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# HOW TO WRITE A WORLD CLASS MEDICAL PAPER

## TIPS, TRAPS AND TRAVESTIES

S&T, Elsevier China

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Building Insights. Breaking Boundaries.™

# Outline



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- **What to do before you start writing a paper?**
- **How to write a quality paper?**
  - **Structure**
  - **Language**
  - **Technical details**
  - **Cover letter**
- **What to do when you finish a paper?**
- **Ethical issues**



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# What to do before you start writing a paper?

# **STEP I: Looking back on your research**



- 1. Have you done something new and interesting?**
- 2. Have you checked the latest results in the field?**
- 3. Have the findings been verified by appropriate analysis and their significance verified?**
- 4. Are the methods/measurements valid and reliable?**
- 5. Can you describe the scope and limitations of the methods?**
- 6. Do your findings tell a nice story or is the story incomplete?**
- 7. Is the work directly related to a current hot topic?**
- 8. Have you provided solutions to any difficult problems?**

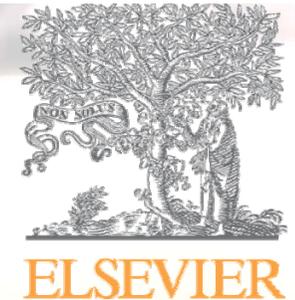
**If all answers are “yes”, then start preparing your manuscript.**

## **STEP II: Thinking over your goals**



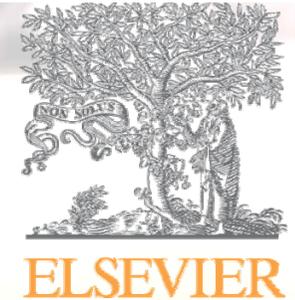
- 1. What type of manuscript?**
- 2. Who is your audience?**
- 3. Which journal?**

# What type of manuscript?



- 1. Full-Length Methodology Research (Original articles)**
  - 2. Letters/Rapid Communications/Short Communications**
  - 3. Case Studies/Case report**
  - 4. Review Papers**
- Self-evaluate your work: Is it sufficient for a full article? Or are your results so thrilling that they need to be revealed as soon as possible?
  - Ask your supervisor and colleagues for advice on manuscript type. Sometimes outsiders may see things more clearly than you.

# Who is the audience?

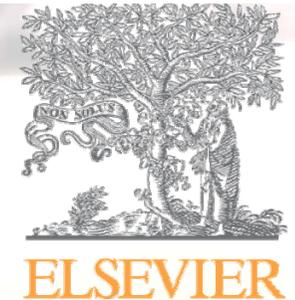


- **Do you want to reach specialists, multidisciplinary researchers, or a general audience?**

**You will need to adjust information and writing style accordingly.**

- **Journals, even in similar subjects, reach readers with different backgrounds**
- **Each journal has its own style; read other articles to get an idea of what is accepted**
- **Is the readership worldwide or local?**

# Which journal?



## Consider:

1. **Aims and scope (check journal websites and recent articles)**
2. **Types of articles**
3. **Readership**
4. **Current hot topics (go through recent abstracts)**
5. **Asking colleagues for advice**

**Sometimes it is necessary to lower one's sights or return to the lab/clinic to obtain more data**

# WARNING



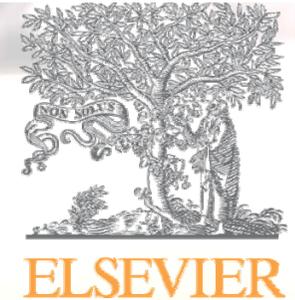
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**DO NOT gamble by scattering your manuscript to many journals**

**Only submit once!**

**International ethics standards prohibit multiple simultaneous submissions, and editors DO find out!**

# Format



- **Consult and apply the list of guidelines in the “**GUIDE FOR AUTHORS**”**
- **Ensure that you use the correct:**
  - **Layout**
  - **Section lengths (stick to word limits)**
  - **Nomenclature, abbreviations and spellings (British vs. American)**
  - **Reference format**
  - **Number/type of figures and tables**
  - **Statistics**

# REMEMBER THAT



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Consulting the **GUIDE FOR AUTHORS**  
will save your time and the editor's

**All editors hate wasting time on poorly  
prepared manuscripts**

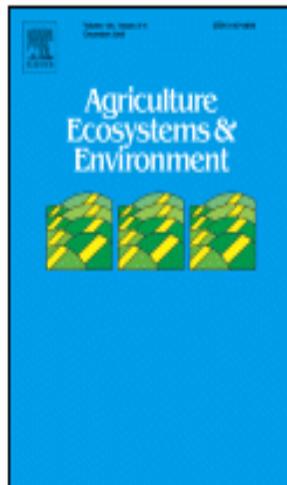
**It is a sign of DISRESPECT**

Visit [www.elsevier.com](http://www.elsevier.com) to find a specific journal  
for **GUIDE FOR AUTHORS**



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# An Example of Guide for Authors



ISSN: 0167-8809  
Imprint: ELSEVIER

## Actions

- Submit Article
- Order Journal
- Free Sample Issue
- Recommend to Friend
- Bookmark this Page

## Guide for Authors



Printer-friendly

An International Journal for Scientific Research on the Interaction Between Agroecosystems and the Environment

### INTRODUCTION

- Types of papers

### BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Ethics in Publishing
- Conflict of interest
- Submission declaration
- Copyright
- Retained author rights
- Role of the funding source
- Funding body agreements and policies
- Language and language services

- Submission

- Referees

### PREPARATION

- Use of wordprocessing software
- Article structure
- Essential title page information
- Abstract
- Keywords
- Acknowledgements
- Math formulae
- Footnotes

- Artwork

- Tables

- References

- Supplementary material

- Submission checklist

### AFTER ACCEPTANCE

- Use of the Digital Object Identifier
- Proofs
- Offprints

### AUTHOR INQUIRIES

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# How to write a quality paper?

# Two Questions for you



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- **What is IMRAD?**
- **Which part should you start with?**



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# Article structure

- Title
- Authors
- Abstract
- Keywords

Need to be accurate and informative for effective indexing and searching

- Main text (IMRAD)
  - Introduction
  - Methods
  - Results and
  - Discussion/Conclusions

Each has a distinct function

- Acknowledgements
- References
- Supplementary materials

# Write in a different order



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- 1. Methods**
- 2. Results**
- 3. Discussion and Conclusion**
- 4. Introduction**
- 5. Abstract**
- 6. Title**

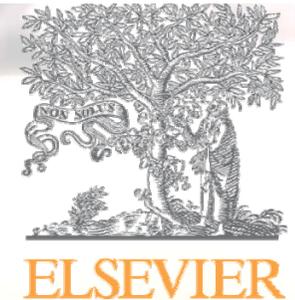
# METHODS



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The **METHODS** section should be the bulk of the paper and it must provide **sufficient information** so that a knowledgeable reader can **reproduce** the experiment.

