

# Writing and Publishing Journal Articles: Ways to Decrease Stress and Increase Success

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# Welcome!

The logo for AUTHORAID features a stylized 'A' on the left, composed of a grey triangle and a red curved line. To its right, the word 'AUTHORAID' is written in a sans-serif font. 'AUTHOR' is in grey, and 'AID' is in red.

**AUTHORAID**





# Plans

- 20 tips for increasing success and decreasing stress when writing and publishing journal articles (micro version of AuthorAID workshop)
- Open discussion (can ask questions orally or in writing)
- Availability after the session
- Handout provided



# Writing and Publishing Journal Articles

20 Tips for Increasing Success  
and Decreasing Stress

# 1. Write to communicate, not to impress.

- Your readers should feel that the material is clear, important, and interesting.
- They shouldn't feel that you have a big vocabulary and that the subject matter is confusing.
- Good writing is largely “invisible writing.”
- Remember: Many readers know relatively little English, and most readers are busy.

## 2. Start thinking about publication when you plan your research.

- Is the research carefully designed?
- Have you planned the statistical analysis, if any?
- Will you have all the information needed to write a publishable paper?





# 4. Take full advantage of library resources.

- Important for background knowledge
- Important for context
- Include openly accessible and other articles
- A resource: librarians



# 5. Make key decisions early.

- Author list
- Journal
- Other



# 6. Follow the journal's instructions to authors.

- Surprisingly, this advice is often ignored.
- Extremely important
- Most journals post instructions on their websites.

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**Checklist for Authors**

**First Author and Manuscript Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

<input type="checkbox"/>	This manuscript (in one or more substantially revised versions) has not been published and is not being considered for publication elsewhere.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The corresponding author is the primary contact for proofing the manuscript and proofs.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Financial support for this research is clearly disclosed in the manuscript.
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Authors have disclosed any conflict of interest related to this article.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Research has been approved by appropriate human or animal subjects research review boards, which are reported in the text of the manuscript.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Conflicts of interest and comparisons have been submitted to a sequence database and sequence identifiers are used to refer to the sequences.
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Track figures in a separate file.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Abstract and title meet word count, which is clearly indicated.
<input type="checkbox"/>	All units of measure are expressed in SI units per International System.
<input type="checkbox"/>	A short (2-3 sentence) biography is provided for the first author or both if two authors.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Authors agree that if accepted for publication in Emerging Infectious Diseases, their manuscript will open publication to the public domain and can be used without liability for copyright infringement.

**Additional notes or statements:** \_\_\_\_\_

## 7. Use good models.

- Good scientific writing: largely a matter of imitation
- Use articles in your target journal as models.
- Some things to notice (if not specified in the instructions): length, number of figures and tables, use of headings, reference format, technical level, style, other

## 8. Organize the information carefully.

- Robert A. Day: “The preparation of a scientific paper has less to do with literary skill than with *organization*.”
- Time invested in organization can save much time later.
- Usual organization of a scientific paper: IMRAD (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion)
- A common structure of case reports: Introduction, Case Description, Discussion

# 9. Use oral & poster presentations to help shape your paper.

- Helps define focus
- Encourages you to analyze the work
- Helps in organizing content
- Provides opportunity for feedback



# 10. Set aside blocks of time for writing.

- Reserve times for writing.
- Consider having regularly scheduled times to write.
- Choose times you tend to function best.



# 11. Keep your audience in mind.

- Some possible readerships:
  - Researchers
  - Clinicians (general physicians, specialists, subspecialists)
  - Other health professionals
  - Medical students
  - Others: policymakers, members of public, et al
- Gear the content to the readers' knowledge.
- Gear the content to the readers' interests.

# 12. Start with whatever part you find easiest.

When writing a paper, what part would you find easiest to start with?

- Introduction?
- Methods?
- Results?
- Discussion?
- Something else?



# 13. Check for proper English and for readability.

- Check grammar, punctuation, and usage.
- Make sure that acronyms are defined.
- Pay attention to items often difficult for non-native users of English:
  - Preposition use
  - Verb tense
  - Use of articles such as *the*
  - Other

# Checking English and readability (cont)

- Where feasible,
  - Use simple, common words
    - attempt→**try**      fundamental→**basic**
  - Delete needless words
    - red in color→**red**    totally destroyed→**destroyed**
  - Condense wordy phrases
    - at this point in time→**now**      in the event that→**if**
  - Use verbs, not nouns made from them
    - produce relief of→**relieve**      provide an explanation→**explain**

# 14. Make sure the text and tables/ figures don't overlap too much.

- A common problem: The text repeats too much information from the tables and figures.
- In general, the text should present only the main message(s) and most important content from each table and figure.
- (Do remember to mention each table and figure.)

