ESSENTIAL

Evolving Security ScienE through Networked Technologies, Information policy And Law

"How, what and when to publish" workshop

Jeanne Pia Mifsud Bonnici

University of Groningen

Groningen, 14 February 2019

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Grant Agreement No. 722482.

Content

Publication Strategies

Why publish?

Choosing the right journal for interdisciplinary research

What do reviewers look for

ESSENTIAL Publication Policy

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Plan

- Introduction – what would you like to know
- Post-its /board
- Experiences
- Go through themes
- Group work? Strategies? Advice?

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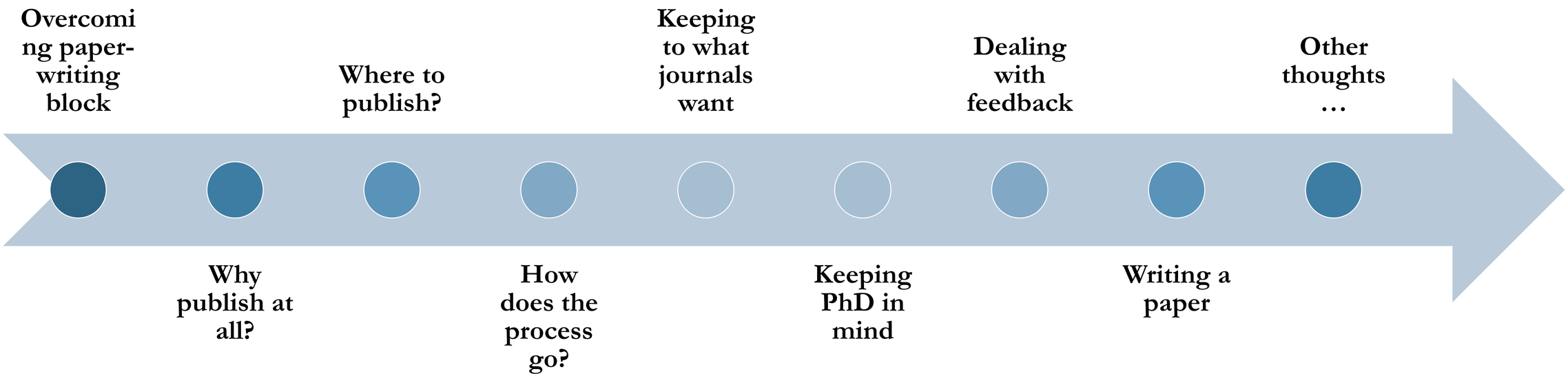

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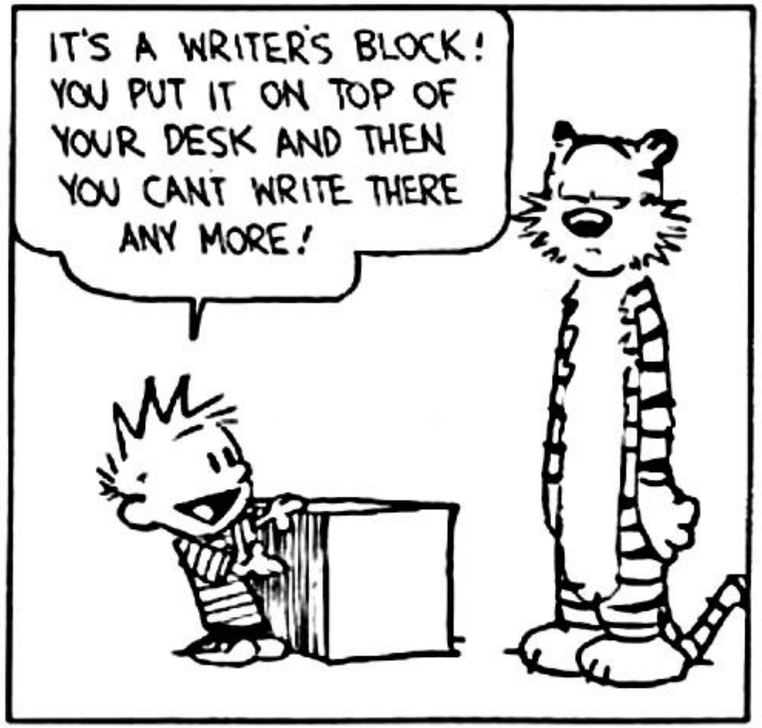
Overcoming paper-writing block

1. **Find a Call for Papers**

2. **Work with others**

While most people see writing as a solitary activity, communal writing – writing with others who are writing – can help to develop confidence, fluency and focus. It can help you develop the discipline of regular writing. Doing your academic writing in groups or at writing retreats are ways of working on your own writing, but – if you unplug from email, internet and all other devices – also developing the concentration needed for regular, high-level academic writing.



3. **Write on what you know**

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Why publish at all?

- Best medicine against procrastination
- Good way to get feedback
- Good way of putting yourself out there gradually
- Good for your cv!

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Background: Author's Perspective

Motivation to publish:

- Dissemination (54% 1st choice)
- Career prospects (20% 1st choice)
- Improved funding (13% 1st choice)
- Ego (9% 1st choice)
- Patent protection (4% 1st choice)
- Other (5% 1st choice)

Bryan Coles (ed.) The STM Information System in the UK, BL Report 6123, Royal Society, BL, ALPSP, 1993

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Where to publish?

- Why internationally?
- Which journals?
- What are impact/indices etc.
- Open Access
- Keep PhD in mind….

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- **Pick the right journal: it's a bad sign if you don't recognise any of the editorial board**

- Check that your article is within the scope of the journal that you are submitting to. This seems so obvious but it's surprising how many articles are submitted to journals that are completely inappropriate. It is a bad sign if you do not recognise the names of any members of the editorial board. Ideally look through a number of recent issues to ensure that it is publishing articles on the same topic and that are of similar quality and impact.

