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**Author Success Workshop:**  
**Effectively Communicating  
Your Research Part 1**

Faculty of Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University

AM Session, 12 February 2019



About Edanz



- Founded in 1995
- Offer expert editing and publication support to researchers worldwide
- Provide education and workshops worldwide and online
- Provide free author tools and resources
- Thai researchers use our tools and services




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About Edanz

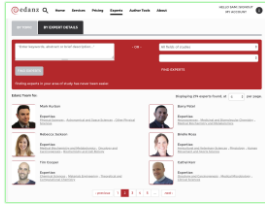


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- BELS-certified editor
- Experts covering many fields including:
  - Infectious diseases
  - Microbiology
  - Parasitology
  - Epidemiology
  - Public health
- Edanz Experts work with you on a personal level and share your passion for research




300

We only accept the best:

5% acceptance rate



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- Workshops worldwide
- Blended learning approach
  - Interactive workshops + Elearning
- Edanz Learning Center
  - Elearning
  - Journal Selector
  - Author Path
  - Webinars

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## Author Success Workshop: Effectively Communicating Your Research Part 1

Faculty of Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University

AM Session, 12 February 2019

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Lilly Gray

### About Lilly...



Editor &  
Project Manager



BA, Communication Studies



Society for Editors and Proofreaders



Certified ELS



### Skills needed on the path to publication success



**Preparation**

- Training in reading papers, ethics, writing, presenting
- Expert Scientific Review

**Journal Selection**

- Expert Scientific Review
- Journal Selection & submission strategy

**Writing**

- Training in ethics, writing, presenting
- Revising
- Editing

**Submission**

- Training in ethics, writing
- Editing
- Formatting
- Abstract Development
- Cover Letter Development
- Reformatting
- Reviewer Recommendation

**Peer Review**

- Training in navigating peer review
- Review Editing
- Point-by-point checking
- Response Letter Development
- Reformatting

**Publication Success**

- Press release, news writing
- Media & presentation training
- Training for early career researchers
- Training in writing grant proposals
- Grant proposal editing

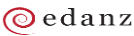
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*Your goal is not only to be published, but  
also to be widely read and highly cited*

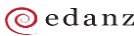
Be an effective communicator

- ✓ Structure your manuscript well
- ✓ Present your science appropriately
- ✓ Write your sentences and paragraphs logically
- ✓ Write to attract your readers



Section 1

Preparing well



Genetic Analysis

What editors want

- 1

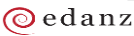
Original and novel research  
("journalism" aspect)  
*News, importance, innovation, timeliness*
- 2

Well-designed, well-reported, transparent study  
*High scientific & technical quality, sound research & publication ethics*
- 3

Logical, engaging contents; correct English & formatting  
*High readability & interest, informative*
- 4

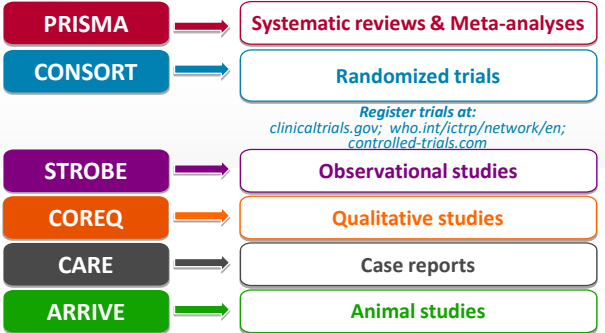
Useful message  
*Clear, real-world relevance, influence*

"Journal Impact Factor" =  
No. citations in indexed journals  
÷ No. articles, past 2 years

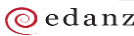


Before you start ...

Use reporting guidelines



<http://www.equator-network.org/>



Before you start ...

Research and publishing ethics

Safety	Ethics board approval; for humans: signed consent, data privacy; animal & environmental safety
Submissions	Submit to only one journal; do not republish without permissions; do not manipulate peer review
No plagiarism	Paraphrase/summarize/synthesize & cite all sources
No cheating	Do <u>not</u> fabricate or falsify data/parts of images
Authorship (icmje.org)	(1) Study design or data acquisition/analysis; (2) Writing/revising; (3) Approval; (4) Accountability
Conflicts of interest	State funding source and any financial/personal relationships that could bias the work

Committee on Publication Ethics, COPE

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Before you start ...

Types of articles (select your journal early!)

❖ <b>Research Article</b>	Most common; full-length paper (Original Article, Original Paper, Research Report...)
❖ <b>Short Communication</b>	Brief report about a specific finding (Brief, Note, Communication, Brief Communication...)
❖ <b>Technical Note</b>	Brief report about a new methodology
❖ <b>Review Article</b>	Summary of recent advances in a field: systematic or non-systematic
❖ <b>Case Report</b>	Observations of 1 or 2 cases
❖ <b>Letter to the Editor</b>	Brief discussion about a previously published article; in some journals, can also be a "Research Letter" containing original research
❖ <b>Book chapter, working paper/preprint</b>	(SSRN, IDEAS/RePEc, institutional sites)

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Before you start ...

Choose your journal early!

Author guidelines

- Manuscript structure
- Word limits, formatting
- Procedures, Copyright

Aims and scope

- Topic, readership
- Selection criteria: quality +/- potential impact?

- Check past papers: learn writing style
- Check relevant references
- Check originality, importance & usefulness!