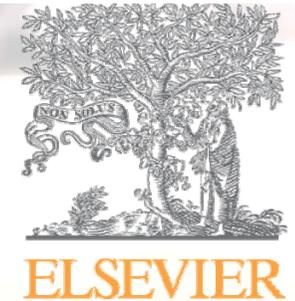
# METHODS



**The METHODS section can be generally divided into several specific parts:**

- 1. Define the population and the methods of sampling**
- 2. Describe the instrumentation**
- 3. Describe the procedures and if relevant, the time frame**
- 4. Describe the analysis plan**
- 5. Describe any approaches to ensure validity and reliability**
- 6. State any assumptions**
- 7. Describe the scope and limitations of the methodology**

# Tips for METHODS



- 1. Be detailed, but not any previously published procedures. Those can be noted or described in the References or Supporting Materials sections.**
- 2. Identify the equipment and materials used. A source of the materials or equipment can be used if there is the chance for variability of quality of these items.**

# RESULTS



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## DO

- Use figures and tables to summarize data
- Show the results of statistical analysis
- Confirm that the method is reliable
- Justify the choice of methods
- Define the limitations of the methods

## DON'T

- Duplicate data among tables, figures and text
- Use graphics to illustrate data that can easily be summarized with text

# Graphics

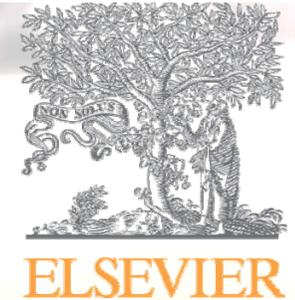


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***“Readers... often look at the graphics first and many times go no further. Therefore, the reviewer should be particularly sensitive to inclusion of clear and informative graphics.”***

**– Henry Rapoport, Associate Editor,  
*Journal of Organic Chemistry***

# Graphics



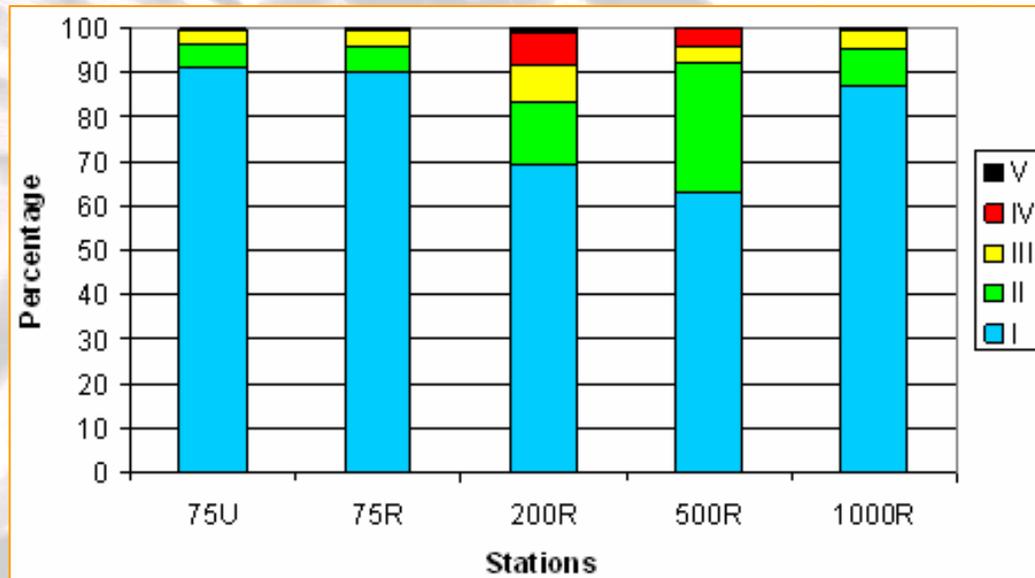
**Figures and tables are the most effective way to present results. BUT:**

- Captions should be able to stand alone, such that the figures and tables are understandable without the need to read the entire manuscript
- Captions should not contain extensive experimental details that can be found in the **METHODS** section
- The data represented should be easy to interpret
- Colour should only be used when necessary

# Graphics



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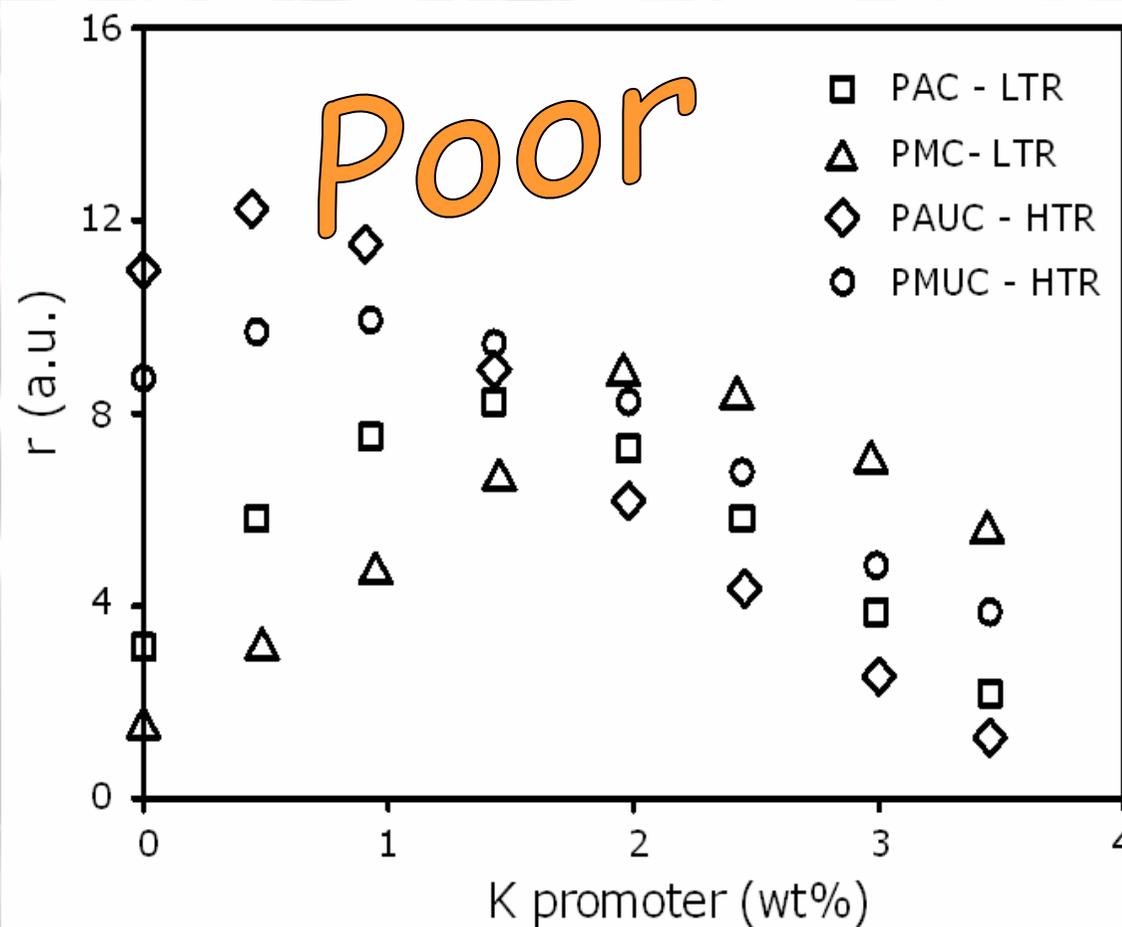
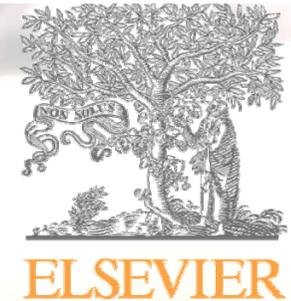


**The figure and table show the same information, but the table is more direct and clear**

ECOLOGICAL GROUP					
Station	I	II	III	IV	V
75U	91.3	5.3	3.2	0.2	0.0
75R	89.8	6.1	3.6	0.5	0.0
200R	69.3	14.2	8.6	6.8	1.1
500R	63.0	29.5	3.4	4.2	0.0
1000R	86.7	8.5	4.5	0.2	0.0