  Ian Russell, editorial director for science at Oxford University Press

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2) Analyse writing in journals in your field

- Take a couple of journals in your field that you will target now or soon. Scan all the abstracts over the past few issues. Analyse them: look closely at all first and last sentences. The first sentence (usually) gives the rationale for the research, and the last asserts a 'contribution to knowledge'. But the word 'contribution' may not be there – it's associated with the doctorate. So which words are used? What constitutes new knowledge in this journal at this time? How can you construct a similar form of contribution from the work you did? What two sentences will you write to start and end your abstract for that journal?

- Scan other sections of the articles: how are they structured? What are the components of the argument? Highlight all the topic sentences – the first sentences of every paragraph – to show the stages in the argument. Can you see an emerging taxonomy of writing genres in this journal? Can you define the different types of paper, different structures and decide which one will work best in your paper? Select two types of paper: one that's the type of paper you can use as a model for yours, and one that you can cite in your paper, thereby joining the research conversation that is ongoing in that journal.

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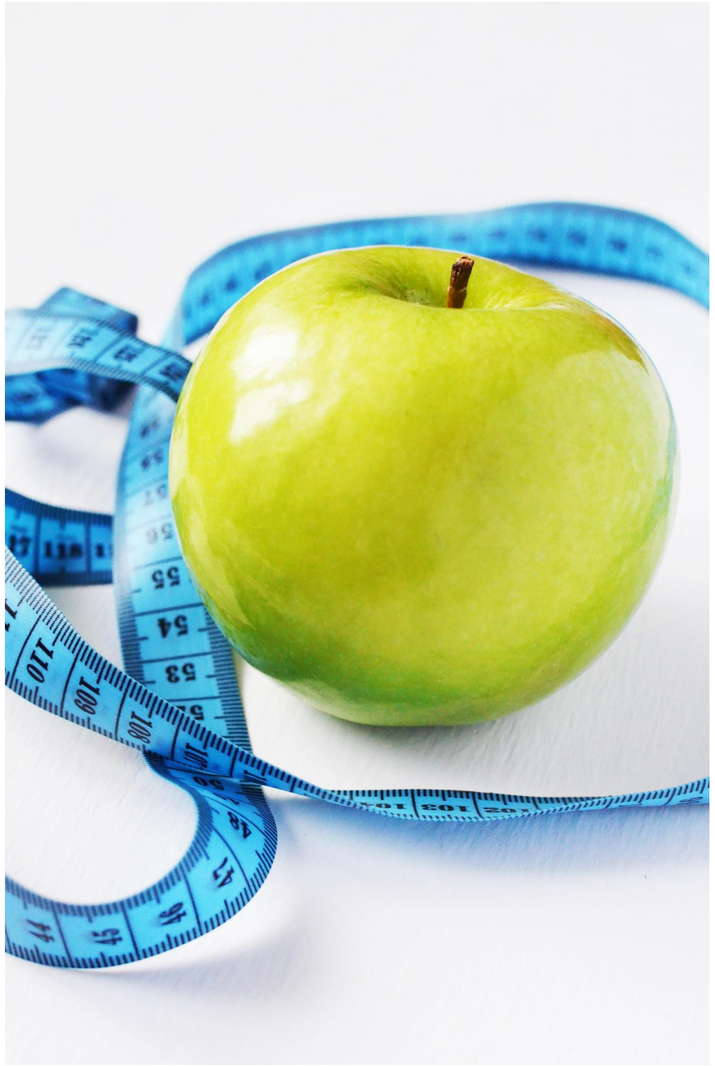

Journal Metrics

- Journal metrics are at your disposal to help you select the most appropriate journal for your article. When used alongside information about the journal's scope, editorial board, international outlook and audience, they can help you to find the best destination for your research.

- Different types of journal metrics It's good practice to look at more than one metric to help you make your decision.
  - Speed – review speed and online publication time
  - Reach – geographic location of corresponding authors and journal usage
  - Impact – impact metrics based on citations received by articles Citation-based impact metrics The average impact of all the articles in a journal is often used as a proxy for the impact of a specific article – especially when the article hasn't yet had time to accumulate its own citations. It's important to take this kind of proxy metric into consideration.

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- **Be strategic too: Think about how quickly you want to see your paper published**
- Some journals rank more highly than others and so your risk of rejection is going to be greater. People need to think about whether or not they need to see their work published quickly - because certain journals will take longer. Some journals, like ours, also do advance access so once the article is accepted it appears on the journal website. This is important if you're preparing for a job interview and need to show that you are publishable.

  Hugh McLaughlin, editor in chief, Social Work Education - the International Journal