Always check your journal is trustworthy: [ThinkCheckSubmit.org](#)


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Edanz Journal Selector

<https://www.liwenbianji.cn/journal-selector>

Insert your proposed abstract/title or keywords into text box



- Similar abstracts
- Links to:
  - Journal website
  - Aims and scope
  - Readership
  - Author guidelines

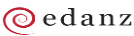
Filter/sort by:

- Field of study
- Impact factor
- Open access/hybrid/subscription
- Publishing frequency

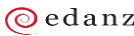
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Section 2

Organizing your manuscript



Organize your message!



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Importance of logic

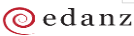
Two factors to consider when writing a manuscript

Logically organizing your ideas

Communicating in English

Draft outline & abstract/title;  
Draft & revise manuscript

Edit manuscript & finalize abstract/title



Scientific presentation

Use your illustrations to structure your manuscript

Where to start?

- ❖ Your *findings* form the basis of your manuscript
- ❖ First organize your findings
- ❖ Logic, then English language

Figure 1

Table 1

Figure 2

?

Figure 3

Logical flow

- Time order
- Most ⇔ least important
- General ⇔ specific
- Simple ⇔ complex
- Whole ⇔ parts

Is anything missing?  
Additional analyses?



Scientific presentation

Prepare an outline

I. Introduction

- A. General background
- B. Related studies
- C. Problems in the field
- D. Aims

II. Methods

- A. Subjects/Samples/Materials
- B. General methods
- C. Specific methods
- D. Statistical analyses

III. Results

- A. Key points about Figure 1
- B. Key points about Table 1
- C. Key points about Figure 2
- D. Key points about Figure 3
- E. Key points about Figure 4

IV. Discussion

- A. Major conclusion
- B. Key findings that support conclusion
- C. Relevance to published studies
- D. Limitations
- E. Unexpected results
- F. Implications
- G. Future directions

❖ Write key ideas in bullet points, as IMRaD (=Intro, Methods, Results and Discussion)

❖ No need for full sentences

❖ Draft title/abstract early; finalize later

❖ Draft article in sections; get feedback & revise each section

❖ Revise content/logic before language

❖ Get help: presubmission peer review & editing by a native English speaker

When using information from other articles: Paraphrase with citations!

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Manuscript structure

Title/Abstract

Introduction

Methods

Results

Discussion

Why did you do the study?

What did you do?

What did you find?

How does your study contribute to your field?

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The 'write' order

Title/Abstract

Introduction

Methods

Results

Discussion

write

Title/Abstract

Methods

Results

Discussion

Introduction

Abstract /Title

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Scientific presentation

Introduction

Why is your study needed?

Previous studies

General

Current study

Specific

Aim

Background information

Worldwide relevance?

Broad/specialized?

Current state of the field

Recent, International

Not too many self-cites

Problem in the field

Importance of filling knowledge gap

Research Q / hypothesis

Specific aim/approach/contents

Results preview? Extra sections (Lit Review)?

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6

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Example introduction

Most health care systems are currently under pressure to reconcile the need to deliver services more efficiently and provide more personalised health care.... The case for using subgroups based on biological-clinical and socio-demographic variables to address heterogeneity is well-established in effectiveness research.... What remains controversial is the use of subgrouping on the basis of individual preferences or values, moving beyond clustering based on.... If it were decided to treat subgroup preferences as valid and independent determinants of public policy, a transparent analytical procedure will be needed.... The aim of this study is to present a procedure combining two analytical techniques that have not, thus far, featured in the debate: (i) Cluster Analysis (CA) which is used to generate preference subgroups, and (ii) Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA).

Background

Current state

Problem

Importance

Aim/approach

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Kaltoft et al. Health Economics Review. 2015;5:10 .

Scientific presentation

Common mistakes in the Introduction

- ❖ Start is too basic/general
- ❖ Ideas are not logically organized; too long; listing instead of synthesis/analysis
- ❖ Important topics in Introduction are not mentioned again in the Results/Discussion
- ❖ Topics in Results/Discussion were not mentioned in Introduction
- ❖ Lacks theoretical/conceptual framework, problem statement, rationale of approach, aims
- ❖ Missing important references; cited studies are not recent/relevant; reviews are cited more than primary research; too many self-cites

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Methods

What did you do?

Who/what was studied

- Participants (controls), settings
- Enrollment (N & “power”)
- Materials, databases, survey tools

How the study was done

- Processes, interviews, topic guide, recordings, text analysis
- Variables/outcomes
- Coding/themes/iterations

Data analysis

- Data handling/modeling/statistics
- Triangulation, reflexivity
- Inter-rater reliability; consensus

Clarify who did what; include any ethics statements; mention software (SPSS, MAXQDA, QDA MINER, ATLAS.ti, NVivo)

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Methods

Organization

- Arrange in (titled) subsections
- Keep parallel to the display items
- Use topic sentences

Established techniques

- Cite previously published studies
- Briefly state modifications
- Use flow chart/table\* if needed

\*Summary of study settings, flow of participants, text selection, variables, chronology of analyses...

New techniques

- Explain purposes; justify choices
- Give enough detail for reproducibility
- Use Supplementary Information

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7

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Common mistakes in the Methods

- ❖ Copy/paste; too much/little detail
- ❖ Research design is not mentioned or inappropriate
- ❖ No referencing for techniques/tools/tests used
- ❖ No timeframe, setting, minimization of biases, details of observers, details on pilot study/data collection/repetition
- ❖ Sample is not big enough; unclear sources or participant flow; unclear inclusion/exclusion criteria
- ❖ Unclear analysis, data processing; inappropriate statistical tests; multiple comparisons or confounders without corrections; does not say how missing data were handled
- ❖ Unclear coding methods; not really “grounded theory”
- ❖ Ethical issues are not mentioned

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Results

What did you find?