# Graphics

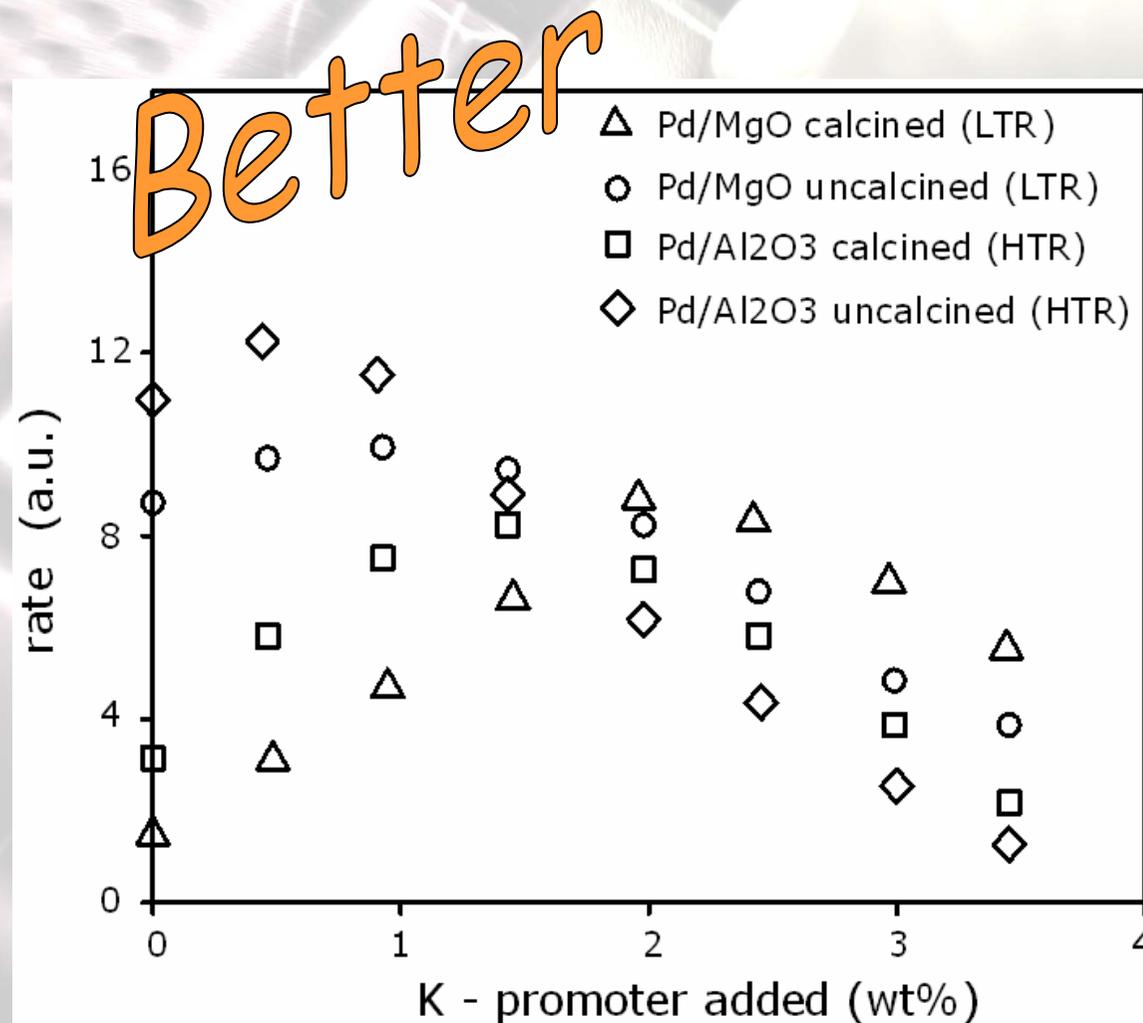


- Legend is poorly defined
- Graph contains too much data
- No trend lines

# Graphics



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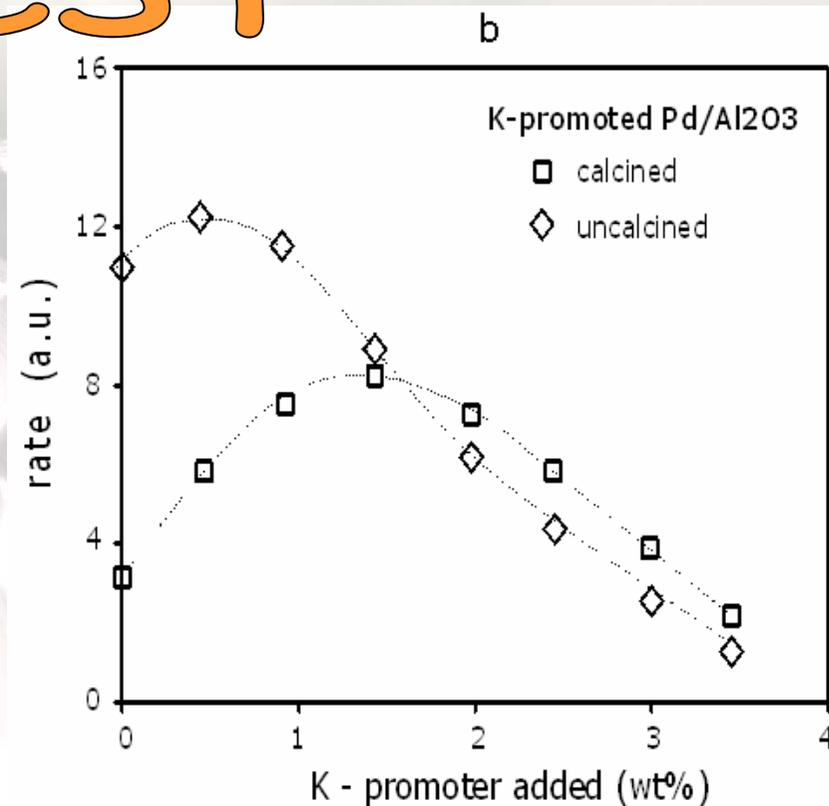
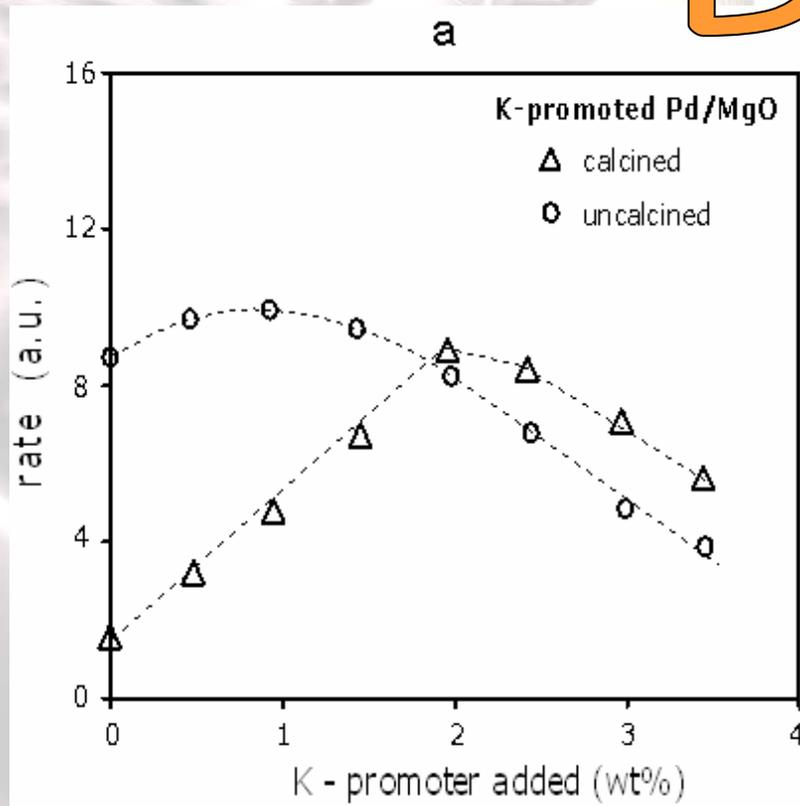
**Legend is well defined but there is still too much data and no trendlines**

