

Elements of Scientific and Technical Writing

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Abstract

Do you like writing technical reports or manuscripts? Many scientists despise writing because it is challenging and time consuming. However, composing science results is not only vital to the progress of research, but also an obligation and the cornerstone of a successful career in a specialized field. Technical writing is a practice of method. Accomplished technical writers continuously practice and refine their writing by focusing on clarity, purpose, organization and language of each word, sentence, paragraph and section. Technical writing requires concision, where a sentence contains no unnecessary words; each sentence and paragraph has a succinct motive, and the entire manuscript has a clear purpose; the structure of each section of writing is well organized; the language and syntax is appropriate and continuously refined. Everyone can become a proficient technical writer with diligence, practice and mindfulness to a few key principles. The goal of this workshop is to introduce the basic elements of scientific and technical writing to postgraduate students. Attention will be placed on active-learning exercises offering students an opportunity to build confidence and identify technical writing focal points – engagement in writing!

Tips for writing scientific journal articles

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Publish or perish is a long proven means of motivating scientists to share their research findings and also used as a criterion to climb the career rank. The percentage of rejection of manuscripts submitted to peer review journals is relatively high that could range from 70 to 80%. Thus, effort must be made to ensure that the submission to the journal is of internationally acceptable quality. Manuscripts submitted to journals first go through a preliminary screening to check whether the scope meets the journal's requirements. In addition, the manuscript is also screened for plagiarism. Manuscripts can be rejected at this level even before it is sent to reviewers. Thus authors must make the right selection of the journal for submission of their manuscripts and the preparation of the manuscript must follow closely the requirements stated in the guidelines for authors.

The other common reason for the rejection of a manuscript is the relevance and significance of research, originality, suitable research methodology, organisation of written material, relevance/appropriateness of graphs, figures, appropriate title, abstract and soundness of discussion and analysis. The manuscripts need to be written in a clear, precise manner for the reader without any ambiguity. Even authors with sound research findings may find their manuscript rejected if not written properly. The presentation will provide guidelines and discuss the common errors to avoid pitfalls in writing journal articles.

3 Minutes Pitching

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In a busy world today, where important people always engaged with many business meetings, their time is so precious. As a future scientist or an expert in solving problem, the opportunity to come across with these people to deliver your idea or thoughts is always impossible. But who knows that one day you might get lucky to meet up with them and have limited time only to tell them your idea briefly. You need to start with short opener to tell them who you are, and why your idea is unique and feasible and how it will solve the problem especially to the consumer target group. The goal is to get your audience interested to hear more. When they're interested, you will definitely won their permission to tell them additional details of your idea, or product. The rest might intrigue them, as it might be the underlying technology, research findings or potential financial return. That's how and why you need to customize your template for each audience and for each occasion. At the most basic level, when you explain the concept of your idea or product, also focus on your target audience and how your idea can solves a problem. The next step to be in place is the potential markets; customers and prospective partners will want to know more about the idea, product or solution. This technique is known as Elevator Pitch or 3-Minutes pitching and the workshop will expose the students on how to acquire this skill.

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