Logical presentation

- Algorithm, test, improvement
- Group/subgroups; Core/subthemes
- Uni-/bi-/multivariable

Subsections

- Each subsection corresponds to *one* figure and method
- Remember to refer to all figures

Factual description

- What you found, *not* what it means (except in qualitative research or combined Results/Discussion sections)
- Online Supplementary Information
- Data accessibility

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Results: describe relationships

✗

Treatment A reduced soil lead levels by 32.7% and increased soil pH by 12.3%.  
Treatment B reduced soil lead levels by 38.1% and increased soil pH by 15.6%.  
Treatment C reduced soil lead levels by 22.3% and increased soil pH by 6.9%.

○

Treatment B reduced soil lead levels (38.1%) *more effectively than* treatments A (32.7%) and C (22.3%).  
*However*, treatment B resulted in the *highest increase* in soil pH among the three groups (Treatment A, 12.3%; Treatment B, 15.6%; Treatment C, 6.9%).

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Common mistakes in the Results

- ❖ Data are not relevant to research problem/question
- ❖ Findings are listed, without a narrative or relationships shown
- ❖ Information in main text is repeated from display items
- ❖ Unexpected or negative data are not mentioned
- ❖ Some data are not explained in the Methods
- ❖ Some of the methods are not used
- ❖ No denominators (totals) for percentages
- ❖ Unclear display items; incomplete descriptive data; errors are not defined (SD or SEM; 95% confidence intervals)
- ❖ Data are not factually presented (includes interpretations)

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Discussion

How do you advance your field?

Current study

Previous studies

Future studies

Implications

Specific

General

Summary of findings

Relevance

Conclusion

Similarities/differences

Unexpected/negative results

Limitations; unanswered Qs

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Writing the beginning of a long Discussion

State the major conclusion of the study

Most health professionals, including dental students, require rudimentary introduction to health economics. The pedagogical challenges of teaching health economics in dentistry arise from the fact that health economics is a nondental subject that requires deep understanding. In this study, we have found that debate when used to teach health economics to dental students enhanced their interest and reinforced their knowledge of the topic and improved organizational thinking.

Re-introduction

Problem

Conclusion

Modified from: Khan et al. J Dent Educ. 2012;76: 1675–1683.

Scientific presentation

Writing the middle of your Discussion

Compare your findings with those published by others

We found that most individual differences in second language achievement are accounted for by genetic differences, rather than school, family, and other environmental influences. Our heritability estimates are higher than those in our earlier study [3], which might be because different measures were used. In the present study we used standardized examination scores at the end of compulsory education, as compared with teacher ratings of academic achievement in our earlier report....

Current finding

Comparison with previous studies

Potential reasons

Modified from: Rimfeld et al. Transl Psychiatry. 2015;5:e638.

Scientific presentation

Writing the middle of your Discussion

Describe limitations and negative results

Why?

Reporting transparency

- Allows complete evaluation of your study
- Prevents others from repeating those experiments
- Allows others to modify those experiments
- Prevents funding agencies from wasting money

Scientific presentation

Writing the end of your Discussion

What do you want people to remember?

We have demonstrated here that genes explain a larger proportion of differences between children in second language achievement than do shared environmental influences of school and home. Our bivariate results for twins demonstrate a general genetic factor of language achievement in the sense that achievement in English and second language is influenced to a large extent by the same genes. It is important to note that genes not only influence aptitude and achievement, but also appetite for knowledge. Such genotype–environment correlation may be increasingly important during adolescence. Our future research thus involves longitudinal study of second language achievement.

Conclusion

May be a separate section

Key finding

Implications

Future directions

May be a “Future work” section

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Modified from: Rimfeld et al. Transl Psychiatry. 2015;5:e638.

Scientific presentation

Common mistakes in the Discussion

- ❖ Overall findings are not summarized at start
- ❖ New results are presented
- ❖ Unexpected/negative results are not explained
- ❖ Statistical significance is confused with clinical significance, or association is confused with causation
- ❖ Results are not discussed with extant literature; unbalanced
- ❖ Limitations are not discussed
- ❖ Results are repeated in the Discussion
- ❖ Conclusions are too generalized, precise, or confident
- ❖ Conclusion is missing or research problem is not really answered; concepts/terms are not parallel
- ❖ No implications for practice/policy or research

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Link your ideas

Introduction  
#@

Methods  
##@

Results  
##

Discussion  
###@

# Words

@ References

Title & Abstract

Situation/  
Problem

Your  
Solution

Evaluation  
/Comment

End matter

General background

Current state of the field

Problem in the field

Aims

Methodology

Results and figures

Summary of findings

Evaluation of findings

Final solution & Implications

References, Acknowledgments, Funding, Conflicts of interest, Previous publication/presentation, Ethics/Data sharing

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Link your ideas

Introduction

Problem-based learning is an instructional method in which problems are the focal part of learning.

However, it is unclear which particular aspect of the problem is essential for student learning.

We tested a model in which we hypothesized that problem input variables would be related to problem process and outcome variables.

Discussion

In conclusion, this study is among the first to shed more light on the causal interactions of specific problem characteristics at the micro level.

Background

Research question

Objective

Conclusion

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Modified from: Sockalingam et al. Advances in Health Sciences Education. 2011;16:481–490.

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After the first draft....

