear as a portion of text highlighted in yellow. You can also place your cursor on the Comment in the text or on the Comment Balloon located in the right hand margin you wish to delete and then move your cursor on the Delete Comment icon located on the Reviewing Tool Bar and then click the left button of your mouse to delete the Comment. The Delete Comment icon is a picture of a yellow folder with a red X located on the upper right hand corner of the yellow folder. Please note that the Delete Comment icon can only be used if you have placed your cursor on the Comment you wish to delete.
 8. To edit a Comment of your own, you can place your cursor on the Comment in the text, then click the right button on your mouse and then click on the Edit Comment tab. You can also place your cursor on the Comment in the text you wish to edit and then move your cursor on the Edit Comment icon located on the Reviewing Tool Bar. The Edit Comment icon is a picture of a yellow folder with a yellow pencil located on the middle of the yellow folder. Once you have clicked either the Edit Comment icon with the left button of your mouse or the Edit Comment tab with the right button of the mouse, the Comment windowpane will open at the bottom of the screen. Move the cursor to the Comment windowpane and click the left mouse button on the Comment you wish to edit. You can then begin to edit the Comment. If you are using a version of Word that has the Comment Balloon option, place your cursor on the Comment Balloon located in the right hand margin you wish to edit and click the left mouse button. You can then begin making your edit. Depending on your version of Word, you can edit the Comment in the Comment Balloon or in the Comment windowpane. Please note that the Edit Comment icon can only be used if you have placed your cursor on the Comment you wish to edit.
 9. To receive additional help or pointers with using these Microsoft Word editing and reviewing features, please access Word's Help resource or email one of the Editors for further assistance.

Conclusion

By using this audit trail approach, we have created a process that is both familiar to qualitative researchers and easier for all participants in the manuscript development enterprise. We also know that with any new innovation, it takes time before we have refined the details and smoothed out the procedures. As we all work towards the ultimate goal of producing quality papers via a process that is both editorially transparent and efficient, we thank authors for their participation and as we continue hone this encouraging approach to managing the editorial process and mentoring authors and reviewers alike.