# Graphics



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# Best



- Legend is clear
- Data is better organized
- Trend lines are present

# Statistics



- **Indicate the statistical tests used with all relevant parameters**  
**mean  $\pm$  SD**
- **Give numerator and denominators with percentages**  
**40% (100/250)**
- **Use Means and Standard Deviations to report normally distributed data**

# Statistics



- Use medians and interpercentile ranges to report skewed data
- Report *P* values  
 **$p=0.0035$  rather than  $p<0.05$**
- The word “significant” should only be used to describe “statistically significant differences”

# DISCUSSION



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**This is the most important section of the article. It is where you get the chance to SELL your data! A huge number of manuscripts are rejected because the DISCUSSION is weak. For some methodology journals, the discussion and conclusions are lumped into one section.**

## **Describe**

- **What your results mean?**
- **Were the methods successful?**
- **How did the findings relate to those of other studies?**
- **Were there limitations of the study?**



# Tips for DISCUSSION

1. Make the Discussion correspond to the Results. **BUT DO NOT** reiterate the results.
2. **DO NOT** making “grand statements” that are not supported by the methods or the results  
**Example: “This novel treatment will massively reduce the prevalence of malaria in the third world”**
3. **DO NOT** introducing of new terms not mentioned previously in your paper
4. **AVOID** unspecific expressions such as “higher temperature” or “at a lower rate”; **USE** quantitative descriptions
5. Speculations on possible interpretations are allowed. **BUT** these should be rooted in fact, rather than imagination.
6. Compare the published results with your own. **BUT DO NOT** ignore work in disagreement with yours – confront it and convince the reader that you are correct or better.

# CONCLUSIONS

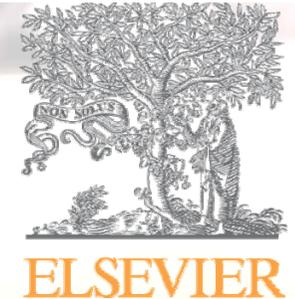


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## **Describe**

- **How your work advances the field?**
- **Indicate applications of your work.**
- **Suggest future experiments that build on your work and point out experiments already underway as well.**

# Tips for CONCLUSIONS



## **Better to avoid:**

- Downplaying negative results
- Making statements based on personal opinion without scientific support
- Repeating other sections
- Over-emphasizing the impact of your study

## • **Example:**

*“Although the statistical analysis did **not provide a reasonable level of significance**, we believe that the methodology is a **valid approach** towards the design of new wastewater treatment facilities. In fact, we argue that these methods could be adopted to the design of any treatment system **worldwide**.”*

# INTRODUCTION



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**The Introduction is used to provide context for your manuscript and convince readers why your work would be useful in advancing that particular field of study.**

**Clearly address the following:**

- 1. What is the problem you are ultimately trying to solve?**
- 2. Are there any solutions?**
- 3. What is the best solution?**
- 4. What is that solution's limitations?**
- 5. What is your work trying to achieve?**
- 6. Outline what was done and achieved in the final paragraph**



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# Tips for INTRODUCTION

1. **Be brief**, usually one to two paragraphs is appropriate. (Consult the **GUIDE FOR AUTHORS** for word limit.) Long introductions put readers off. Introductions of Letters are even shorter. Try **NOT TO** make this section into a history lesson.
2. Cite a couple of original and important works, including recent review articles). However, **editors DO NOT LIKE too many citations to references irrelevant to the work, or inappropriate judgments on your own achievements.**
3. **DO NOT ignore** contradictory studies or work by competitors
4. **DO NOT mix** introduction with results, discussion, and conclusion or your data. Always keep them separate to ensure that the manuscript flows logically from one section to the next.
5. Expressions such as “novel”, “first time”, “first ever”, “paradigm-changing”.
6. Define any non-standard abbreviations and jargon
7. Provide a perspective that is consistent with the journal that you are submitting to.

# ABSTRACT



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**Indicative (descriptive) abstracts** outline the topics covered in a piece of writing so the reader can decide whether or not to read on. Often used in review articles and conference reports

**Informative abstracts** summarize the article based on the paper structure (problem, methods, case studies, conclusions), but without section headings

**Structured abstracts** follow headings required by the journal. Often used in Medical journals

**Check carefully which type fits the journal of your choice.**

# ABSTRACT



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**The quality of an abstract will strongly influence the editor's decision**

## **A good abstract:**

- **Is precise and honest**
- **Can stand alone**
- **Is brief and specific**
- **Uses no technical jargon**
- **Minimizes the use of abbreviations**
- **Cites no references**

**Use the abstract to “sell” your article**

# TITLE



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A good title should contain the **fewest** possible words that **adequately** describe the contents of a paper

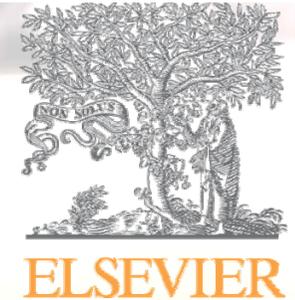
## DO

- Convey main findings of research
- Be specific
- Be concise
- Be complete
- Attract readers

## DON'T

- Use unnecessary jargon
- Use uncommon abbreviations
- Use ambiguous terms
- Use unnecessary detail
- Focus on part of the content only

# TITLE



**Preliminary observations on the effect of Etanercept in Patients with Ankylosing Spondylitis**



**Effect of Etanercept on Patients with Ankylosing Spondylitis**



## **Tips:**

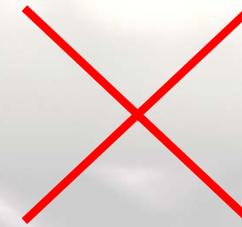
**Long title distracts readers.**

**Remove all redundancies such as “observations on”, “the nature of”, etc.**

# TITLE



**Action of antibiotics on bacteria**



**Inhibition of growth of mycobacterium tuberculosis by streptomycin**

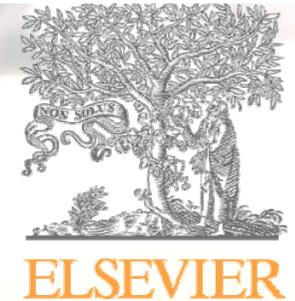


## **Tips:**

**Titles should be specific.**

**Think to yourself: “How will I search for this piece of information?” when you design the title.**

# KEYWORDS



**Keywords are important for indexing: they enable your manuscript to be more easily identified and cited.**

**Check the [GUIDE FOR AUTHORS](#) for journal requirements**

## **Tips:**

- **Keywords should be specific**
- **Avoid uncommon abbreviations and general terms except established abbreviations (e.g. DNA)**
- **Medical Subject Headings (MeSH, National Library of Medicine): <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/MBrowser.html>**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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**Acknowledge anyone who has helped you with the study, including:**

- **Advisors**
- **Financial supporters**
- **Proofreaders**
- **Typists**
- **Suppliers who may have given materials**

## **Tips:**

- **State why people have been acknowledged and **ask their permission****
- **Acknowledge sources of funding, including any grant or reference numbers**

