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# First Things First: Writing Strategies

Marilyn L. Grady

## Writing and Editing

Writing and editing are symbiotic processes. My earliest editing experiences were invested in my own manuscripts. Writing, rewriting, and refining have been constant aspects of my academic career.

My editing skills “ramped up” during the phase of my professional career that required the editing of nine pathophysiology course books each year for three years. The background that enabled me to edit my own work and the pathophysiology texts was a strong foundation in grammar and spelling. Reading has been a steady influence on my editing skills as well. Reading is a vocabulary builder as well as a constant “styles of writing” lesson. (Steve Martin’s [2010] *An Object of Beauty* is an example of a “styles of writing” lesson.)

In my work as a professor, 65 of my doctoral students have completed the writing of their dissertations and graduated. Additionally, I serve on the doctoral supervisory committees of many other students. These experiences call on my editing skills and provide an opportunity to oversee research design and methods and extend my knowledge in the field of educational leadership.

As a professor I have written extensively since I live in the land of “publish or perish.” Because I have had a significant number of refereed journal articles published, I have experienced the comments, criticism, and recommendations of a number of editors and reviewers. The books I have written, alone or in collaboration with others, have expanded my writing skills. The comments of editors and reviewers provided by the book publishers have honed my writing and editing skills as well.

These experiences have enriched my work as the editor of the *Journal of Women in Educational Leadership (JWEL)*. My work as the editor of *JWEL* has provided an opportunity to review the work of a wide range of scholars in the field of educational leadership. The work of these individuals provides a significant, focused body of work on the topic of women in educational leadership.

Thank you to all who have made my work as founding editor of *JWEL* possible.