

On the Craft of Editing

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Being an editor of a scientific journal is a challenging endeavor. Unfortunately, there is no “school for editors”,¹ which forces one to learn this craft through daily experience. However, certain attributes can be of great help.

Firstly, a medical journal editor must possess a deep understanding of the clinical field in which most of their readers practice daily. Secondly, they must have a profound knowledge of the fundamentals and scope of biomedical research. This will enable them to assess the originality, quality, and relevance of the articles they decide to publish in the journal.²

Additionally, it is essential for the editor to understand the wide range of ethical issues that permeate both professional practice and scientific research and publication. Such knowledge will enable them to assess whether the material they are going to publish meets the standards that currently govern the activity and that society demands. Another important characteristic is being an avid reader. This interest should not be limited to the specific subject matter of their journal but should also encompass the latest news and trends across the entire spectrum of biomedical publishing. Staying updated will facilitate a more accurate judgment regarding the material to be published

and a better understanding of the readers’ needs.

While the aforementioned aspects certainly contribute to forming a good scientific journal editor, one of the most important ingredients for reaching a higher level is creating a team that supports this work. This group must consist of competent professionals, but perhaps more importantly, “good people”,³ who should possess generosity, moral integrity, and intellectual honesty.

Recently, José María Ceriani Cernadas, who served as the editor-in-chief of our journal for 15 years, passed away. With deep sorrow, I bid farewell to his physical presence, but at the same time, I am pleased to have known a person who embodied all the aforementioned qualities, including having formed a team capable of continuing the task. In a journal about to celebrate its 100th anniversary, José has left his mark. ■

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doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5546/aap.2025-10719.eng>

To cite: Ferrero F. On the Craft of Editing. *Arch Argent Pediatr*. 2025;e202510719. Online ahead of print 30-ABR-2025.

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