Author Guidelines for Integrative Literature Reviews

About Integrative Literature Reviews

An integrative literature review is a form of empirical research that generates new knowledge about the topic reviewed. It "reviews, critiques, and synthesizes representative literature on a topic in an integrated way such that new frameworks and perspectives on the topic are generated" [1, p. 356]. It "follow[s] certain procedures intended to make … coverage as complete and unbiased as possible and to make [the] process explicit enough to be replicable" [2, pp. 1-2].

Integrative literature reviews generally offer a reconceptualization and reformulation of a mature body of work or a preliminary conceptualization of an emerging body of work. The results can help a discipline identify important gaps in research, affirm best practices, set standards, and make other important advances in teaching, research, and practice.

The *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication* does **not** accept narrative literature reviews. Narrative reviews assemble and analyze the literature on a topic based primarily on the writer's professional experience and knowledge of the field of research, but they do **not** require comprehensiveness, nor do they require clear articulation of the methods of review. Integrative literature reviews, by comparison, both clearly articulate the methods of review and aim to provide a comprehensive view of the topic under investigation.

The *Transactions* will consider only integrative literature reviews situated within the larger conversation on professional communication. Although professional communication is an interdisciplinary field and readers have eclectic interests, the one thing that connects readers of this journal is their interest in professional communication. |

We recommend limiting the word count to no more than 7500 words, excluding references.

Guidelines for Integrative Literature Reviews

Formatting References	Follow the IEEE style for formatting references, which differs from the APA and MLA styles that are more widely used among professional communicators. For instructions on formatting references, see *TPC Citation Style*.
Formatting Text	Note specific guidelines regarding: - File formats - Formatting of text (margins, spacing, type face) - Formatting of tables, charts, figures, and illustrations See Guidelines for Formatting Manuscripts for details.

Use the titles below as your major section headings and address each of the issues below in the corresponding section.

Abstract	Structure the abstract (between 200 and 250 words) by subheadings that address all sections required of integrative literature reviews below, as well as implications for practice, research, and/or education.
Introduction	Contextualize the topic of the review and explain its significance. Integrative literature reviews are often important for establishing best or orthodox practice, as well as confirming established knowledge, in emerging and longstanding fields of inquiry. The introduction should announce and justify the focus or topic of the review.

The introduction need not repeat sources that will be included in the review itself. Instead, it can describe real-world, methodological, or pedagogical issues that inspired the review. Therefore, the literature cited in the introduction might illustrate the problems in areas of inquiry, theories, methods, or practice that necessitated the review.

Include information on

- The need for assessing the topic
- The relevance and importance of the topic to readers of the *Transactions on Professional Communication*
- The general research question or problem statement underlying the review.

Close this section by providing a brief preview of the main sections in the manuscript.

Research Methodology

Describe in detail how the review was conducted. Integrative literature reviews require systematic search and analysis processes. Describe the general design of the review. State, step-by-step, how the sources were collected.

(Note: Explain only how the data (the sources) were collected—do not report in this section the findings that were collected and synthesized.)

Review protocol: Describe your full search strategy, including your selection of databases, a justification why they were chosen, and the set of search terms used (with justification).

(***Reminder****:* The literature is the data for analysis in an integrative literature review.)

Inclusion/exclusion criteria: Specify your selection rules. Explain criteria used for determining which sources were included in the review.

Data analysis: Explain how you extracted data from the sources (i.e., software used to organize the extraction and analysis processes, etc.).

Describe how results from the studies were handled and combined. Explain your systematic process for analyzing the corpus (i.e., how items in the corpus were examined, how main ideas and themes from the literature were identified and analyzed, etc.).

Results/ Discussion

Explain how the findings from the sources were analyzed. Whether they were analyzed quantitatively or qualitatively, justify the analytic methods and their appropriateness.

Characterization of corpus: Describe the attributes of the literature included in the review. How many sources were eliminated at each stage of data collection? How many sources were included? In what types of journals were they published? What methods do the sources use? Assess the quality of the sources and explain how their quality was evaluated.

Findings synthesis: Offer a synthesis of the findings. The synthesis can be a thematic analysis or meta-analysis (e.g., combining numerical data from multiple studies to draw new conclusions). When appropriate, conduct sub-analyses of different subgroups of similar sources. End with an overall summary of the findings.

Conclusions & Further Research

Describe how the review makes a significant contribution to new thinking on the topic.

Draw practical, pedagogical, and/or methodological implications of your reformulation of findings from sources on the topic. How do the main findings of your review matter to those who teach, research, and work in professional communication?

Openly acknowledge all of the limitations of the review, as well as the implications of those limitations.

Close with suggestions for future research and recommendations.

References

1. R. J. Torraco, "Writing integrative literature reviews: Guidelines and examples," in *Human Resources Dev. Rev.*, vol. 4, no. 3, pp. 356–367, 2005.

2. J. Ramey and P. G. Rao, "The systematic literature review as a research genre," *2011 IEEE International Professional Communication Conference*, Cincinnati, OH, USA, pp. 1-7, 2011.

Samples of Integrative Literature Reviews Published in the *Transactions*

A. Alaiad, Y. Alnsour, and M. Alnsaro, "Virtual teams: Thematic taxonomy, constructs model, and future research directions," *IEEE Trans. Prof. Commun.*, vol. 62, no. 3, pp. 211-238, 2019.

M. Grene, Y. Cleary, and A. Marcus-Quinn, "Use of plain-language guidelines to promote health literacy " *IEEE Trans. Prof. Commun*., vol. 60, no. 4, pp. 384-400, 2017.

[Note that a subscription is required to view the articles. If you do not already have a subscription, your library might. Authors may also request sample research articles from the editor.]

Additional Resource on the Integrative Literature Review Genre

R. Whittemore and K. Knafl. "The integrative review: Updated methodology*, "Journal of Advanced Nursing*, vol. 52, no. 5, pp. 546-553, 2005.

Reviewers' Expectations

To learn about the criteria that reviewers consider when providing feedback, consult the rubric for reviewers of integrative reviews.