

Editorial

The Five-Step Paradigm for Success in Technical Journal Publication

Successful authorship for technical journals requires a variety of skills. Using the right paradigm can help minimize the pain and agony. A five-step approach is recommended.

- 1) Write a draft paper, describing the idea and confirming its validity via theoretical analysis, experimental verification, etc. Enlist the help of a colleague to read the draft. Use the comments as guidance in preparing a revision (second draft).
- 2) Submit the second draft to a conference. The conference technical committee will review it and indicate changes that should be incorporated to produce the conference paper (third draft).
- 3) Present the paper at the conference. Solicit feedback from the audience. Use the conference feedback to prepare another revision (fourth draft).
- 4) Submit the fourth draft to the appropriate technical journal. If you submit to the IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON COMPUTERS, we will obtain several reviews that, in most cases, will include several suggestions for revision.
- 5) If the suggestions are "small," the coordinating editor will request a minor revision. Upon successful completion of the requested revisions, the coordinating editor will then recommend that the paper be accepted for publication. If a more significant revision is required, the coordinating editor will request a major revision. This means that the revision will be re-reviewed before acceptance (or rejection). If the paper is rejected (either on first review or after the major revision), you may wish to revise it and submit it elsewhere or abandon the project.

Note that this is a sequential process. Occasionally, would-be authors try to shorten the process by concurrent submission of the same paper to both a conference and a journal. When this "shortcut" is detected, it causes immediate rejection, and the two opportunities for constructive comment (the conference program committee review and the feedback at the conference) are lost. The resulting journal submission is more likely to be rejected (or is more likely to need a major revision) than if the full Five-Step Paradigm is implemented. If the paper is accepted by both the conference and the journal, the author will usually have to withdraw it from one or the other since most journals are unwilling to publish a conference paper verbatim.

An important aspect of the final step (journal publication) is the need to acknowledge that a prior version of the paper was published in a Conference Proceedings. In the case of our TRANSACTIONS, such prior publication must be disclosed to the Editor-in-Chief upon submission or as soon afterward as possible. It must also be noted as a footnote to the paper. The "standard" form for such an acknowledgment is as follows:

This is an expanded version of a paper published in *Proceedings of Conference on Topic XYZ*, location of conference, date, pp. xx-xx, copyright © 199x, IEEE.

Upon acceptance by the TRANSACTIONS (or upon receiving a request for a minor revision), the author should obtain permission for publication of the revision from the holder of the copyright on the Conference Proceedings.

Earl E. Swartzlander, Jr.
Editor-in-Chief