# REFERENCES



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**Check the style and format as required – it is not the editor's job to do so for you**

**Harvard System (alphabetical by author/date):**

**Berridge, MJ 1998, Neuronal calcium signaling, *Neuron* vol. 21: pp. 13-26**

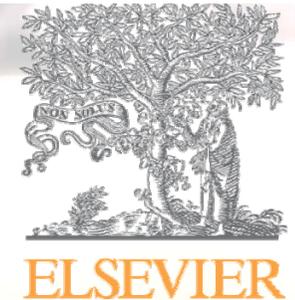
**APA (American Psychological Association) System (alphabetical)**

**Berridge, M.J. (1998). Neuronal calcium signaling. *Neuron* 21, 13-26**

**Vancouver System (numbered in order or citation)**

**1. Berridge MJ. Neuronal calcium signaling. *Neuron*. 1998;21:13-26**

# Tips for REFERENCES



Check the **GUIDE FOR AUTHORS** to ensure the proper format. **Make the editor's work easier and they will appreciate the effort.**

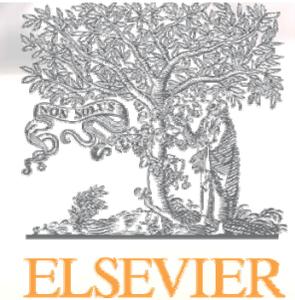
## **Avoid**

- **Too many references**
- **Excessive self-citations**
- **Excessive citations of publications from the same region**
- **Personal communications, unpublished observations and submitted manuscripts not yet accepted**
- **Citing articles published only in the local language**

## **Check**

- **Spelling of author names**
- **Punctuation**
- **Number of authors to include before using "et al."**
- **Reference style**

# SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS



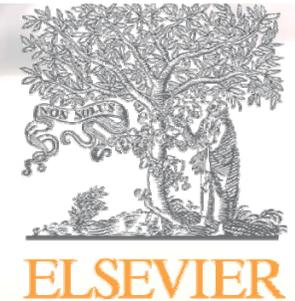
Information related to and supportive of the main text, but of secondary importance, may be contained in an appendix

## **Includes:**

- **Extensive statistical analysis**
- **Supplementary mathematical analysis**
- **Additional data**
- **Video data**

**Will be available online when the manuscript is published**

# Language

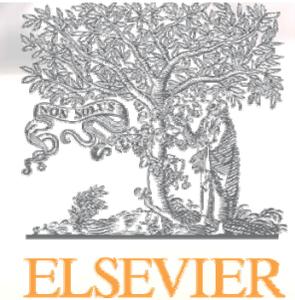


***“Journal editors, overloaded with quality manuscripts, may make decisions on manuscripts based on formal criteria, like grammar or spelling. Don't get rejected for avoidable mistakes; make sure your manuscript looks perfect”***

***--Arnout Jacobs,  
Elsevier Publishing***

**Thus, both the science and the language need to be sound**

# The three “C”s

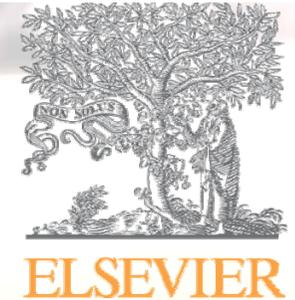


**Good writing possesses the following three “C”s:**

- **Clarity**
- **Conciseness**
- **Correctness (accuracy)**

**The key is to be as brief and specific as possible without omitting essential details**

# Know the enemy

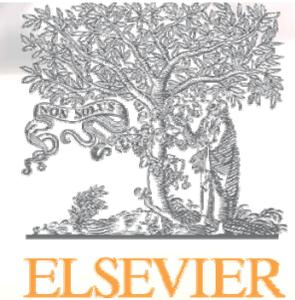


**Good writing avoids the following traps:**

- **Repetition**
- **Redundancy**
- **Ambiguity**
- **Exaggeration**

**These are common annoyances for editors**

# Repetition and Redundancy



**Vary the sentences used when writing the abstract or describing findings at the end of the introduction**

**Don't copy from other sections verbatim!**

**Avoid words with the same meaning**

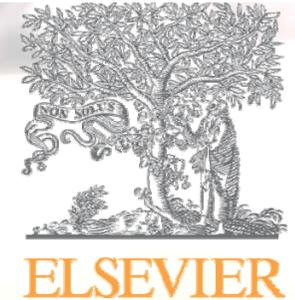
**In addition, a systematic analysis of the data was also presented...**

**After statistical analysis of the data, the methods were then modified...**

**Avoid using the same descriptive word twice in one sentence**

**In this paper, a simple methodology for classifying simple composite wastes has been proposed.**

# Repetition and Redundancy



**Avoid circular sentences**

*In order to compare the differences in the two analytical methods, the dependent variable was set to concentration, **in order to determine if changes had occurred.***

**The reason for the experiment is described twice, in slightly different terms**

# Ambiguity



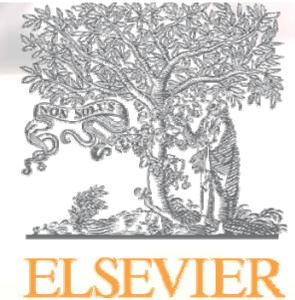
**Ensure correct use commas and hyphens**

**“Calcium regulated transcription”** has a different meaning from **“Calcium-regulated transcription”**

**In** **“To identify biomarkers of prostate cancer, we performed microarray analysis, using custom cDNA arrays”**

**The second comma should be deleted**

# Ambiguity



## Ensure correct use of “which”

**In** “Data were normalised to the internal reference housekeeping gene actin, which showed...”



**The “which” is used incorrectly, referring to actin rather than to the normalisation of data**

“Data were normalised to the internal reference housekeeping gene actin, revealing that...” **is correct**



# Ambiguity



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**Semi-colons are used in place of periods to separate two parallel sentences. They do not take the place of a comma or colon.**

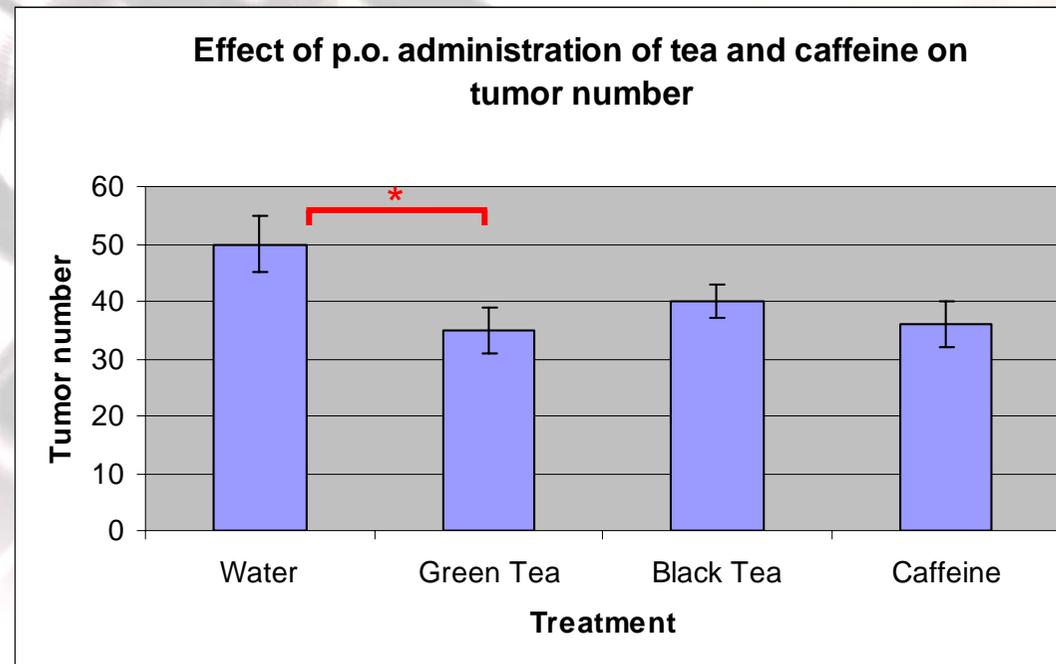
**The data and information were grouped into four broad classes mainly based on the constituent chemicals in the waste stream, namely; the physiochemical properties, toxicity effects, exposure potency and waste quantity.**