Format manuscript

Revise manuscript

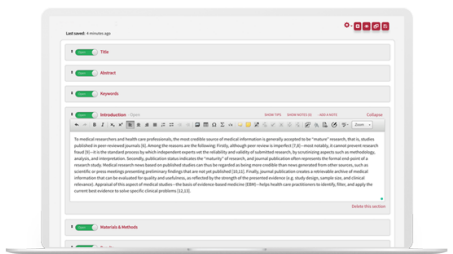
- Use journal template/style
- Re-check word limits
- Format references

- Get input from colleagues
- Check Figures/Tables
- Check consistency/logical flow between sections
- Edit for clarity, conciseness, and accuracy
- Have a rest! Then proofread





Author Path

- Online guided writing tool
- Designed specifically for scientific manuscripts
- Writing guidance for all sections
- Rich features:
  - Collaboration
  - Journal selection
  - Reference management





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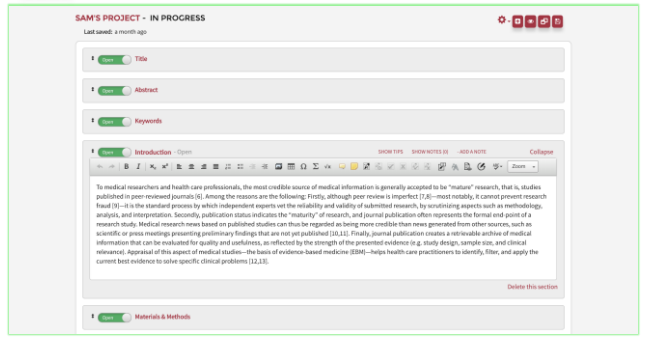
- Well organized
- Easily follow the IMRaD structure
- Customize sections
- Upload your existing manuscript




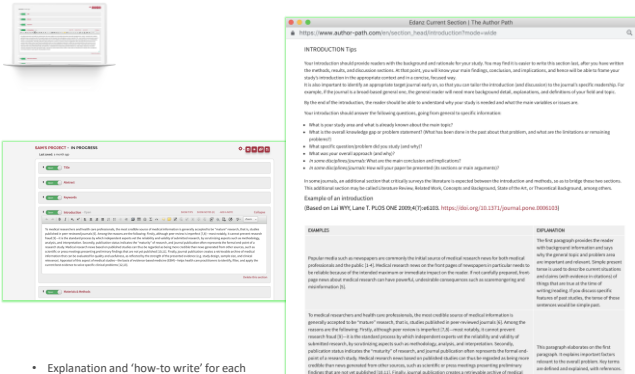


SAM'S PROJECT - IN PROGRESS

- Write
- Collaborate
- Add notes & comments
- Access education







INTRODUCTION Tips


Your introduction should provide readers with the background and rationale for your study. It is the first section of your manuscript, and it is the first section that your readers will read. It is the first section that your readers will read. It is the first section that your readers will read.

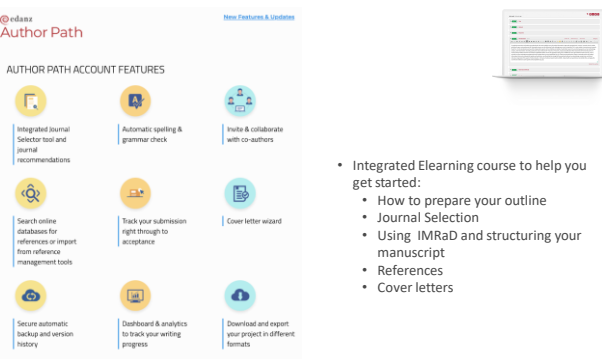
Examples of an introduction

Example 1: A study of the effect of... on... (Liu et al., 2018)

Example 2: A study of the effect of... on... (Liu et al., 2018)

- Explanation and 'how-to write' for each section
- Examples from successfully published papers




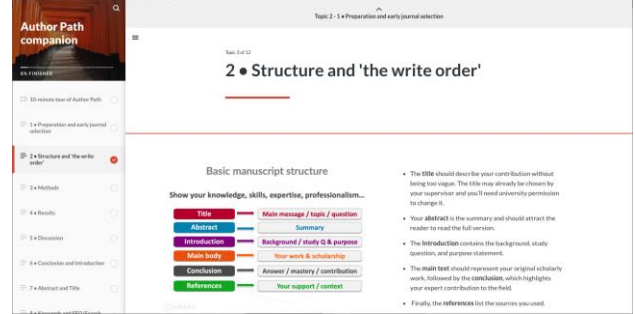


AUTHOR PATH ACCOUNT FEATURES

- Integrated Journal Selector tool and journal recommendations
- Automatic spelling & grammar check
- Invite & collaborate with co-authors
- Search online databases for references or import from reference management tools
- Track your submission right through to acceptance
- Cover letter wizard
- Secure automatic backup and version history
- Dashboard & analytics to track your writing progress
- Download and export your project in different formats

- Integrated Elearning course to help you get started:
  - How to prepare your outline
  - Journal Selection
  - Using IMRaD and structuring your manuscript
  - References
  - Cover letters





Author Path companion

Basic manuscript structure

Show your knowledge, skills, expertise, professionalism...

Title: Main message / topic / question


Abstract: Summary

Introduction: Background / study aim & purpose

Main body: Your work & scholarship


Conclusion: Answer / mastery / contribution

References: Your support / context



# Section 3

## Effective writing




Titles and abstracts

✗

"I should use complex words to make my writing more impressive."

**Nature's guide to authors:**


Nature is an international journal covering all the sciences. Contributions should therefore be written *clearly and simply* so that they are accessible to readers in other disciplines and to readers for whom English is not their first language.

