



How do I transform my seminar or conference paper into a publishable article?

- It is very rare that a paper is ready to submit to a journal (a) because it's in early stages, and/or (b) not written "for" a journal.
- First thing, pick the journal to which you want to submit; we hope it is *IFJP*. Familiarize yourself with what it publishes and the literatures to which those who write on your topic contribute.
- Check the target journal for what they have published on your topic. (One or more of these authors will likely be your reviewers.)
- Submit your keywords into a search engine such as Google Scholar to make sure you are familiar with the prominent work on your topic; this will be a useful check for insuring you are in dialogue with the other intellectual contributions. You may find critical citations to include.
- You are ready to submit when your paper is as well written and as well structured as those published in the journal. (Particularly for non-native English authors, see also our FAQ on English-language dominance: https://www.ifjglobal.org/submit-to-us/#anchor_language_questions_shortcut).
- If you are lucky enough to have useful/constructive feedback on a paper, use this to begin re-shaping it. Key will be to move from "thoughts or ideas on a page" to focusing on or around a main question or research curiosity. Is this already clear in your paper? If not, work on this. A published paper typically has a clear point.
- Also key is the structure/flow of the paper. One of the good reasons for presenting work in courses and conferences is that this helps to expose where (a) the gaps are, (b) where the "unacceptable jumpy" parts are, (c) what people don't get, (d) if

you're trying to include too much/too little, (e) if your theory/approach doesn't work (well enough), (f) if there is work "out there" that you have missed or don't know about. Attend to this – and if feasible, as soon as possible after your presentation – even if in bullet points while it is still fresh in your mind.

- If you get unhelpful/unconstructive comments, don't be put off! Such comments may be, indeed are likely to be, helpful; they will tell you something (such as "it's not what I'm doing anyway" which might get you to focus better; or that your work is provocative – not a bad thing!)
- Make sure you re-write your paper very carefully – finding a statement in the conclusion on the lines of 'in this *chapter* I have' ...simply shows a reader/editor that you have not cared enough about your work. (By the way, a paper *inspired by* a chapter in your dissertation is possible, but by definition a chapter doesn't stand alone.)
- Make sure that your title and abstract properly reflect the re-written paper. Make sure the abstract is stellar – reviewers will decide whether to review based on the abstract.
- Check the journal you want to submit to and make sure you follow all of their guidelines.
- There is no magic formula. Revising a paper for potential publication is largely about re-shaping, re-writing and making sure your structure is clear and coherent – and you do what you say you are going to do. Good writing is also about "letting some words go" – even a lot of them. Writing is (largely about) re-writing.
- And to reiterate, you are ready to submit when your paper is as well written and as well structured as those published in the journal.
- Good luck!