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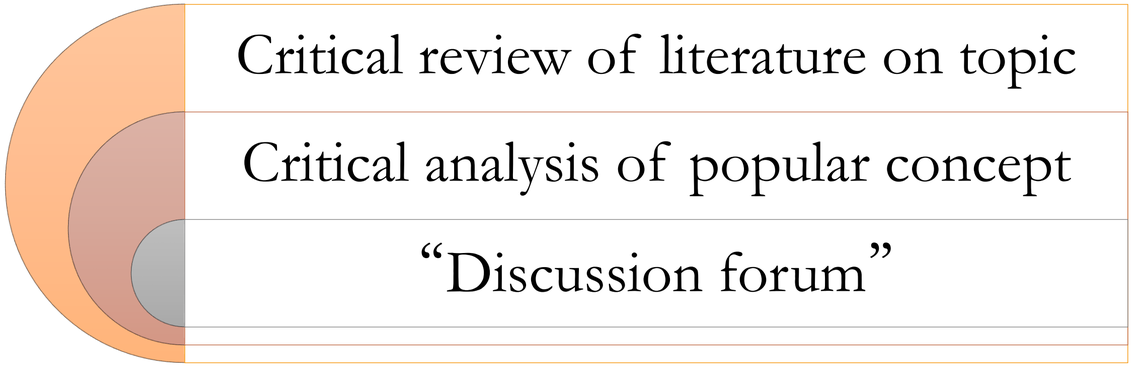
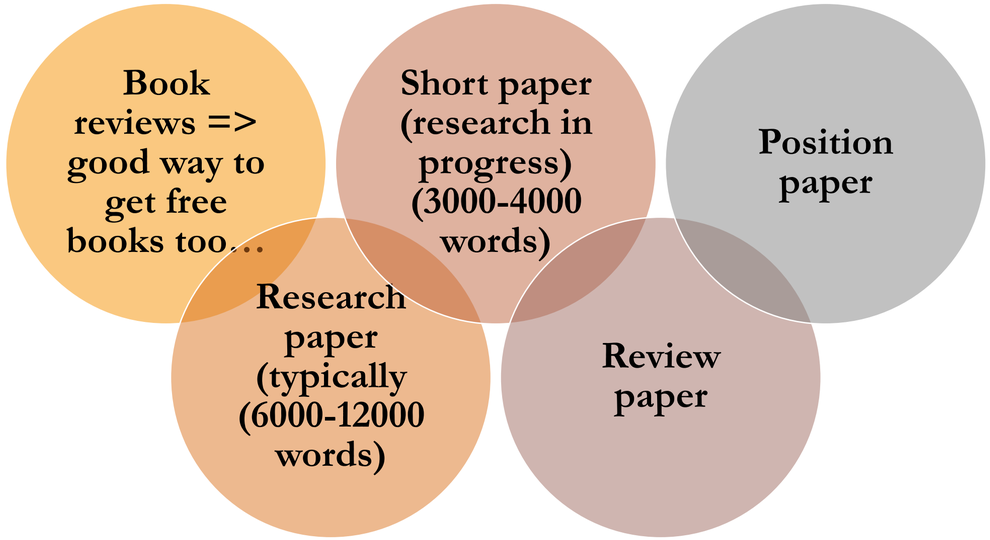
What to publish?





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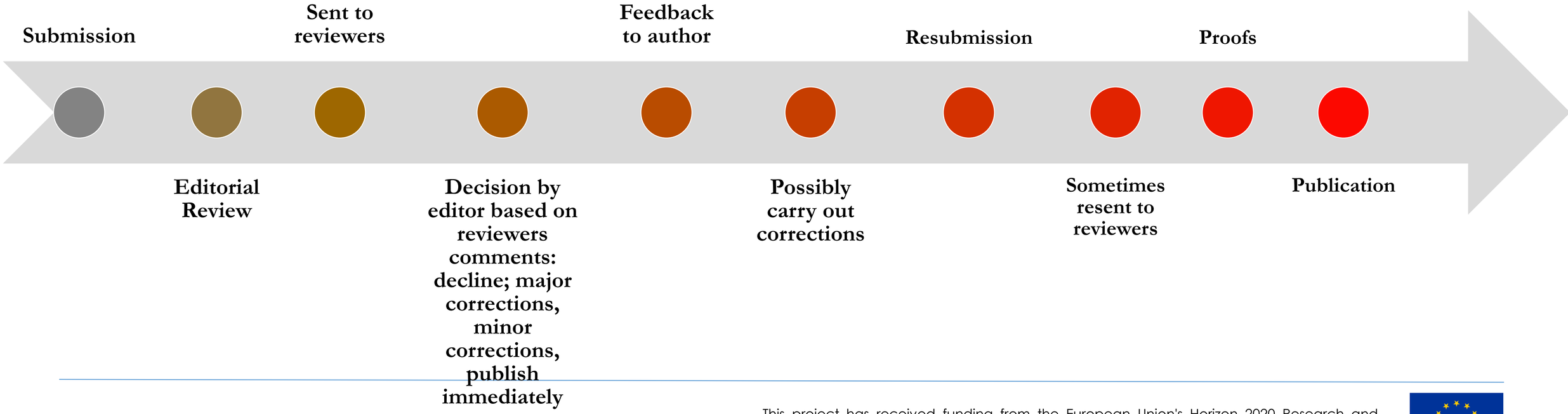
How does the process go?

- Read journal's Guide for Authors
- Often through an electronic editorial system



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Keeping to what journal wants

- **Always follow the correct submissions procedures**
- Often authors don't spend the 10 minutes it takes to read the instructions to authors which wastes enormous quantities of time for both the author and the editor and stretches the process when it does not need to

  Tangali Sudarshan, editor, Surface Engineering

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Peer Review process

Different types of peer review

Type of review	Description
Single blind (most common)	Reviewer identity hidden from author; reviewer knows identity of authors
Double blind	Both reviewer and author remain anonymous to each other
Open	Reviewer and author are known to each other

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After Submission

- Most journal editors will make an initial decision on a paper - to review or to reject
- Most editors appoint two referees
- Refereeing speed varies tremendously between journals
- Authors should receive a decision of Accept, Accept with Revision (Minor or Major), or Reject
- If a paper is rejected, most editors will write to you explaining their decision
- After rejection, authors have the option of submitting the paper to another journal - editor's suggestions should be addressed

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What does the peer reviewer do?

- Reviewers help determine the validity, significance and originality of the work, and can suggest improvements to the manuscript and the research.
- On their recommendation, editors will accept, accept with revisions, or reject a manuscript.
- To make good judgments, peer reviewers use their own checklists to evaluate the content for scientific value and originality, to see that articles adhere to general scientific practice as well as the journal's specific guidelines, and to check that you've referenced correctly.