[www.nature.com/nature/authors/gta/index.html#a4](http://www.nature.com/nature/authors/gta/index.html#a4)

Effective writing

Improve readability

To ascertain the efficaciousness of the program, all of the program participants were interrogated upon participant program completion.




Effective writing

Improve readability

To ascertain the efficaciousness of the program, all of the program participants were interrogated upon participant program completion.

To determine the efficacy of the program, we interviewed all participants.




Effective writing

Avoid complex words

Avoid	Preferred
Adequate	Enough
Apparent	Clear
Ascertain	Determine
Commence	Begin
Endeavor	Try
Exceedingly	Very
Magnitude*	Size
Retain	Keep
Sufficient	Enough
Terminate*	End
Utilization	Use

\*OK in certain fields (magnitude of earthquakes, to terminate gene expression)



Effective writing

Delete unnecessary words

"It is well known that Most of the interviewed informants..."


"As a matter of fact, such a This observation..."

"A number of studies have shown that Demographic factors..."

"That is thus another reason why Therefore, we believe..."

"...as described previously in our previous study."


"...at a birth rate of 2.2 births per couple."



Effective writing

Delete unnecessary words

Avoid	Prefer
At a concentration of 2 g/L	At 2 g/L
At a temperature of 37°C	At 37°C
In order to	To
In the first place	First
Four in number	Four
Green color	Green
Subsequent to	After
Prior to	Before
Future plans; past history	Plans; history
It can be argued that	Perhaps/Maybe




Effective writing

Improve readability

Use short sentences

15–20 words

One idea per sentence




Effective writing

Use short sentences

Economists considered Tanaka Industries, a large Japanese trading corporation founded in 1916 outside of Nagoya by Ichiro Tanaka, to be a model in the development of modern employee conditions worldwide.

30 words



Effective writing

Use short sentences

Economists considered Tanaka Industries, a large Japanese trading corporation founded in 1916 outside of Nagoya by Ichiro Tanaka, to be a model in the development of modern employee conditions worldwide.

30 words

Effective writing

Use short sentences

16 words

Economists considered Tanaka Industries to be a model in the development of modern employee conditions worldwide. This large Japanese trading corporation was founded in 1916 outside of Nagoya by Ichiro Tanaka.

15 words

One idea per sentence

Effective writing

Use strong verbs

Avoid nominalizations

Estimate → Estimation

Decide → Decision

Assess → Assessment

Analyze → Analysis

Use strong verbs instead of converting a verb into a noun

~~We made a/an...~~ → ~~We conducted a/an...~~

We decided...

Clear, short, and direct

Check if journal allows I/We, or prefers This study/These findings/This author

Effective writing

Active voice is preferred

AMA Style	"In general, authors should use the <b>active voice</b> ..."
APA Style	"Use the <b>active voice</b> rather than the passive voice..."
Chicago Style Guide	"As a matter of style, passive voice is typically, but not always, inferior to <b>active voice</b> ."
ACS Style Guide	"Use the <b>active voice</b> when it is less wordy and more direct than the passive."
SPE Style	"Use <b>active voice</b> . The use of active rather than passive voice produces clearer, more concise writing"
ASCE Style	"Wherever possible, use <b>active verbs</b> that demonstrate what is being done and who is doing it..."
IEEE	"Use <b>active voice</b> by default; research shows readers comprehend it more quickly than passive voice..."

Effective writing

Avoid reader confusion

Is this sentence in the active or passive voice?

In this study, a mathematical equation for domestic happiness was developed using factor analysis.

Effective writing

Avoid reader confusion

Is this sentence in the active or passive voice?

Passive voice

In this study, a mathematical equation for domestic happiness **was developed** using factor analysis.

Effective writing

Avoid reader confusion

Part of the Introduction

Pack et al. created a questionnaire to probe how happy people feel in their households.<sup>3</sup>  
In this study, a mathematical equation for domestic happiness **was developed** using factor analysis.

Effective writing

Avoid reader confusion

Part of the Introduction

Pack et al. created a questionnaire to probe how happy people feel in their households.<sup>3</sup>  
**In this study**, a mathematical equation for domestic happiness **was developed** using factor analysis.

Who did the work *in this study*?

Pack et al. ?    The author ?



Effective writing

Avoid reader confusion

Part of the Introduction

Pack et al. created a questionnaire to probe how happy people feel in their households.<sup>3</sup>

In this study, we developed a mathematical equation for domestic happiness using factor analysis.

Who did the work in this study?

The author

© edanz

Effective writing

When to use the passive

(1) The doer is not important or not known; making generalizations (“English is spoken in many countries”)

(2) Avoiding We...We...We... in Methods

(3) If the authors did not themselves do a step in the Methods (but a technician/colleague/company did it, and is named in the Acknowledgments)

(4) Some journals use passive in the Methods or Abstract

(5) Avoiding top-heavy subjects (“All participants were interviewed by the same researcher, who had been thoroughly trained in phenomenological analysis”)

(6) To stress the doer (“...by someone/something”)

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Effective writing

Academic English writing style

Which sentence suggests that you will get funding?

1. You deserve the funding, but the study Topic position perfect.

2. The study design is not perfect, but you deserve the funding. Stress position

Readers focus at the end of the sentence to determine what is important.

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Effective writing

Academic English writing style

The stress position can also introduce the topic of the next sentence

The study design is not perfect, but you deserve the funding. The grant will be awarded in two stages.