**The data and information were grouped into four broad classes mainly based on the constituent chemicals in the waste stream. The classes included the physiochemical properties, toxicity effects, exposure potency and waste quantity.**



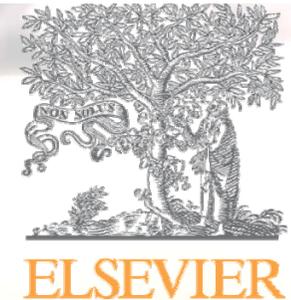
# Exaggeration



*“There was a **massive** decrease in the number of tumors following p.o. administration of green tea”*

Beware of **exaggeration** but do indicate **significance**

## Other common traps



**Inconsistent tense – don't mix tenses in the same sentence**

Before tumors **were** microdissected, epithelial cells **are**...

**Inconsistent use of plural or singular**

In eight **patients**, a **biopsy** from the affected sites of the head and neck **was** performed



In eight **patients**, **biopsies** from the affected sites of the head and neck **were** performed



## Other common traps



**Unbalanced sentences – make sure the clauses either side of “compared with” match up**

**Expression levels of p53 in smokers were compared with non-smokers...**



**Expression levels of p53 in smokers were compared with **those in** non-smokers...**



## Other common traps



**Incorrect use of respectively – two corresponding lists are required**

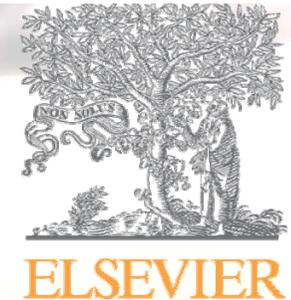
**The proportions of various monocyte surface markers were 45%, 63% and 70%, respectively**



**The proportions of monocytes positive for CD163, CD7 and CD11a were 45%, 63% and 70%, respectively**



## Other common traps



**Incorrect use of etc. / and so on**

***“The two groups of data were compared using a variety of statistical methods including a t-test, chi squared analysis, etc.”***

**It is important here to define the tests used as they are particular to the paper, not part of a natural series and not obvious to the reader.**

## Other common traps

### Overuse of etc. / and so on

*By comparison with results found in the literature, such as those presented by MacDonald et al. (2003), Smith (2005), Burns (2006), **and so on**, the consequences presented here show a similar trend.”*

**The use of “etc.” and “and so on” should be minimized in a manuscript and, whenever possible, a full series of examples should be provided, particularly when referencing the literature**

# Language Editing Services



**Your manuscript is precious, invest in it**

- **Specialist scientific and medical editing services are commercially available to polish the language in your manuscript prior to journal submission**
- **Rates start from \$8 per page**

**More information can be found on the Elsevier website at:**  
<http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/authorsview.authors/languagepolishing>

# Language Editing Services



## Recommended companies include:

- **Edanz Editing**
- **Liwen Bianji**
- **International Science Editing**
- **Asia Science Editing**
- **SPI Publisher Services**
- **Diacritech Language Editing Service**

**Use of an English-language editing service listed here is not mandatory, and will NOT GUARANTEE acceptance for publication in Elsevier journals**

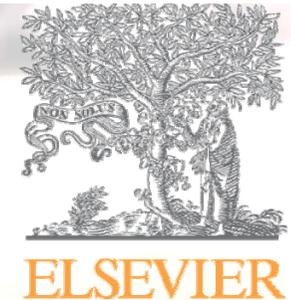
# Technical details



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- **Layout**
- **Length**
- **Abbreviation**

# Layout



- **Keep line spacing, font and font size consistent throughout – double-spaced 12-point Times New Roman is preferred**
- **Use consistent heading styles throughout and no more than three levels of headings**
- **Number the pages**
- **Number lines if journal requires – check the GUIDE FOR AUTHORS**
- **Order and title sections as instructed in the GUIDE FOR AUTHORS – Figure and Table sections are normally together following References**

# Length



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***“...25-30 pages is the ideal length for a submitted manuscript, including ESSENTIAL data only”***

Julian Eastoe, Co-editor,  
*Journal of Colloid and Interface Science*

Consult the **GUIDE FOR AUTHORS** for word and graphic limits

**Letters or short communications have stricter limits on the length. For example, 3000 words with no more than five illustrations**

# Abbreviation



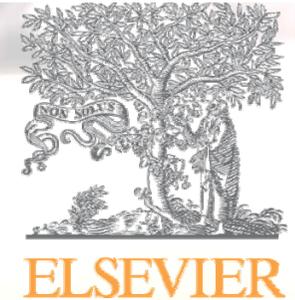
- Define non-standard abbreviations on first use in both the abstract and the main text
- Check the **GUIDE FOR AUTHORS** for a list of standard abbreviations that don't need defining
- Don't abbreviate terms used only once or twice in the entire manuscript – spell these out in full
- Acronyms: capitals not required in the definition unless a proper noun or start of a sentence

**ubiquitin proteasome system (UPS)**

**NOT**

**Ubiquitin Proteasome System (UPS)**

# Cover letter



- **This is your chance to speak to the editor directly**
- **Keep it brief, but convey the particular importance of your manuscript to the journal**

**This is your opportunity to convince the journal editor that they should publish your study, so it is worth investing time at this stage**

# Cover letter



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## **Include:**

- **Editor name – Address to journal editor, not generic**
- **First sentence – provide title, author list and journal name**
- **Briefly describe:**
  - **your research area and track record**
  - **the main findings of your research**
  - **the significance of your research**

## **Tips:**

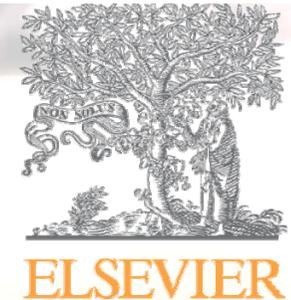
- **Confirm the originality of the submission and what your purpose is.**
- **Mention what would make your manuscript worthwhile to the journal.**
- **DO NOT** summarize your manuscript, or repeat the abstract.
- **State the final approval of all co-authors as well as if your manuscript has been previously rejected.**
- **Mention other special requirements such as conflicts of interest**
- **Suggested reviewers, people who should not review.**



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# What to do when you finish a paper?

