

Tips for Recruiting Authors



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Janet's personal tips

Tip #1 – What do readers want?

- Open your mind to possible topics, even if they seem far out.
- Think about what you as a reader would like to see in your state newsletter.
- Ask other histotechs (coworkers, Board members, society members) what they'd like to see in the newsletter.
- If they give you an idea, ask if they'd be willing to write the article. If they say no, ask if they know of someone who *would* like to write it.

Tip #2 – Be active in your state histology society

- Attend your state society functions. Sit in on lectures and workshops.
- Was there a talk that interested you or the audience? How was the speaker?
- If there was a good response to the presentation, ask the speaker if he/she would consider writing a one or two page article on the topic for your newsletter.

Tip #3 – Be active in NSH

- Attend the NSH S/C if possible. Sit in on lectures and workshops.
- Refer to Tip #2.
- Can't go to the national convention? Find someone from your state society who is going.
- Ask if the attendee would write a one page summary or review of a workshop he/she took.

Tip #4 – Involve Board members

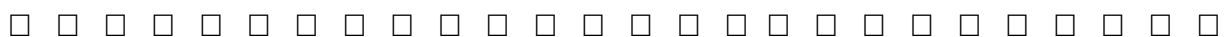
- During your state society Board meeting, ask Board members if they would like to have/keep a quality newsletter; they should say yes. (If they stare blankly at you, resign as editor immediately!)
- Let the Board members know that being editor is not an easy task, that obtaining articles is like pulling teeth, and that the newsletter is a reflection of the state society's commitment as a whole. Lay a heavy guilt trip if necessary! They must understand that a newsletter requires a group effort.
- Make a motion that each Board member be required to write one article per year for the newsletter. You can assign topics, but I prefer to have each person choose a topic of their own unless they specifically ask me to suggest something. (See Exhibit #1)
- Each Board member should also be required to submit articles pertaining to their Board responsibilities. For example, the MSH Convention Coordinator is asked to write a pre- and post-convention report.

Tip #5 – Involve students

- Does your state have any institutions with HT/HTL programs?
- Speak with the Program Director about having active student involvement with the state Histology Society. Perhaps students could write articles which describe their experiences in learning histologic techniques. In Michigan, we have two active programs. One is a hospital-based HT/HTL program which asks students to volunteer to write articles. The other is a joint community college/secondary school HTL program which requires students to write articles as part of their course work.

Tip #6 – Involve award recipients

- Does your state society give awards or scholarships?
- Ask an award recipient to submit an article. In Michigan, we award a student scholarship; it is a *requirement* that the recipient submit an article for the newsletter.



Tip #7 – Talk to vendors

- Never mind that their job is to sell a product. Maybe the product is something histotechs would like to know more about.
- Who works for the vendors? Frequently former bench techs who have advanced knowledge in specialty areas!
- This is almost a no-brainer – histology equipment/reagent suppliers *love* to tell people about their stuff!
- Ask a vendor representative to write an article about something in their special area. Has the company just introduced a new product? If it is truly innovative, histotechs would probably like to hear the details and background information. You may screen the article so it doesn't sound too much like a commercial, and place a disclaimer at the beginning (“This article is for informational purposes only, and does not imply endorsement by MSH”). I have run articles about ventilation, HER2/neu, and microwave fixation which had been written by representatives of companies selling associated products.

Tip #8 – Network

- I'm tired of hearing the word, but the concept works. Get to know other people who work in histology, or who work in related fields.
- When an article topic comes to mind, you can call someone who may either write the article or recommend another expert who will. This is how I snagged a two-part article on the transmission of TB in wildlife; the topic intrigued me, so I called a histotech friend who had done work on deer specimens. She referred me to the veterinary pathologist who has published papers on that very subject!

Tip #9 – Cruise the Histonet

- Follow topics discussed on the Histonet.
 - Did someone ask for help with a technical problem? Was there a knowledgeable reply?
 - Contact the person who gave that reply and ask if they would write it up.
 - Was there a discussion about a controversial issue relating to histology?
 - Contact someone involved in that discussion who gave an articulate response and ask if you could use it.
- I have obtained technical articles with this method, as well as a series of articles providing insight into another country's laboratory methods.

Tip #10 – Trade

- There are at least 40 other newsletter editors in the same situation.
- How about trading an article that *you* have written for one from another editor? This takes more of your time, of course, but try it. I have done this once, and I discovered that it was a nice change to write an article for a newsletter other than my own.

Tip #11 – Place an ad

- This is partly desperation, partly reminding members that newsletter editing takes a lot of help.
- This rarely works for me, but I do it occasionally to try to spur members to get involved. It at least lets them know that anyone, not just the “experts,” is welcome to submit an item. (See Exhibit #2)