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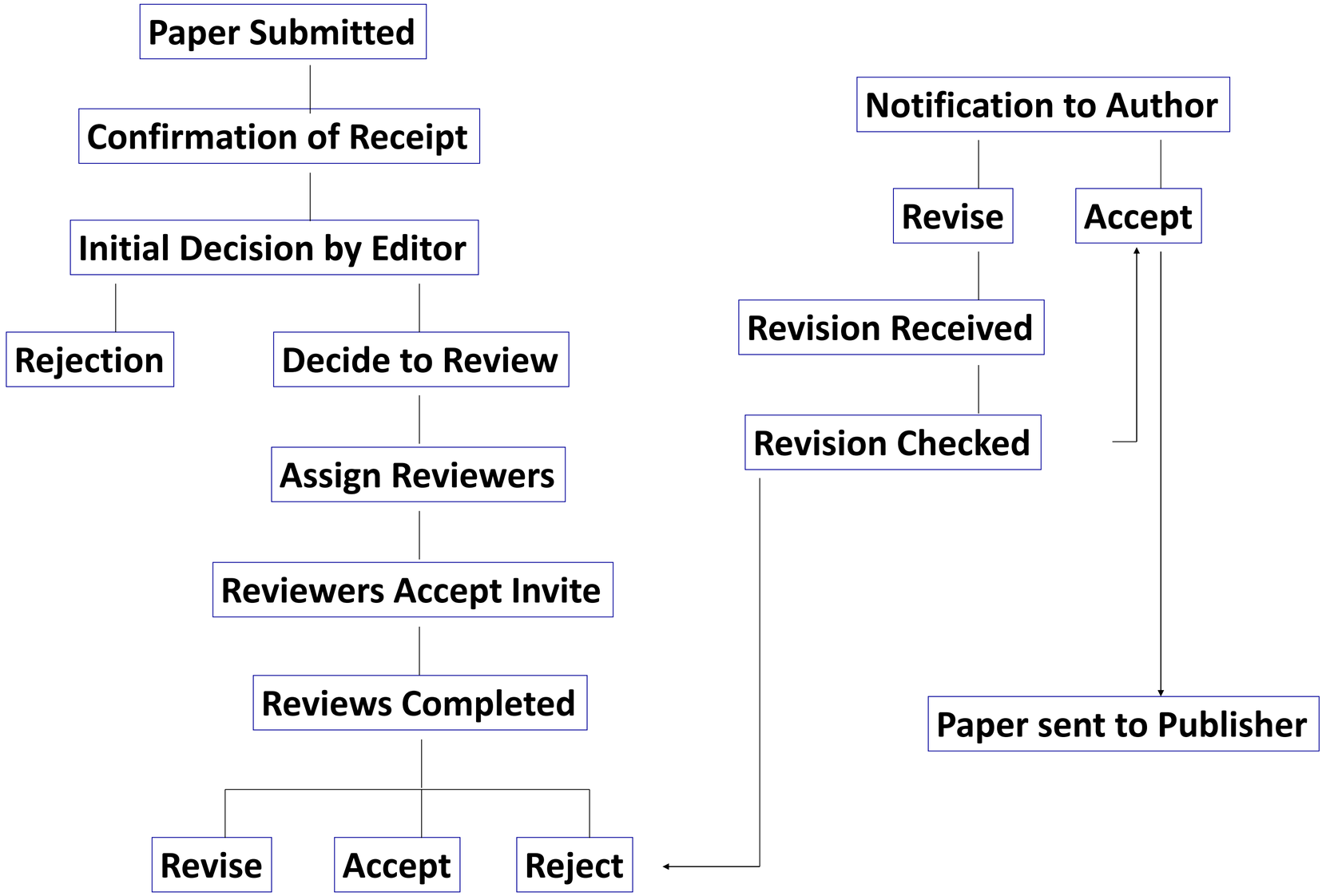
Overview of Peer Review Process



Dealing with feedback

- 'Killing' the reviewers! …..however corrections mean publication!
- **Respond directly (and calmly) to reviewer comments**
- When resubmitting a paper following revisions, include a detailed document summarising all the changes suggested by the reviewers, and how you have changed your manuscript in light of them. Stick to the facts, and don't rant. Don't respond to reviewer feedback as soon as you get it. Read it, think about it for several days, discuss it with others, and then draft a response. *Helen Ball, editorial board, Journal of Human Lactation*
- **Revise and resubmit: don't give up after getting through all the major hurdles**
- You'd be surprised how many authors who receive the standard "revise and resubmit" letter never actually do so. But it is worth doing - some authors who get asked to do major revisions persevere and end up getting their work published, yet others, who had far less to do, never resubmit. It seems silly to get through the major hurdles of writing the article, getting it past the editors and back from peer review only to then give up. *Fiona Macaulay, editorial board, Journal of Latin American Studies*

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- **Analyse reviewers' feedback on your submission**
- What exactly are they asking you to do? Work out whether they want you to add or cut something. How much? Where? Write out a list of revision actions. When you resubmit your article include this in your report to the journal, specifying how you have responded to the reviewers' feedback. If your article was rejected, it is still useful to analyse feedback, work out why and revise it for somewhere else.
- Most feedback will help you improve your paper and, perhaps, your journal article writing, but sometimes it may seem overheated, personalised or even vindictive. Some of it may even seem unprofessional. Discuss reviewers' feedback – see what others think of it. You may find that other people – even eminent researchers – still get rejections and negative reviews; any non-rejection is a cause for celebration. Revise and resubmit as soon as you can.

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◆**It is acceptable to challenge reviewers, with good justification**

◆It is acceptable to decline a reviewer's suggestion to change a component of your article if you have a good justification, or can (politely) argue why the reviewer is wrong. A rational explanation will be accepted by editors, especially if it is clear you have considered all the feedback received and accepted some of it.

Helen Ball, editorial board of Journal of Human Lactation

◆**Remember: when you read published papers you only see the finished article**

◆Publishing in top journals is a challenge for everyone, but it may seem easier for other people. When you read published papers you see the finished article, not the first draft, nor the first revise and resubmit, nor any of the intermediate versions – and you never see the failures.