# 15. Get feedback from others before submitting your paper.

- “Pre-submission peer review”
- Can be helpful to get feedback from
  - Another specialist in your research area
  - Someone in your general field
  - Someone outside your field



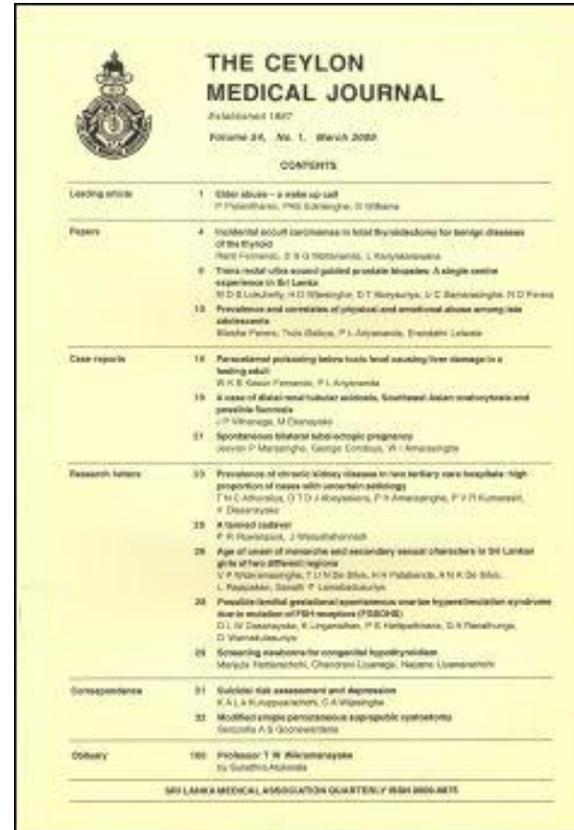
# 16. Revise, revise, revise.

- In revising, make good use of feedback from others.
- Also, set aside the paper for a while, so you can view it with a fresh eye.
- A story: editor of the *Journal of Clinical Investigation*



# 17. Understand how journals work, and interact with them accordingly.

- Initial screening
- Peer review
- Editor's decision
- Revision
- Copyediting
- Review of proofs
- Other



**THE CEYLON MEDICAL JOURNAL**  
Established 1887  
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# 18. View peer reviewers and editors as your allies.

- Peer reviewers
  - Not only a source of advice to editors
  - Also a source of mentorship for authors
- Editors
  - Your goal and theirs: to publish an excellent paper
  - Work together to overcome barriers

# 19. Consider obtaining assistance from a mentor or “author’s editor”.

- Some sources of mentorship
  - One’s current or former professors
  - Senior colleagues
  - AuthorAID mentorship volunteers
  - Other
- “Author’s editors”—editors whose role is to help authors improve materials before submission
  - At editing companies
  - On a freelance basis
  - At some institutions

## 20. Make good use of online resources.



# Some Resources

# AuthorAID ([www.authoraid.info](http://www.authoraid.info))

- Project mainly to help authors in developing countries to write about and publish their work
- Includes
  - A resource library
  - An e-mail discussion list
  - A blog
  - And more
- Provides opportunity to obtain mentors
- From INASP (the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications)

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[Joan Murumba](#), Kenya

### Upcoming Events

[TDR Impact Grants](#)

Geneva, Switzerland, 01 March 2013

[AuthorAID Travel Grant](#)

14 March 2013

[Integrated Approach to Business Research](#)

Islamabad, Pakistan, 17 April 2013

[Good Clinical Research CME Conference](#)

Istanbul, Turkey, 07 June 2013

[2013 CODESRIA Gendre Institute](#)

Dakar, Senegal, 17 June 2013

[More events...](#)

### Latest Resources

[Online tools for researchers](#)

[PDF copy - Application for online course \(April 1 to May 5, 2013\)](#)

(PDF document, 237Kb)

[More resources...](#)

### AuthorAID Discussion

### Latest News

#### [Tip of the Week #120](#)

By [Bernard Appiah](#), 11 March 2013

A helpful comparison [Read More...](#)

#### [Remembering to Define Abbreviations](#)

By [Barbara Gastel](#), 10 March 2013

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#### [Resource of the Week #100: Some Presentations on Reference Management Software](#)

