The Role of the Editorial Guide

The editorial guide builds a collaborative relationship with the contributor, warming up to roles that will assist the writer to complete the article in a timely manner and to a high standard. The precise naming of this role is an evolving endeavour and best efforts to date have delineated a cluster of complimentary roles. My grateful thanks to Mike Cormack for his input in this endeavour.

Architect: From the outset discuss with the writer the intention of the article, its purpose, logic, structure, shape, overall flow, theoretical underpinnings and the selection of examples to be included. What sort of piece is it and how will it work?

Morenian Thinker: Assist the contributor to think and write from a Morenian perspective, founding the article on Morenian theory and making use of psychodrama principles and practices throughout.

Sounding Board: Respond to ideas, tensions, conflicts and anything else that emerges as the writer comes to grips with the piece.

Cheerleader: Assist the writer to sustain their warm-up, which often means reassuring and encouraging them when anxiety, perfectionism or procrastination emerges.

Coach: A keeping-on-track function. Sometimes writers can get caught up in the detail and lose sight of their original overall intention. It is important to help them keep an eye on the bigger perspective by comparing the detail of the work-in-progress with the purpose and structure agreed at the outset, and by making sure that different bits integrate successfully into a coherent whole.

Reviewer: Provide feedback from the perspective of the audience or different subgroups within the audience. Basically, you are responding to the writing with a fresh set of eyes and asking questions such as - am I engaged, am I curious, am I inspired, does it hang together, does it work well?

Copy Editor: Suggest improvements to clarity of meaning, sentence structure, word precision, grammar and punctuation, and do this without taking over the contributor's unique writing style. It is important that the writer's voice remains and that s/he maintains ownership of the piece.

Peer Companion: Maintain connection and positive tele with the contributor so as to reduce any sense of isolation that may emerge during the process.

Double, Mirror and Role Reverser: Say no more…

In assisting a person to develop their writing, questions often emerge regarding the difference between supervising and editing. The following perspective, provided by Bev Hosking, may be helpful and do keep in mind that this is an area of overlap where flexibility is called for.

With supervision, you relate more to the development of the writer.
With editing, you relate more to the development of the writing.

I trust this guidance is helpful.

Bona Anna
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