BEST PRACTICES FOR DRAFTING & PUBLISHING ARTICLES

GETTING STARTED
- Regularly read articles about law librarianship. Keeping abreast of what is happening in the profession can inform your own writing.
- Volunteer for writing opportunities, as those may lead to additional prospects.
- Learn as much as you can about the publication process for the journal, magazine, newsletter, blog, or resource you want to be published in.
- Writing shorter pieces such as blog posts can spur you to write longer articles.
- Consider publishing in more general librarianship resources, as opposed to only law librarianship resources.

WHAT SHOULD I WRITE ABOUT?
- Write what you want to know – Are you curious about a topic? Research and investigate, then share your findings with others.
- Think about challenges and/or lessons that can be attractive to a wide range of law librarians: government, academic, law firm.
- Think about what's next in the profession. Keep your scholarship focused on the future.
- Write about your own expertise. Your daily experiences can inform other readers.

FINDING TIME TO WRITE:
- Get an accountability buddy – finding time to write and keeping on task can be a big challenge; but a friend or colleague regularly checking in about your progress can be a good way to keep motivated.
- Consider writing with a co-author, especially if you are nervous about publishing.

DRAFTS AND EDITING:
- Ask a friend or colleague to edit your article. Ask for comments and suggestions in addition to grammar/spellchecking.
- Become comfortable with outlining and revising your written work.
- Assume you will go through several drafts.

WHAT IF I FAIL?
- Do not let fear stop you from pursuing your scholarship.
- Be ambitious and bold.
- Stop assuming you are not an expert.
• Do not let one rejection stop you from writing or from submitting your article elsewhere.
• Ask for details on how to improve your proposal or article.

REASONS AALL SPECTRUM ARTICLES ARE NOT SELECTED FOR PUBLICATION:
• Topic is repetitive – covered recently in AALL Spectrum. (Do your homework and check to see when the topic was last addressed.)
• Topic does not share a progressive or new idea.
• Topic is not applicable to a wide audience.
• Topic is not applicable to law librarianship.
• Topic is better suited to an academic journal such as Law Library Journal.