By [Barbara Gastel](#), 09 March 2013

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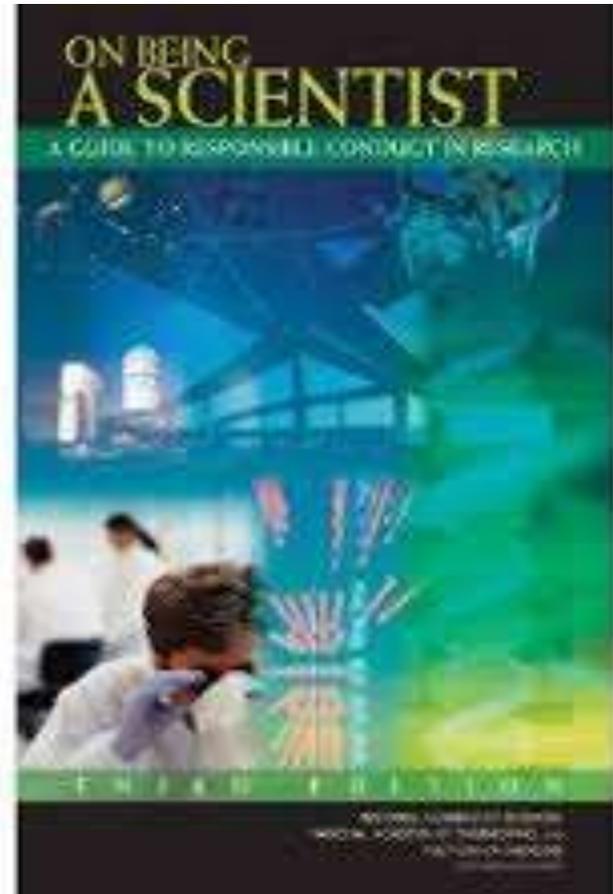


[David T. Mbiriri](#) Zimbabwe

*Research interests: Animal science, poultry production, meat quality, animal*

# *On Being a Scientist: A Guide to Responsible Conduct in Research*

- [www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record\\_id=12192](http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12192)
- Book on ethics in research and publication
- From the US National Academies
- Available online
- Intended mainly for early-career researchers
- Website includes video



# Grammar Girl

([grammar.quickanddirtytips.com](http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com))

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Grammar Girl website. The browser's address bar shows the URL <http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com/>. The website header features the Grammar Girl logo and the tagline "Quick and Dirty Tips FOR BETTER WRITING". A navigation menu includes links for "General", "Grammar", "Punctuation", "Word Choice", "Style", and "All Tips". The main content area is titled "Crazy English Idioms" and features a video player with a play button and a progress bar. Below the video, there is a text-based tip: "Do you tell people to pound sand or pound salt? Where do we get the expressions 'the whole ball of wax' and 'the whole shebang'?" followed by a "Listen or Read" button. A social media sharing bar shows 1.1k likes and a Facebook share button. On the right side, there is a search bar, a "Have a Question or Tip for Us?" section, and a video player showing "Grammar Girl 35 - Lightning and Tip of the Day". Below the video player, there are thumbnails for "Nutrition Diva" and "Grammar Girl". At the bottom left, there is a "SUBSCRIBE" section for the Grammar Girl's Free Newsletter, with a text input field for "Your Email" and a "SUBMIT" button. At the bottom right, there is a "Recent Tips" section for "Only: The Most Insidious Misplaced Modifier" dated March 1, 2013, with a brief description. A "TRAVIAN" game advertisement is also visible at the bottom right. The browser's status bar at the bottom indicates a zoom level of 75%.

# Instructions to Authors in the Health Sciences ([mulford.meduohio.edu/instr/](http://mulford.meduohio.edu/instr/))

http://mulford.meduohio.edu/instr/

Mulford Library: Instructio...

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

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Gastel, Barbara - Outlook ... Acer Games Acer Suggested Sites Web Slice Gallery Options Acer Google Español

### AUTHOR GUIDELINES

- [COPE Guidelines](#)
- [EASE Guidelines](#)
- [Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Publication \(Vancouver Style\)](#)

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- [ICMJE Conflict of Interest Form](#)

### COPYRIGHT

- [SHERPA Publisher Copyright Policies and Self-Archiving](#)
- [SPARC Author's Addendum](#)

### OPEN ACCESS

- [NIH Public Access Plan](#)

### REPORTING STANDARDS

## Instructions to Authors in the Health Sciences

These pages provide links to Web sites which provide instructions to authors for over 6,000 journals in the health and life sciences. All links are to "primary sources" - that is, to publishers and organizations with editorial responsibilities for the titles.