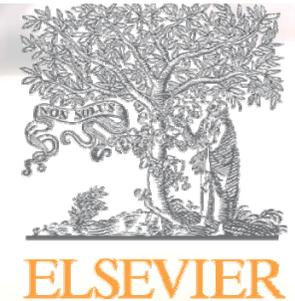
# Final checks



**Revision before submission can prevent early rejection**  
**What can I do to ensure my paper is in the best possible state prior to submission?**

- **Ask colleagues to take a look and be critical.**
- **Check that everything meets the requirements set out in the **GUIDE FOR AUTHORS** – again!**
- **Check that the scope of the paper is appropriate for the selected journal – change journal rather than submit inappropriately.**

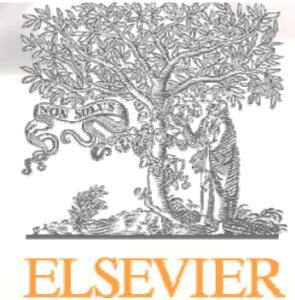
# Post-referee revision



**Carefully study the reviewers' comments and prepare a detailed letter of response**

- **Respond to all points; even if you disagree with a reviewer, provide a polite, scientifically solid rebuttal rather than ignore their comment**
- **Provide page and line numbers when referring to revisions made in the manuscript**
- **Perform additional calculations, computations, or experiments if required; these usually serve to make the final paper stronger**

# Post-referee revision



**The reviewer is clearly ignorant** of the work of Bonifaci et al. (2008) showing that the electric field strength in the ionization zone of the burned corona is less than the space charge free field before the corona onset....



**Thank you for your comment. However, we feel that the assumption in our model is supported by recent work by Bonifaci et al. (2008),** who showed that the electric field strength in the ionization zone of the burned corona is less than the space charge free field before the corona onset.



# Post-referee revision



- **State specifically what changes you have made to address the reviewers' comments, mentioning the page and line numbers where changes have been made**
- **Avoid repeating the same response over and over; if a similar comment is made by multiple people explain your position once and refer back to your earlier response in responses to other reviewers or the editor**

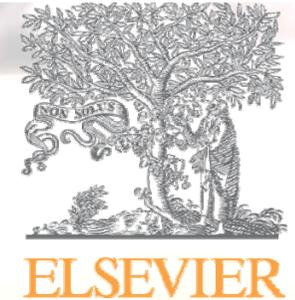
# Post-referee revision

## Clearly differentiate responses from reviewers' comments by using a different font style

**Reviewer's Comments:** It would also be good to acknowledge that geographic routing as you describe it is not a complete routing solution for wireless networks, except for applications that address a region rather than a particular node. Routing between nodes requires further machinery, which detracts from the benefits of geographic routing, and which I don't believe you have made practical.

**Author's reply:** *We agree and will add an appropriate caveat. Note that for data-centric storage (name-based exact-match and range queries for sensed events), the storage and query processing mechanisms "natively" address packets geographically – without a "node-to-location" database.*

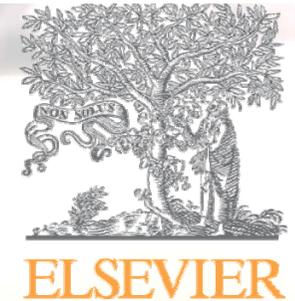
# Accepting rejection



## Don't take it personally!

- **Try to understand why the paper has been rejected**
- **Evaluate honestly – will your paper meet the journal's requirements with the addition of more data or is another journal more appropriate?**
- **Don't resubmit elsewhere without significant revisions addressing the reasons for rejection and checking the **new GUIDE FOR AUTHORS.****

# Accepting rejection



## **Suggested strategy for submitting elsewhere:**

- **In your cover letter, declare that the paper was rejected and name the journal**
- **Include the referees' reports and show how each comment has been addressed**
- **Explain why you are submitting the paper to this journal; is it a more appropriate journal?**



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# Ethical Issues



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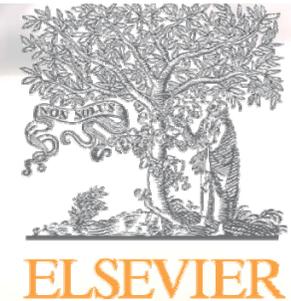
**Unethical behavior “can earn rejection and even a ban from publishing in the journal”**

Terry M. Phillips, Editor,  
*Journal of Chromatography B*

**Unethical behavior includes:**

- Multiple submissions
- Redundant publications
- Plagiarism
- Data fabrication and falsification
- Improper use of human subjects and animals in research
- Improper author contribution

# Multiple submissions



Multiple submissions save your time but **waste editors'**

The editorial process of your manuscripts will **be completely stopped** if the duplicated submissions are discovered.

*“It is considered to be unethical...We have thrown out a paper when an author was caught doing this. I believe that the other journal did the same thing”*

**James C. Hower, Editor,  
International Journal of Coal Geology**

# Multiple submissions



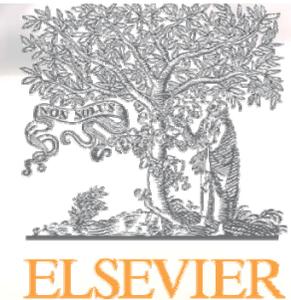
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**Competing journals constantly exchange information on suspicious papers**

**You should not send your manuscripts to a second journal **UNTIL** you receive the **final decision of the first journal****

**DON'T DO IT!!**

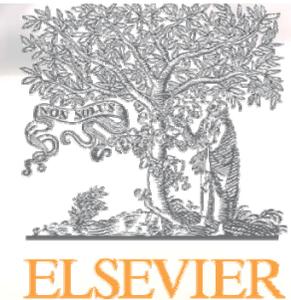
# Multiple submissions



**An author should not submit for consideration in another journal a previously published paper**

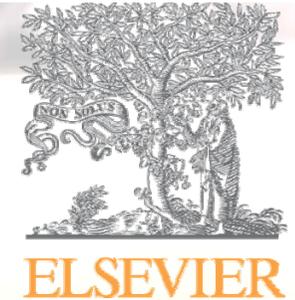
- **Published studies do not need to be repeated unless further confirmation is required**
- **Previous publication of an abstract during the proceedings of conferences does not preclude subsequent submission for publication, but full disclosure should be made at the time of submission**

# Redundant publication



- Re-publication of a paper in another language is acceptable, provided that there is **full and prominent disclosure of its original source** at the time of submission
- At the time of submission, authors should disclose details of related papers, even if in a different language, and similar papers ***in press***

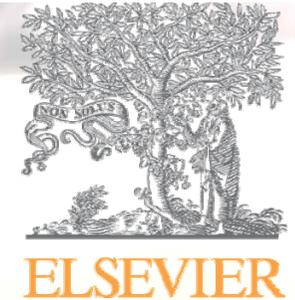
# Plagiarism



***“Plagiarism is the appropriation of another person’s ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit, including those obtained through confidential review of others’ research proposals and manuscripts”***

**Federal Office of Science and Technology Policy,  
1999**

# Plagiarism



***“Presenting the data or interpretations of others without crediting them, and thereby gaining for yourself the rewards earned by others, is theft, and it eliminates the motivation of working scientists to generate new data and interpretations”***

**Bruce Railsback, Professor,  
Department of Geology, University of Georgia**

**For more information on plagiarism and self-plagiarism,  
please see: <http://facpub.stjohns.edu/~roigm/plagiarism/>**

# Plagiarism

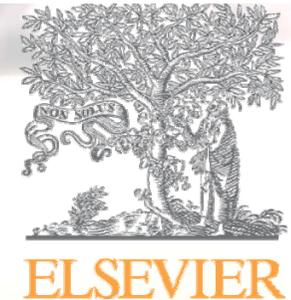


**Plagiarism is a serious offence that could lead to paper rejection, academic charges and termination of employment. It will seriously affect your scientific reputation.**

**DON'T DO IT!**

**Unacceptable paraphrasing, even with correct citation, is considered plagiarism**

# Paraphrasing



- **Original (Gratz, 1982):**

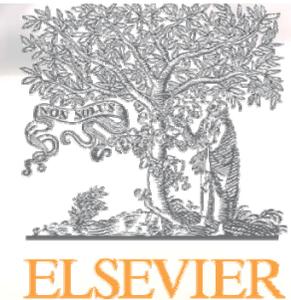
Bilateral vagotomy resulted in an increase in tidal volume but a depression in respiratory frequency such that total ventilation did not change.

