Guidelines for Reviewers

The Golden Rule **"Treat others as you would like to be treated"**, apply very well for the most general and essential guidelines for reviewers. Siegelman (1988) adapted this golden rule of the Ethics of Reciprocity in what might be called the Golden Rule of Reviewing. He stated **"Referee manuscript as you would like to have your own papers treated"** (Siegelman, 1988, p. 360).

"The Golden Rule" is an essential moral principle found in almost all major religious and cultures. It has been conceived as the most essential basis for the modern concept of human right. Principal philosophers and religious figures have stated it in different ways. At www.religioustolerance.org/reciproc.htm, for example, versions of the Golden Rule in 21 world religious are quoted. Analogously we might conceive Siegelman's Reviewing Golden Rule as an essential rule that can be applied to virtually all reviewing processes and methods in spite of their high diversity and the variety of their ends and means.

To be more specific, with regards to some guidelines for reviewers, would depend on the objectives sought by the reviewing process and on its inherent limitations and restrictions. Different editorial objectives, for example, would probably originate different guidelines. Different disciplines with possibly different epistemological values would also probably require different guidelines. Journal reviewing might have different guidelines to the reviewing required by conferences presentations or proceedings publications. Scientific research papers would probably have different guidelines than those recommended for papers of case studies, work in progress, experience-based reflections, industrial innovations, analogical thinking, etc.

One way of dealing with the inherent diversity of disciplines and kinds of papers in a multi-disciplinary context is to ask the reviewers (beside their constructive feedback oriented to improve the paper, their reasoned recommendation for accepting/rejecting the paper) to rate the paper according different criteria established by the respective editor or the respective conference's chair or organizers. The weights of these criteria would depend on the kind of article submitted and on the nature and the objectives of the corresponding journal or the conference.

Consequently, in multi-, inter-, and trans-disciplinary contexts, especially in those oriented to forums integrated by the academic, industrial and public sectors, we recommend the reviewers to rate the article being reviewed according the following criteria:

1. **Originality:** Not known or experienced before. A technique or a method not used before. Has this or similar work been previously reported? Are the problems and/or approaches in the paper completely new?

2. **Novelty:** According this criterion, it is not necessary for the paper to develop new techniques, or to generate new knowledge, but it should, at least, apply, or combine, them in a fresh and novel way or shed some new light on their applicability in a certain domain.

3. **Innovation:** A new product, process or service based on new or known technologies, methods or methodologies. Known technologies and techniques might be combined to generate new product or service with potential users in

the market. What defines an innovation is a new kind of possible users of a product or a service, not necessarily new knowledge, new techniques, new technologies, new methods, or new applications. Innovation is related to new uses or new markets.

4. **Relevance:** Importance, usefulness, and/or applicability of the ideas, methods and/or techniques described in the paper.

5. **Appropriateness:** Suitability, agreeableness, compatibility, congruity, and adequacy of the paper to the areas and topics of the journal or the conference. Would the article perhaps better be presented at another journal or conference?

6. **Significance:** Importance and noteworthiness of the ideas, methods and techniques used and/or described in the article. The problem approached in the article should be interesting and natural, and not just be chosen by the authors because it can be attacked by their methods. What it is presented in the article is not just obvious and trivial ideas.

7. **Quality:** Scientific, technical, and/or methodological soundness of the article. Correctness of results, proofs and/or reflections. Inclusion in the articles of details that allow checking the correctness of the results or citations of articles where can be found the proof or parts of it.

8. **Presentation:** Adequate organization of the article and the language used in it, as to make its content clear, easily readable and understandable. Clarity in what has been achieved by the author of the article. Even technical papers on a narrow topic should be written such that non-experts can comprehend the main contribution of the paper and the methods employed. The paper shouldn't just be a litany of deep but obscure theorems. The information of the paper should be available to the reader with a minimum of effort.