Stress position

Topic position

= Word/theme cohesion


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Effective writing

Cohesion

Referencing within/between sentences

- Repeating a word (or singular↔plural)
  - Publishing research is important. Publishing takes many forms.
- Using the definite article (or “such a/an”) and a synonym/group noun
  - Publishing research is important. The activity is a part of academia.
- Using a demonstrative with or without a group noun
  - Publishing research is important. This (activity) is a part of academia.
- Using a pronoun
  - Publishing research is important. It ensures knowledge is recorded.
- Using a relative pronoun
  - Publishing research is an activity that ensures knowledge is recorded.
- Substituting a word
  - Publishing research is an important activity; presenting is another.
- Omitting the word (ellipsis)
  - Publishing research is important but is usually not taught.


Based on: Halliday and Hassan, Cohesion in English, 1976, London: Longman.

Effective writing

Beyond cohesion

The stress position can introduce the topic of the next sentence, but the terms have to be logically connected

The study design is not perfect, but you deserve the funding. The grant money of some funding agencies is given only if authors make their data publicly available.




Effective writing

Coherence


Logical relations within and between sentences

- Cause and effect
- Comparison and contrast
- Elaboration, e.g., Classification/Definition, Exemplification
- Description (giving characteristics)
- Narrative sequence of events (reporting a linear sequence)
- Procedures, instructions
- Problem and solution
- Past, present, future (situation/gap analysis)
- Arguing for and against (evaluation)
- Whole to parts, or parts to whole
- General to specific, or specific to general

Based on: Grabe and Stoller, 2002; Teaching and researching reading, Harlow, UK: Pearson Education.

Activity 1

Improving readability



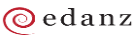
## Improving readability

Please improve the readability of the following sentences.

To ascertain whether our algorithm was correct, the simulation results were carefully analyzed with the appropriate methods.

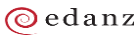
In order to make a decision if the statistical test was appropriate, we conducted an assessment of the normality of the data distribution.

After terminating the first data collection period, the test was repeated on two more occasions.



## Section 4

### Avoiding common mistakes



Common errors

## Avoid mistakes 1

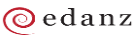
**Compared with** is for saying how things are different

The accuracy of the new program was reduced compared to the previous program.

The accuracy of the new program was reduced compared **with that of** the previous program.

The accuracy of the new program was **lower than that of** the previous program.

The computer can be compared to the brain.



Common errors

## Avoid mistakes 2

Clarify **contrasts**

~~X~~ The bacteria that were treated with A grew **faster**.

The bacteria that were treated with A grew faster than untreated bacteria.

The bacteria that were treated with A grew faster than those treated with B.

The bacteria grew faster after A treatment.




Common errors

Avoid mistakes 3

Make sentences **concise** and **interesting**

✗ Author 1 and Author 2 showed.... Author 3 et al showed.... Author 4 showed....

Surface modification has various advantages, including UV protection (REF), disinfection (REF), and easy cleaning (REF).



Common errors

Avoid mistakes 4


Be **formal**, **concise**, and **accurate**

✗ The reliability **wasn't generally affected by** data filtering.

The reliability **increased by only 2.5%** after data filtering.

✗ It's **really interesting and important** to find a new way, **which is easily scalable**, to make vancomycin.

A new scalable approach to synthesize vancomycin is required.



Common errors

Avoid mistakes 5


Fix **run-ons (comma splices)** and **fragments**

✗ Inefficiency is related to energy flow, however not all losses are because of energy flow.

Inefficiency is related to energy flow; **however**, not all losses are because of energy flow. (Or...**However**,)

✗ Our modified assay rapidly screened many cDNA libraries. Which is why it should be a useful high throughput method.

Our modified assay rapidly screened many cDNA libraries. **Hence**, it should be a useful high throughput method. (Or...**Because** our modified assay rapidly screened many cDNA libraries, **it** should be...)



Common errors

Avoid mistakes 6

Check the logic of **lists**

✗ The variables included family size, personal and household incomes.

The variables included family size **and** personal and household incomes.

✗ The recorded times were 3 minutes, 2 minutes and 40 seconds.

The recorded times were 3 minutes, 2 minutes, **and** 40 seconds.

✗ The cities comprised Shanghai, China, London, UK, and Chicago, USA.

The cities comprised Shanghai, China; London, UK; and Chicago, USA.



Common errors

Avoid mistakes 7

Don't misuse **time words**

✗ While many people read e-books, some still prefer real books.

Although/Whereas many people read e-books, some still prefer real books.

✗ The patient had no appetite since he had eaten breakfast.

The patient had no appetite because he had eaten breakfast.

✗ The plants were harvested as they flowered.

The plants were harvested because/once they had flowered.

Common errors

Avoid mistakes 8

Don't misuse **statistical words**

✗ Patient parameters

...improved significantly; it is significant that...

X was caused by Y

The risk of developing X in this retrospective study...

Patient variables

...improved considerably/markedly; it is important that...

X was associated with/related to/linked to Y

The odds of developing X in this retrospective study...

The risk of developing X in this prospective study...

Common errors

Avoid mistakes 9

❖ **Respectively** is used for *corresponding list items*

✗ The two values were 143 and 21, respectively.

The two values were 143 and 21.

The values for groups A and B were 143 and 21, respectively.

Common errors

Avoid mistakes 10

❖ **Don't use numbers** to start a sentence

✗ 50 participants were recruited.

We recruited 50 participants. / In this study, 50 participants were recruited.

Fifty participants were recruited.