Philip Powell, managing editor of the Information Systems Journal

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When paper is rejected….

- **Be persistent, thick-skinned and resilient**
- These are qualities that you may develop over time – or you may already have them. It may be easier to develop them in discussion with others who are writing for journals.

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What to do with rejected papers?

- Read rejection letter (or first para), take deep breath, don't send angry impulsive emails
- Return to it when you've calmed down (couple of days?)
- Take criticism into account, maybe change angle of the paper, focus on strongest points, if necessary rework design & analysis
- Submit to another journal
- See it as new project
- Aim for a slightly less prestigious journal?

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Take care of yourself

- Writing for academic journals is highly competitive. It can be extremely stressful. Even making time to write can be stressful. And there are health risks in sitting for long periods, so try not to sit writing for more than an hour at a time.
- Be sure to celebrate thoroughly when your article is accepted.
- Remind yourself that writing for academic journals is what you want to do – that your writing will make a difference in some way.

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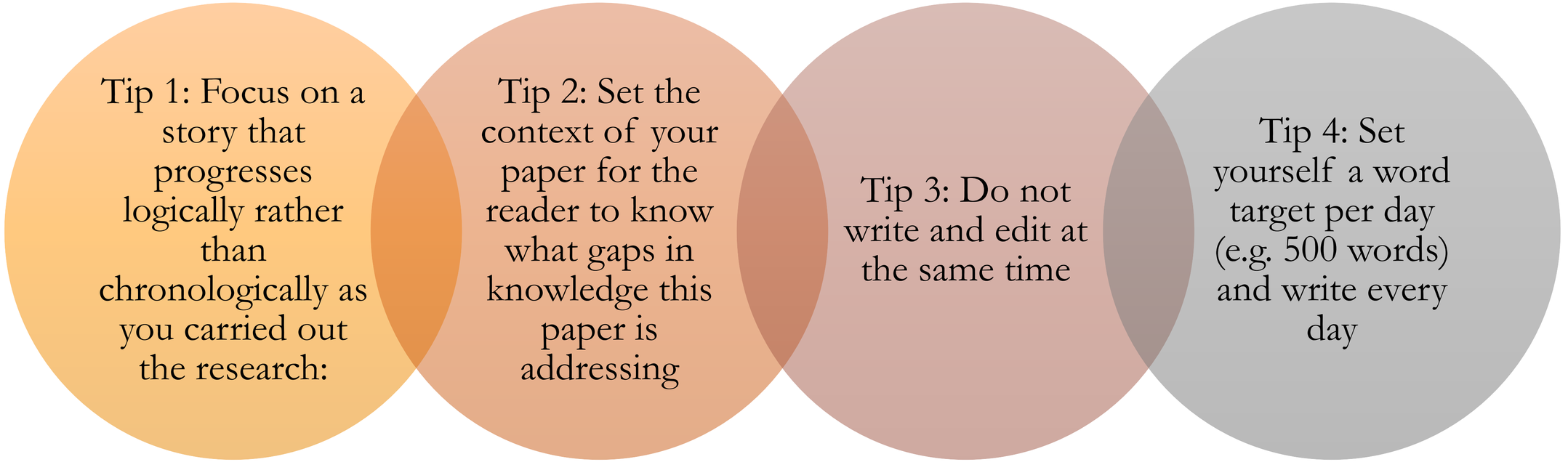
Writing a paper (1)



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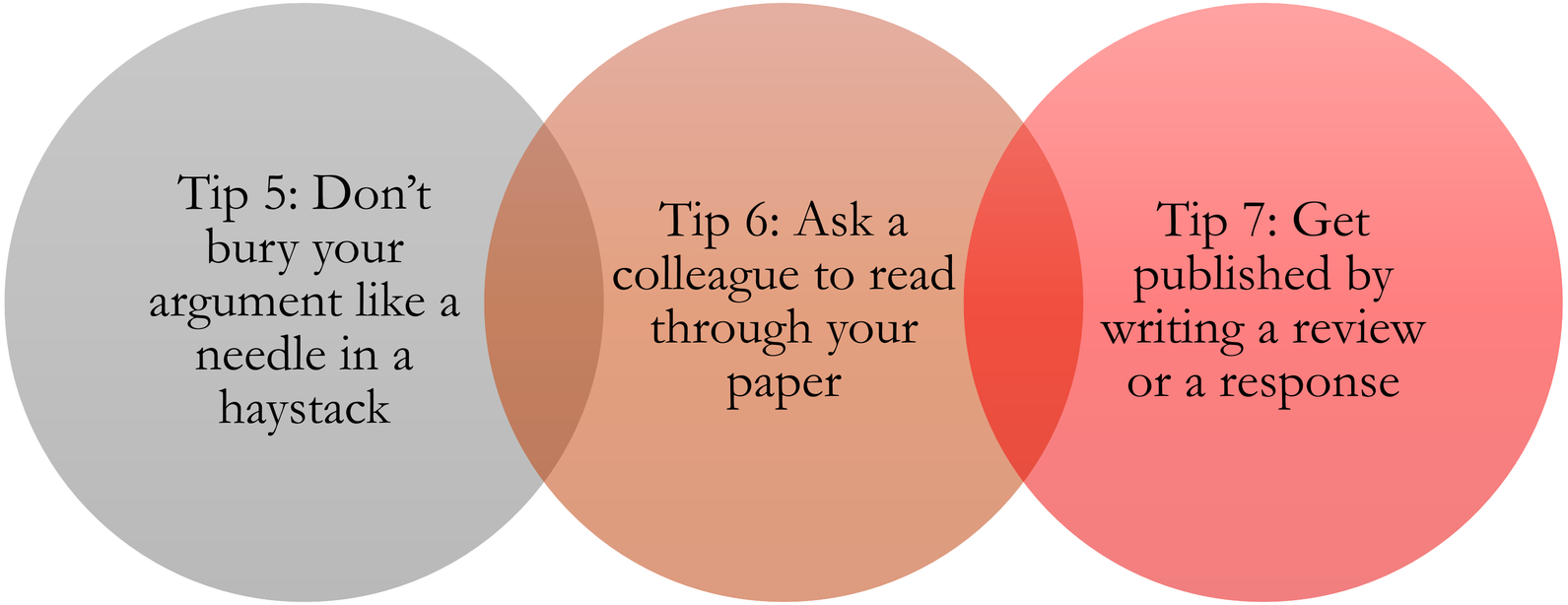
Writing a paper (2)