### Alphabetical Listings of Journal Titles

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

#### Search

- Journal title begins with:
- Journal title contains:

Add special character: ▼

Search

75%

# OneLook Dictionary Search

([www.onelook.com](http://www.onelook.com))

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <http://www.onelook.com/>. The browser's address bar and menu bar are visible. The website content includes a search bar with the text "Word or phrase:" and a "Search" button. Below the search bar are three radio buttons: "Find definitions" (selected), "Find translations", and "Search all dictionaries". A section titled "Example searches" contains a list of search terms and their corresponding descriptions:

Search Term	Description
<a href="#">bluebird</a>	Find definitions of <i>bluebird</i>
<a href="#">blue*</a>	Find words and phrases that start with <i>blue</i>
<a href="#">*bird</a>	Find words and phrases that end with <i>bird</i>
<a href="#">bl????rd</a>	Find words that start with <i>bl</i> , end with <i>rd</i> , and have 4 letters in between
<a href="#">bl*:snow</a>	Find words that start with <i>bl</i> and have a meaning related to <i>snow</i>
<a href="#">*:snow</a> or <a href="#">:snow</a>	Find any words related to <i>snow</i>
<a href="#">*winter sport</a>	Find words related to the concept <i>winter sport</i>

The browser's status bar at the bottom right shows a zoom level of 75%.

# UsingEnglish.com

([www.usingenglish.com](http://www.usingenglish.com))

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the homepage of UsingEnglish.com. The browser's address bar shows the URL <http://www.usingenglish.com/>. The website header features the 'UE UsingEnglish.com English Language (ESL) Learning' logo and a navigation menu with links for Home, Members, Testing, Reference, Articles, Forums, Resources, and For Teachers. A prominent green 'Download' button is visible, accompanied by instructions: '1) Click the download button', '2) This will take you to our website', and '3) Download the product'. Below the header, the main content area is titled 'English as a second language online' and describes a large collection of ESL tools and resources. Two sidebars offer 'Teacher Favourites' (Handouts & Printables, Lesson Plans & Worksheets, Teacher-training Handouts) and 'Learner Favourites' (Quizzes, Idioms, Phrasal Verbs, Irregular Verbs). The footer contains sections for 'Tests & Quizzes', 'English Reference', 'For Teachers', and 'Articles', along with a 'Share' section with social media icons and a search bar. A 'Dictionary Free Download' link is also present at the bottom right.

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# Designing Conference Posters

([colinpurrington.com/tips/academic/posterdesign](http://colinpurrington.com/tips/academic/posterdesign))

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar containing the URL <http://colinpurrington.com/tips/academic/posterdesign>. The browser's menu bar includes File, Edit, View, Favorites, Tools, and Help. The toolbar shows a McAfee security icon and several quick launch icons for Outlook, Acer Games, Acer, Suggested Sites, Web Slice Gallery, Options, Acer, Google, and Español. The website's navigation menu includes HOME, GRAPHICS, TIPS, ABOUT, and CONTACT. The main content area features the title "Designing conference posters" and a sub-heading "A one-sentence overview of the poster concept". The text explains that a large-format poster is a document for communicating research at a conference, consisting of a short title, an introduction, an overview of the research approach, graphical results, a discussion of findings, a list of important articles, and acknowledgements. A photograph shows a man in a blue shirt standing next to a large poster board. The browser's status bar at the bottom indicates a zoom level of 75%.

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Photographs, nerdy graphics, gratuitous tips, and much more.

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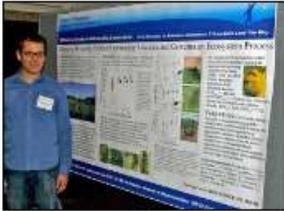
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NATURE

## Designing conference posters

### A one-sentence overview of the poster concept

A large-format poster is a document that can communicate your research at a conference, and is composed of a short title, an introduction to your burning question, an overview of your novel approach, your amazing results in graphical form, some insightful discussion of aforementioned results, a listing of previously published articles that are important to your research, and some brief acknowledgement of the tremendous assistance and financial support conned from others — if all text is kept to a minimum, a person could fully read your poster in under 5 minutes (really).



# Questions?



Wishing you much success!