Effective writing

Check spelling

**Irregular plurals**

Index -> **Indices** (or Indexes for book index)

Appendix -> **Appendices** (or Appendixes for book appendix)

Species -> **Species**

Axis -> **Axes**

Die -> **Dice**

Hypothesis -> **Hypotheses**

Agenda -> **Agendas** (used to be Agendum -> Agenda)


Datum -> **Data** (but Data can be singular if "big data")

Criterion -> **Criteria**

Phenomenon -> **Phenomena**

Fungus -> **Fungi** or Funguses; Matrix -> Matrices or Matrixes

Medium -> **Media** (but Media can be singular if social/mass media)



Effective writing

Check spelling

**UK versus US spelling**

Haemoglobin -> Hemoglobin

Organise, Organisation, Analyse -> Organize, Organization, Analyze

Colour, Mould -> Color, Mold

Grey -> Gray

Programme, Program (computing) -> Program

Practice [n], Practise [v] -> Practice [n][v]

Licence [n], License [v] -> License [n][v]


Centre, Fibre, Metre -> Center, Fiber, Meter (but UK&US Meter=device)

Catalogue -> Catalog

Aluminium -> Aluminum

Label, Labelled, Labelling -> Label, Labeled, Labeling

Fulfil, Enrol -> Fulfill, Enroll (but UK&US Controlled, Targeted, Cancellation)




Effective writing

Check spelling

**Confused spellings**

Accept/Except	Coarse/Course
Advice/Advise	Complement/Compliment
Affect/Effect	Currant/Current
All together/Altogether	Defuse/Diffuse
Aloud/Allowed	Desert/Dessert
Altar/Alter	Discreet/Discrete
Bare/Bear	Interesting/Interested
Bazaar/Bizarre	Loose/Lose
Brake/Break	Principle/Principal
Canvas/Canvass	Sight/Site/Cite
Chord/Cord	Stationary/Stationery
	Storey/Story
	There/Their/They're



<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/usage/commonly-confused-words>

Section 5

Making a good impression



Which would you buy?



First impressions are important!



<http://burgerconquest.com/2012/10/13/new-york-food-and-wine-festival-blue-moon-burger-bash-2012-winners-announced/>; <http://burgerconquest.com/>

Titles and abstracts

Take care with the title and abstract

Your title & abstract should attract readers

Relevance of your aims

Importance of your results

Validity of your conclusions

First impression of paper:  
clear/concise/convincing

It sells your work:  
Readers judge your style & credibility

Often first or only part that is read by readers/reviewers



Titles and abstracts

Your article's title

Important points

✓ Only main idea/s

✓ Accurate, simple

✓ Population/model

✓ Include keywords

✓ Fewer than 20 words

✓ Include method/study type

Avoid


✗ Unneeded words ("A study of")

✗ Sensationalism, journalistic style

✗ Complex word order

✗ Abbreviations, jargon

✗ "New" or "novel"



Titles and abstracts

Title styles

Interrogative

Can ischemic preconditioning improve prognosis after coronary artery bypass surgery?

Assertive/Declarative\*


Ischemic preconditioning improves prognosis after coronary artery bypass / Improved prognosis after coronary artery bypass by ischemic preconditioning

Indicative/Descriptive\*

Prognostic effects of ischemic preconditioning in coronary artery bypass patients

\* + Method (subtitle)

XXXXXXX: randomized controlled trial





The diagram illustrates the structure of an abstract. It features a large orange circle on the left containing the text "Titles and abstracts". To the right, a sample abstract text is presented with several sections highlighted in different colors and enclosed in colored boxes with questions. The text is as follows:

Numerous systemic (SS); **however**, the comparative efficacy of these treatments is unclear. **We performed** a retrospective analysis of our cutaneous lymphoma database to evaluate the treatment efficacy of 198 MF/SS patients undergoing systemic therapies. The primary end point was overall survival (OS) for all alive patients with advanced-stage disease made up 53%. The median OS for all alive patients was 4.9 years (range 0.3–39.6), with a median survival of 11.4 years. Patients received a median of 3 lines of therapy (range 1–13), resulting in 199 treatment episodes. Twenty-eight treatment modalities were analyzed. **We found** that the median TTNT for single- or multiagent chemotherapy was only 3.9 months (95% confidence interval [CI] 3.2–5.1), with few durable responses. The median TTNT for interferon (IFN) was 8.7 months (95% CI 6.0–18.0), and his... gave a median TTNT of 4.5 months (95% CI 4.0–6.1). When compared directly with chemotherapy, interferon and HDACi both had greater TTNT ( $P < .00001$  and  $P = .01$ , respectively). **In conclusion**, this study confirms that all chemotherapy regimens assessed have very modest efficacy; we recommend...

The highlighted sections and their corresponding questions are:

- Why did you do the study?** (Green box, highlights "We performed")
- What did you do?** (Yellow box, highlights "We found")
- What did you find?** (Red box, highlights "In conclusion")
- How does your study contribute to your field?** (Blue box, highlights "this study confirms")


At the bottom left is the edanz logo, and at the bottom right is the text: "Modified from: Cannegieter et al. Blood. 2015; 125: 229–235."

# Search Engine Optimization


Titles and abstracts


- ❖ Identify 7–8 keywords (try to use standard terms\*)
- ❖ Use 2 in your title; 5–6 in the keyword list
- ❖ Use 3 keywords 3–4 times in your abstract
- ❖ Use keywords in headings when appropriate
- ❖ Be consistent throughout your paper, but include some synonyms
- ❖ Cite your previous publications when relevant

\*Standard terms from PsycINFO, BIOSIS, ChemWeb, ERIC Thesaurus, GeoRef, MeSH, etc

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Journal editors are busy!