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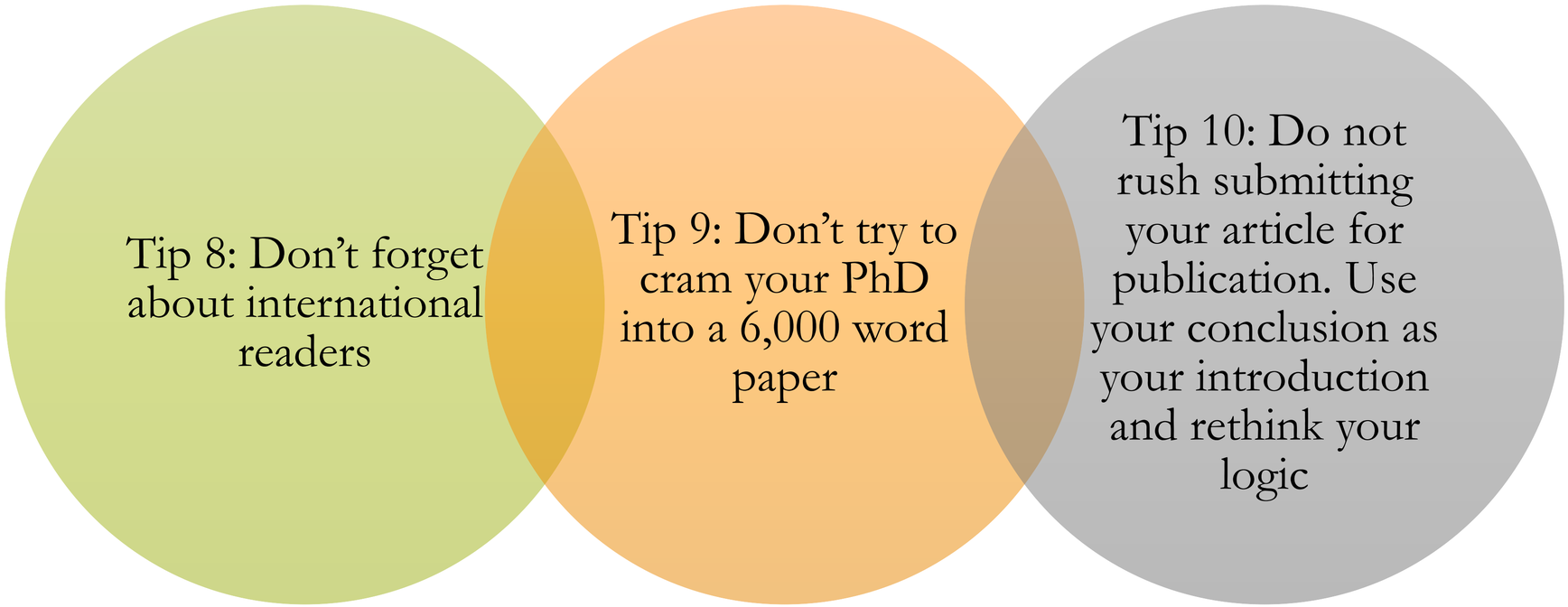
Writing a paper (3)



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Reference Strategically

- **References are your source of credibility in an academic paper**.
- It goes without saying that if you want your work to be seriously considered by any publisher, you need to rely almost exclusively on academic references (forget Wikipedia and other stand-alone websites). But that is only the beginning of your task, and if you choose your references strategically, you will greatly improve your chances of being perceived as a credible source yourself.
- How can you pick the right references? Pay attention to these details:
- **Go to the original source:** the most important studies will be cited by hundreds or thousands of other scholars. You may in fact learn about the most important studies *by way of* the references of other scholars. But if you want to use one of these field-defining studies to situate your argument, pull up the original work and cite the original author instead of the secondary source where you encountered the work. Not only will you learn more in the process, but the reviewers considering your work will be much more familiar with the 'big names' in your discipline. Since they are already familiar with these names, they know they are credible and they're more likely to see you as credible too.
- **Reference articles that are widely cited:** you can gain a faster understanding of the state of a particular discipline by reading widely cited articles first. Use a tool such as Thomson-Reuters Web of Science to search for articles and sort them by the number of citations. This is a quick way to discover the most important articles (according to the academic community) on a particular topic. Referencing these articles within your own work will show reviewers that you have a good understanding of the field.

