Publishing the MRP: US & International Audiences

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Questions to Ask: Peer-Review

• Before you even begin the process of writing, you need to ask yourself several questions:
  – What do I have to say?
  – Is it worth saying?
  – What is the right format for the message?
  – What is the audience for the message?
  – Where should I publish the message?
  – How can I best use paper and web-based resources?
Types of articles

- Editorial articles
- Research articles
- Overview articles
- Case reports
- Letters to the editor
- Case reports
- Guidelines
Choosing a Journal

• Factors to consider:
  – National or international audience?
  – Broad or specialty journal?
  – Journal's content area, culture and readers?
  – What is the history of this journal in regards of publishing your type of research methods?
  – Requirements on sample size for qualitative analysis or analysis requirements on data?
  – Chances of acceptance?
  – Impact factor, immediacy factor, or other publication measures?
  – Practical matters (time to publication, etc.)?
  – Are there other more appropriate outlets (books, popular media, internet, special issues, newsletters)?
Authors Guidelines

• Don’t Piss Off the Editor! Make sure you read the authors guidelines carefully
  • Decide on the manuscript type
    • Brief Report
    • Full Article
    • Other
  • Make a template
  • Note reference style and adhere to it.
Choosing a Journal (2)

- Once you have identified some potential journals, you should always:
  - Review the journals’ aims and scope carefully, as well as read several recent issues, to determine whether or not your manuscript will be a good fit.
  - Send a brief letter or email to the editors of the journals of choice to assess interest. Include the paper’s title, abstract or other description.
  - Ask any additional questions (e.g. flexibility on paper length, typical times for the peer review process) that may influence your decision on where to submit.
How to Write

- Writing the manuscript
  - Framing it to the journal and their audience (fit)
  - Dedicate time daily to writing the manuscript and remember the Importance of writing schedules
  - Make a timeline and hold yourself accountable.
  - Consider starting a writing group
I. PLANNING AND PREPPING
1. How and When to Pick a Journal
2. Tone and Style
3. Writing With Others: Tips for Coauthored Papers

II. WRITING THE ARTICLE
4. Writing the Introduction
5. Writing the Method
6. Writing the Results
7. Writing the Discussion
8. Arcana and Miscellany: From Titles to Footnotes

III. PUBLISHING YOUR WRITING
9. Dealing With Journals: Submitting, Resubmitting, and Reviewing
10. One of Many: Building a Body of Work
Manuscript Sections:

- Introduction: Why is this question important to the field? What have others done? Why did you decide to do it?
- Methods: How did you do it?
- Results: What did you find?
- Discussion: What does it all mean?
Steps to Organizing Your Manuscript

- Prepare the figures and tables.
- Write the Methods.
- Write up the Results.
- Write the Discussion.
- Write a clear Conclusion.
- Write a compelling introduction.
- Write the Abstract.
- Compose a concise and descriptive Title.
- Select Keywords for indexing.
- Write the Acknowledgements.
- Write up the References.
“Finer” Criteria

- Journal editors are most interested in publishing articles that are:
  - **Feasible** (answer a question using a robust method)
  - **Interesting** (particularly for their readership)
  - **Novel**
  - **Ethical**
  - **Relevant**
Stylistic Considerations

• Use short words, sentences and paragraphs.
• Use nouns and verbs rather than adjectives and adverbs.
• Use active rather than passive voice.
• Don’t use jargon or abbreviations if at all possible.
• Avoid clichés.
• If the journal is not in your first language, find a native speaker (if possible) to review the content and language of the paper before submission.
Stylistic Considerations (2)

- Poorly written, excessive jargon
- Inadequate/inappropriate presentation
- Poor description of design
- Excessive zeal and self promotion
- Rationale confused, contradictory
- Essential data omitted, ignored
- Boring
- Important work of others ignored

Byrne DW, Publishing Medical Research Papers, Williams and Wilkins, 1998