Cover letters

Cover letter

Dear Editor-in-Chief,

I am sending you our manuscript entitled "Techniques to detect entanglement in cats" by Schrodinger *et al.* We would like to have the manuscript considered for publication in *Quantum Theory Frontiers*.


Please let me know of your decision at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely yours,

Albert Einstein, PhD

No information about the manuscript

Too short



Cover letters

Cover letter

[Insert your Name and address here]  
[Insert Journal Editor's name here]  
Editor-in-Chief  
[Insert journal name here]  
[Insert date here - Day Month Year]

Dear Dr [Insert editor's surname here],

Please find enclosed our manuscript titled "[Insert title of your manuscript here]", which we would like to submit for publication as an [Insert article type here] in [Insert journal name here].

[Insert a sentence on the broad topic of the study and its importance. Then, insert 2-3 sentences explaining what is known on your subject and the relevant knowledge you are adding. In the final sentence, explain the objectives of the study and its novel aspects.]

[Insert about 3 sentences briefly describing the methods of the study and the main findings.]

[Discuss the implications or potential applications of the findings. Explain who will be interested in the findings and why they should care about them. Explain how this is appropriate for the readership of the journal.]

We confirm that this manuscript has not been published elsewhere and is not under consideration by another journal. All authors have approved the manuscript and agree with submission to [Insert journal name here]. The study was supported by a grant from the [Insert funding body here]. The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

We would like to recommend the following researchers as potential reviewers for this paper:

1. [Reviewer 1 name plus contact information]  
2. [Reviewer 2 name plus contact information]  
3. [Reviewer 3 name plus contact information]

We ask that the following researchers are excluded as reviewers because of potential conflict of interest:

1. [Reviewer 1 name plus contact information]  
2. [Reviewer 2 name plus contact information]

Please address all correspondence to:  
[Insert contact address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address.]

We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,  
[Insert name], [Insert title]

Your name and address

Editor & Journal

Greeting & Introduction

Context & Importance

Methods & Findings

Implications & Relevance

Originality & Ethics

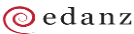
Reviewer Recommendation

Reviewer Exclusion

Contacts & Availability

Sign-off & Signature block

Highlight study quality & impact; recent articles in journal, themed issue?



Cover letters

Building your cover letter

Dr Alan Wysong  
Editor-in-Chief  
*Civil and Mechanical Engineering Today*

17 July 2016

Dear Dr Wysong,

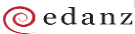
Please find enclosed our manuscript titled "Assessment of reinforcing bars for improving seismic structural performance in near-field and far-field earthquakes", which we would like to submit for publication as a Research Article in *Civil and Mechanical Engineering Today*.

Journal editor's name

Did you read the website carefully?

Manuscript title

Publication type



Cover letters

Building your cover letter

Second paragraph:

Deformed reinforcing steel bars are a standard part of concrete buildings. Modeling studies have shown that reinforcement properties are important for maintaining the integrity of low- and high-rises that are situated at places that are prone to earthquakes. However, studies comparing seismic performance in near- and far-field earthquakes are lacking. Information on steel reinforcement of buildings at locations that are near and far from fault lines would be of broad interest to engineers, planners, and policy makers.

Current statusProblemAudience

@edanz

Cover letters

Building your cover letter

Third paragraph:

We modeled different near- and far-field earthquake scenarios for a ten-storey building reinforced by different configurations of steel bar. Ductility factors were calculated for the different scenarios, correcting for site softness. Ductility factors and probabilities of complete collapse were different when near- and far-field earthquakes were simulated. Intensity, site effect, and reinforcement configuration were key dependent variables in the model. Repetition was an additional variable that affected the integrity of the building structure....

MethodsKey results

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Cover letters

Building your cover letter

Fourth paragraph:

✓ Why *interesting* to the journal's readership

These findings are useful for understanding building location and concrete reinforcement and will be of interest to *Civil and Mechanical Engineering Today* readers, especially those researching building materials or involved in city planning. Furthermore, our integrated modeling approach combining site effect and repetition offers a promising strategy to identify candidate reinforcement configurations in future studies.

RelevanceImplications

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Cover letters

Building your cover letter

Last paragraph:

We confirm that this manuscript has not been published elsewhere and is not under consideration by another journal. All authors have approved the manuscript, including authorship and order, and agree with submission to *Civil and Mechanical Engineering Today*. This study was funded by a grant from XXXXXX Lands Corporation Co. Ltd. The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

EthicsFundingConflicts of interest

@edanz

Cover letters

Building your cover letter

Original and unpublished

Not submitted to other journals

Authors agree on paper/journal

Conflicts of interest

Source of funding

Contact details

“Must-have” statements

Cover letters

Building your cover letter

Other important information:

✓ Recommended / excluded reviewers

✓ Author’s contact information

We would like to recommend the following reviewers to evaluate our manuscript:

1. Reviewer 1 and contact information

2. Reviewer 2 and contact information

3. Reviewer 3 and contact information

4. Reviewer 4 and contact information

Please address all correspondence to:

Reviewers

Contact information

Cover letters

Recommending reviewers

Where to find them?

How senior?

Who to avoid?

From your reading/references, networking at conferences

Aim for mid-level researchers

Collaborators (past 5 years), researchers from your university

International list:  
1 or 2 from Asia, Europe, the Americas, Australasia

Choose reviewers who have published in your target journal

Your goal is not only to **publish**, but also to be **widely read and cited**

Be an effective communicator

✓ Structure your manuscript well

✓ Present your science appropriately

✓ Write your sentences and paragraphs logically

✓ Write to attract your readers