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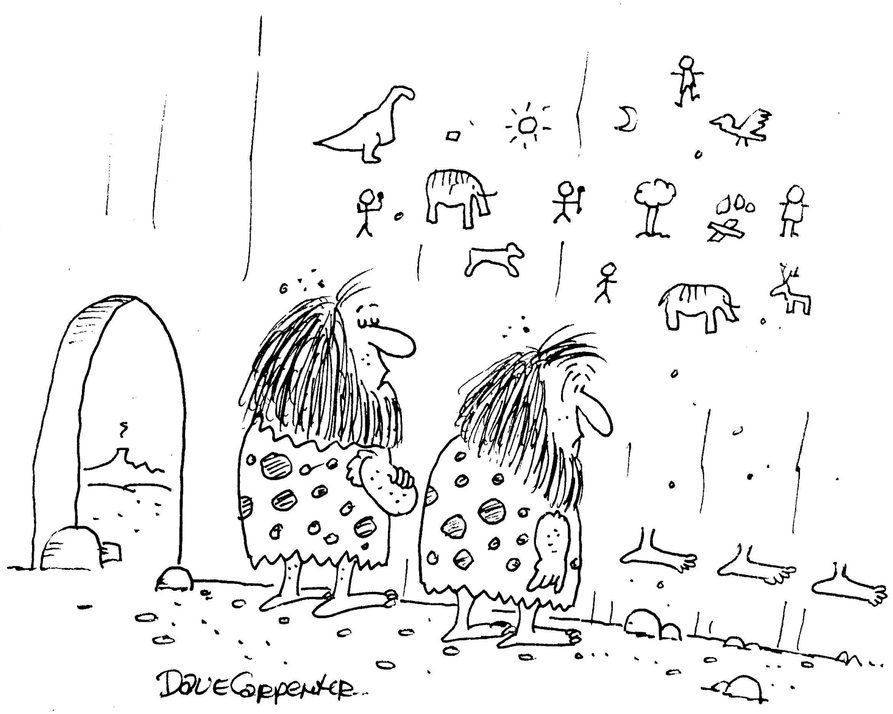
- **Cite articles from the journal to which you are submitting:** the reviewers who consider your work are likely regular readers of the journal they're reviewing for (and that you're targeting for publication).
- They may have authored articles in this particular journal themselves, or they might have provided editorial oversight on articles recently published in the journal. In any case, there is a good chance that they will be familiar with any article you reference from the journal.
- Not only will this help you further establish your credibility and display an understanding of the field, it's also a strategic way to take advantage of the reviewer's ego: it reminds them that their work and their journal are important! (If they publish your article, your article will also count as another citation for their journal, which is a good thing.)



"Must be the footnotes."

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Edit your work extensively

- You need to have a serious editing and revision process if you intend to publish your work, one that goes beyond the quick skim you might give a paper before passing it in for a class. Start by doing something very old fashioned: print the draft and grab a red pen.

- When you edit your own work, you need to give yourself plenty of time between when you actually do your writing and when you do your editing. When we're writing, we have a lot of ideas swirling around in our heads; all these ideas allow us to make logical jumps in our writing that, while they might make sense to us at the time, end up confusing others (or perhaps, even ourselves when we're not in the same head space).

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- There are a two things you can look for in your editing process that, when addressed, will markedly improve the quality of your paper:

- **Fix Confusing Passages**: When it comes to your writing style, simpler is better. Nothing will doom your work more definitely than if no one can understand what you're trying to say. This point should be emphasized:

"*Brilliant writing is simple writing, a relevant idea delivered clearly and directly*."

- **Write in short, concise sentences**. If your writing is littered with commas, semi-colons, and dashes, go back and simplify. As you edit your paper, be your own worst nightmare: read critically and ask yourself, "does this make sense?" Make sure that your ideas are connected, and never assume your readers will be able to follow your line of thinking.

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- Remember that the reader is not responsible for figuring out what you're trying to say: you're responsible for conveying your ideas clearly.
- Avoid the Passive Voice: If you are unfamiliar with the passive voice, start by reading a basic overview. Particularly in non-scientific writing, overuse of the passive voice can lead to writing that is unnecessarily verbose, indirect, and lacking in specificity. If you address your use of the passive voice, you are likely to improve your writing in two ways: first, eliminating the passive voice will simplify your writing (see above); and second, changing passive constructions to active constructions may force you to be more specific or to add additional details.
- For example, consider this simple passive sentence: "The bill was signed into law."
- Use of the passive voice allows the writer to easily leave out an important detail: who signed the bill into law?
- By converting the same sentence into the active voice, the author is forced to add specificity: "The King signed the bill into law."

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- Overall, your editing process should make up a significant portion of the work you do until you reach a final version of your paper. If you approach this process with a critical eye, you will end up cutting out superfluous passages and elaborating on important details. The result will be a much stronger paper.

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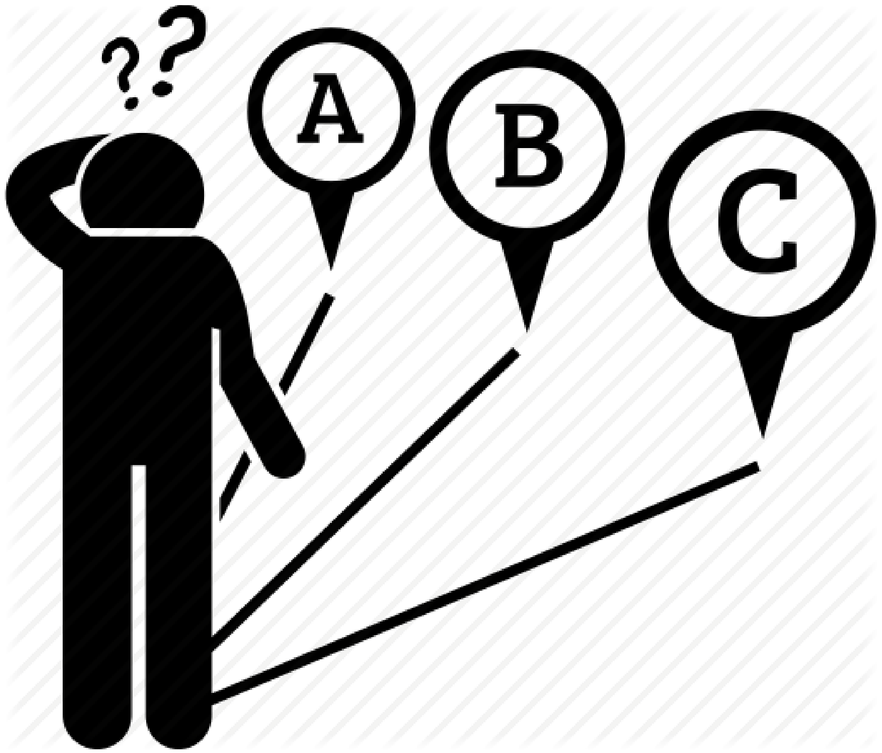
Referencing Styles

- **Use journal format**
- In case of doubt how to follow format ask.