- **Restatement 1:**

Gratz (1982) showed that bilateral vagotomy resulted in an increase in tidal volume but a depression in respiratory frequency such that total ventilation did not change.



# Paraphrasing



- **Original (Buchanan, 1996):**

What makes intentionally killing a human being a moral wrong for which the killer is to be condemned is that the killer did this morally bad thing not inadvertently or even negligently, but with a conscious purpose – with eyes open and a will directed toward that very object.

- **Restatement 2:**

**Buchanan (1996) states that** we condemn a person who intentionally kills a human being because he did a "**morally bad thing**" not through negligence or accident but with open eyes and a direct will to take that life. 

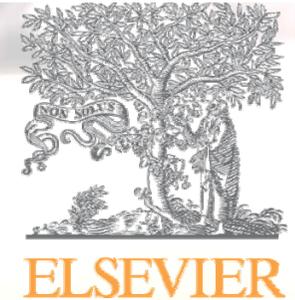
# Data fabrication and falsification

- **Fabrication** is making up data or results, and recording or reporting them
- **Falsification** is manipulating research materials, equipment, processes; or changing / omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record

*“The most dangerous of all falsehoods is a slightly distorted truth”*

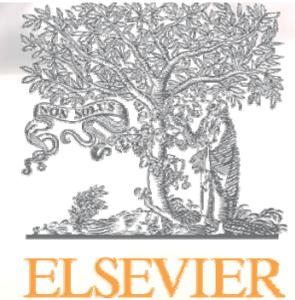
G.C. Lichtenberg (1742–1799)

# Unethical research



- **Experiments on human subjects or animals should follow related ethical standards, namely, the Helsinki Declaration of 1975, as revised in 2000 (5)**
- **If doubt exists concerning the compliance of the research with the Helsinki Declaration, authors must explain the rationale for their approach and demonstrate approval from the institutional review body**

# Improper author contribution



## **Authorship credit should be based on**

- 1. Substantial contributions to conception and design, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data**
- 2. Drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content**
- 3. Final approval of the version to be published**

**Authors should meet conditions 1, 2, and 3. Those who have participated in certain substantive aspects of the research project should be acknowledged or listed as contributors. Check the **GUIDE FOR AUTHORS** and **ICMJE (International Committee of Medical Journal Editors)** guidelines: <http://www.icmje.org/>**



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# Conclusion: Getting Accepted

# Publishers *do* want quality



## **WANTED**

- **Originality**
- **Significant advances in field**
- **Appropriate methods, case studies and conclusions**
- **Readability**
- **Studies that meet ethical standards**

## **NOT WANTED**

- **Duplications**
- **Reports of no scientific interest**
- **Work out of date**
- **Inappropriate/incomplete methods or conclusions**
- **Studies with insufficient data**

# Summary



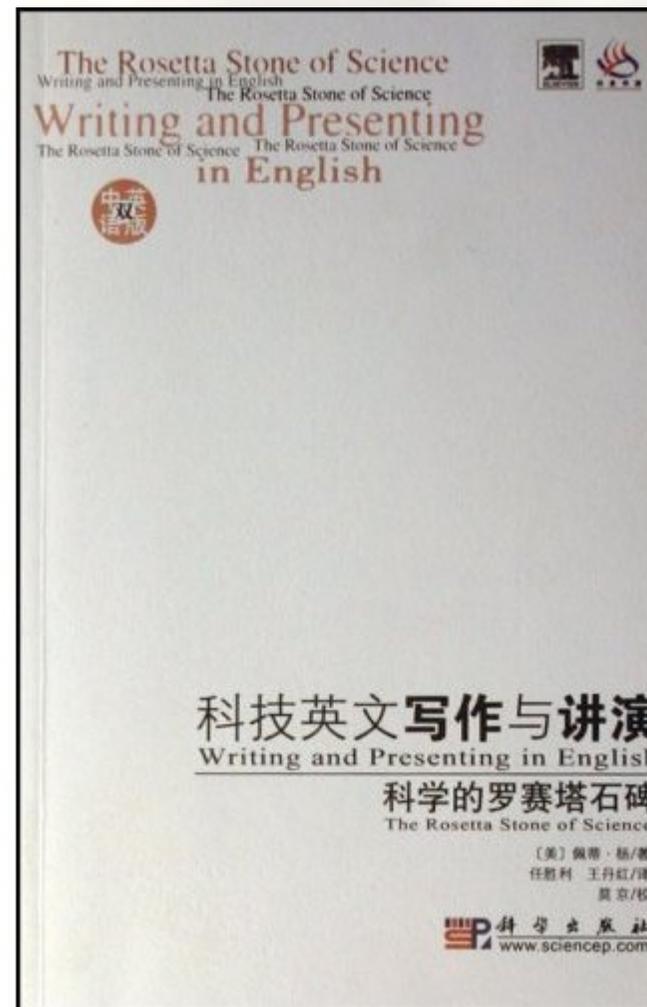
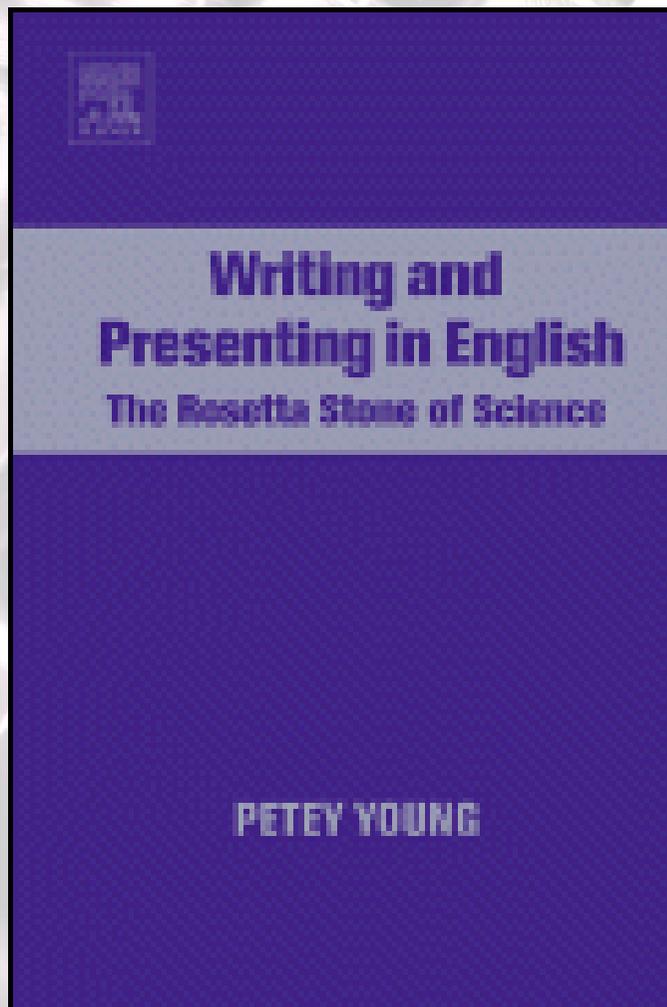
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- **Look back and think it over before you start writing a paper**
- **White it in a proper way:**
  - **IMRAD**
  - **Good Language**
  - **Watch details (Guide for Authors)**
  - **Write a cover letter**
- **Check you paper when you finish it.**
- **Revise the paper / Accept rejection**
- **Behave in an ethical way**

# A book may be helpful



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**Thank you!**

**Questions?**