Introduction to section I

Publication of a paper in a journal is the culmination of a process. The publication process begins with an idea that is developed and refined until it lends itself to empirical research or conceptual elaboration. The idea must be placed in the context of extant research and theory, and something ‘new’ must be identified. Idea development is followed by empirical research, conceptual elaboration, and/or theory development. The idea, its elaboration, and the results of any empirical research or theory development then need to be documented in a fashion that is accessible and meaningful to readers in some well-defined audience. That audience is the readership of the journal for which the paper is intended. Throughout the development process it is helpful to obtain feedback by having others read and comment on the evolving paper and by making formal and informal presentations where ideas can be discussed, sharpened and polished. At some place in the cycle, the feedback and refinement process reach the point of diminishing returns, which suggests it is time to submit the paper. Submission starts a process of review and revision, which results in publication or rejection by the target journal. Rejection may result in revision of the paper for another journal based on feedback, and the process begins again.

The joys of receiving an acceptance letter and seeing a paper published online or in print are part of the rewards for work that goes into the process of crafting a publication. However, if a publication is really successful, publication is not even the end of the process. Successful and influential publications are read, are cited and impact theory, future research and/or practice. It is useful to remember that the real objective of scholarship is the creation and communication of new knowledge. Publication is just a vehicle for achieving this objective.

The three papers in this section of the book provide insights into the publication process. The first chapter is an update of an earlier paper (published in 2008) by the editors of this book (Ladik and Stewart). It provides the results of a survey of reviewers regarding what they look for when reviewing papers and what they view as the criteria for publication of a paper. Editors and reviewers serve as gatekeepers in the publication process, so it is fitting that the first chapter of the book provides the perspectives of these gatekeepers as an introduction. The second chapter is a reprint of a paper by John Summers that originally appeared in the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*. This paper provides a useful and comprehensive summary of the publication process.

The third chapter, by O.C. Ferrell and Linda Ferrell, focuses on the important topic of ethics. While there have always been important ethical dimensions of the publication process, the proliferation of retractions of papers in leading journals in multiple disciplines has served to highlight the need for attention to ethical issues. Some ethical issues, such as blatant plagiarism of the work of others, are easily discoverable and generally recognized as inappropriate. Other ethical issues are not

so easily detected and are more nuanced. Chapter 3 provides a helpful introduction to these issues.

The three chapters in this first section of the book will likely raise as many questions as they answer. This is the motivation for the remainder of the remaining chapters of the book.