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Sending off

Consult with your supervisors

Submit it to them

Do not just submit as deadline is close

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Sending ‘it’ off

- Proof-read
- Write a covering letter
- **Don’t repeat your abstract in the cover letter**

We look to the cover letter for an indication from you about what you think is most interesting and significant about the paper, and why you think it is a good fit for the journal. There is no need to repeat the abstract or go through the content of the paper in detail – we will read the paper itself to find out what it says. The cover letter is a place for a bigger picture outline, plus any other information that you would like us to have. *Deborah Sweet, editor of Cell Stem Cell and publishing director at Cell Press*

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Watch for deadlines

- Everyone is under time pressure: the editor, the reviewer, not just you. If you undertake the "revise and resubmit", reply to the editor and get on with it. Good things do not, normally, come to those who wait.
- You are not a first-year undergraduate; don't leave it so late that you need to ask for an extension.

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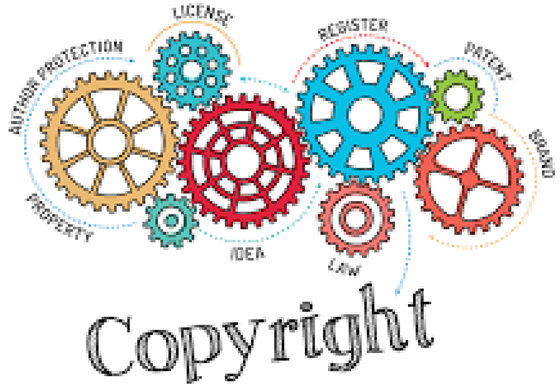

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◆Before choosing an end user license:

- Understand what each user license permits, and the rights it grants to readers for using your article.
- Check if your funding body or institution has a policy requiring the use of a specific license.
- Read your journal's Guide for Authors to ensure it offers the license you want to use.
- Visit the Creativecommons.org site for more information on what to consider before selecting a user license. (It's important to note that you can't revoke your chosen license.)

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Options	1. Publish in an open access journal 2. Publish in a journal that supports open access (also known as a hybrid journal)	1. Link to your article 2. For selected journals Elsevier makes the articles freely available after an embargo period in the open archives 3. Self-archive your manuscript

Promote your work

◆SEO your article

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) helps to ensure that your article appears higher in the results returned by search engines such as Google. This can mean you attract more readers, gain higher visibility in the academic community, and potentially increase citations.

Tips for SEO include:

- Use keywords, especially in the title and abstract.
- Add captions with keywords to all photographs, images, graphs and tables.
- Add titles or subheadings (with keywords) to the different sections of your article.
- Make sure you place links to your article from relevant websites e.g. your department website, PURE, LinkedIn, blogs and social media.

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◆Share your paper (including via LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook..)

◆Be discovered online

- Put on your MEPA page
- Put in PURE
- Put in academia.edu
- Put on SSRN
- Set Google Scholar Citations profile

◆Present at conferences

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Monitor your impact

◆If you're at an early stage in your career, you can use metrics that don't require longer timeframes:

- **Collaboration** – how big is your network? What's the status of colleagues in your network? Where in the world are they located?
- **Scholarly output** – how productive are you?
- **Usage** – how often have your publications been viewed?
- **Article metrics** – who's talking about papers online and what's being said?
- **Journal status** – what's the status of the journals that have published your work? The average citation impact of all the articles in a journal is a useful proxy for the impact your articles will achieve when they've had time to accumulate citations.

◆When you're at a later stage in your research career, with a sizeable output and an impressive number of citations, further metrics can then become useful:

- **Citation count** – how many citations have your articles received?
- **Outstanding articles** – which of your articles are in the top percentile of comparable articles?
- **h-index** – this rates your entire publication career based on both output and citation impact. (An h-index of 11 indicates that 11 of a researcher's articles have each received at least 11 citations.)

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General Advice

- Establish a reputation of a reliable & honest researcher (always acknowledge your sources)
- Be prepared to give advice to those who seek advice from you
- **Accept to review papers from journals or chapters in edited volumes**

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Co-authored or single publications?

- Depends on field
- Co-authoring with experienced researchers can be great experience
- Combination of specific skills of authors

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Ethical standards

- Be honest: always attribute where your idea comes from…plagiarism has severe consequences
- As a reviewer, make sure your give constructive criticism together with your honest opinion
- Never be nasty or dogmatic
- If you guessed who reviewed your paper and you meet that person: don’t start talking about the paper unless the reviewer starts about it
- Don’t cite or use data of a paper you have been asked to review
- If you wish to contact the author/s, ask the editor to pass on the message

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Take home messages

1. Enjoy writing and sharing your writing with a wider public!

2. Strive for precision and perfection but do not be blocked by them.

3. Do not be discouraged by criticism: what does not kill you makes you stronger!

4. Think ahead: life after a PhD is sooner than you think.

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Sources

- (for multiple slides) https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/blog/2013/sep/06/academic-journal-writing-top-tips
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- How to Write and Publish an Academic Research Paper 101 Tips from JournalPrep.com
- (esp. slide 28) - http://www.inquiriesjournal.com/blog/posts/51/5-tips-for-publishing-your-first-academic-article/

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Thank you for your attention