

Ten Tips for Publishing a Scientific Article

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ABSTRACT

Publishing a scientific article is essential for sharing knowledge, advancing academic careers, and fostering professional growth. This article presents ten practical recommendations to support successful scientific publishing. It emphasizes the importance of planning the manuscript early, clearly defining objectives and target audiences, and preselecting suitable journals. Choosing the right journal – considering its scope, requirements, indexing, and impact factor – is critical. The article also highlights the need to follow author guidelines, structure the manuscript appropriately, uphold scientific integrity, and present findings clearly. Finally, it encourages authors to be patient with editorial timelines, appreciate reviewer feedback, and seek support from colleagues. These strategies aim to increase the chances of publication and support a strong academic trajectory.

Keywords: Medical Writing, Peer Review, Research, Manuscripts as Topic, Publications, Journal Article.

Diez consejos para publicar un artículo científico

RESUMEN

Publicar un artículo científico es clave para compartir conocimiento, fortalecer la trayectoria académica e impulsar el crecimiento profesional. Para lograrlo, se requiere no solo una redacción clara y rigurosa, sino también comprender el proceso editorial y anticiparse a sus desafíos. Este artículo presenta 10 recomendaciones prácticas para facilitar la publicación científica. Se sugiere planificar el manuscrito desde el inicio del proyecto, definiendo objetivos, destinatarios, y preseleccionando posibles revistas. La elección adecuada de la revista, considerando alcance, requisitos, indexación y factor de impacto, es fundamental. También se destaca la importancia de seguir las instrucciones para autores, estructurar correctamente el texto, respetar la integridad científica y presentar los hallazgos con claridad. Finalmente, se alienta a cultivar paciencia ante los tiempos editoriales, valorar las devoluciones de los revisores, y buscar el apoyo de colegas. Estas estrategias pueden mejorar las probabilidades de éxito en la publicación y contribuir a una carrera académica sólida.

Palabras clave: escritura médica, revisión por pares de la investigación, manuscrito, publicaciones artículo de revista.

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INTRODUCTION

Publishing a scientific article is a fundamental goal for researchers and academics, as it contributes both to the advancement of knowledge and to professional recognition. However, the publication process is often complex and challenging, particularly for those who are beginning their careers in the scientific field. This manuscript aims to provide a practical guide based on ten essential recommendations, covering everything from initial planning to interaction with reviewers and editors. Following these recommendations can significantly increase the chances of successfully publishing scientific work¹.

TIP 1. PLAN AHEAD

Planning is the cornerstone of any successful research project: it involves systematically and thoughtfully designing all the activities required to achieve the proposed scientific objectives. Before beginning to write, it is crucial to clearly define the objectives, the hypothesis, and the methodology to be used. Proper planning helps structure the work coherently, prevents deviations during the process, and organizes the writing^{2,3}.

The first step is selecting the topic. To do so, it is advisable to develop the scientific rationale, a useful tool for assessing the relevance of the information as well as the availability and timeliness of the data. When narrowing the focus to a specific topic, it is helpful to ask: How important is it? Is sufficient information available? How necessary is it in the current context? What questions does it raise? This process facilitates the appropriate selection of the research topic and the necessary information to develop the manuscript⁴⁻⁶.

TIP 2. AGREE ON AUTHORSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES FROM THE OUTSET

Clarity in the assignment of roles and responsibilities is essential to prevent conflicts before, during, and after the publication process. From the outset, it is advisable to determine who will be the authors of the article and what the specific contribution of each will be, avoiding the inclusion of individuals who did not actively participate⁷.

The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE, www.icmje.org) proposes four criteria for defining authorship:

1. Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the study, or to the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data.
2. Participation in drafting the manuscript or critically revising it for important intellectual content.
3. Approval of the final version to be published.
4. Accountability for all aspects of the work, ensuring the integrity and accuracy of the content.

TIP 3. COORDINATE AND LEAD THE WRITING PROCESS

Scientific writing may present challenges related to fluency, coherence, and clarity of the text. For this reason, it is important to implement strategies such as critical

rereading and continuous editing. It is useful to avoid becoming overly attached to the first draft; authors should be willing to shorten, delete, or rewrite sections of the text and regard errors as opportunities for improvement.

Appointing a writing lead or coordinator can be an effective strategy to maintain control of the process. This individual may be responsible for compiling the various sections of the manuscript, ensuring consistency in style, and compliance with established deadlines⁸.

TIP 4. ENSURE A COMPREHENSIVE AND RIGOROUS WORK

The integrity and rigor of the content are fundamental for the acceptance of a scientific article. The manuscript must include a detailed description of the methodology, the results obtained, and a critical discussion interpreting the findings within the context of the existing literature. Reviewing by an expert in the field can enrich the analysis and provide valuable critical insight⁸.

TIP 5. USE A BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCE MANAGER

The collection and accurate citation of bibliographic sources is one of the most relevant and complex tasks. Proper referencing helps avoid errors, prevents plagiarism, and gives credit to the original sources.

From the author's perspective, the correct use of references contributes positively to the evaluation of the manuscript. It is essential to carefully follow the specific citation guidelines of each journal⁹.

Tools such as Paperpile, EndNote, Mendeley, and/or Zotero allow references to be organized and formatted efficiently, simplifying the process and ensuring the appropriate citation style (e.g., Vancouver format).

TIP 6. REVIEW AND REFINE THE MANUSCRIPT

Thorough revision is a critical stage before submitting a manuscript to a journal. It is advisable to perform multiple readings to identify and correct spelling, grammatical, or content errors. Requesting review by colleagues or experts can provide a valuable external perspective.

Although this stage may be demanding and may generate doubts, it contributes to improving the quality of the work and provides greater confidence when submitting it. Since scientific journals aim to publish content of high quality and scientific value, this careful review process is key to increasing the likelihood of acceptance^{10,11}.

TIP 7. SELECT THE RIGHT JOURNAL

Selecting the journal is a strategic decision that affects visibility, as it influences the likelihood that other researchers will find and read the article, the potential to receive more citations, and the possibility of publishing the article as open access (without institutional subscriptions or paywalls). Criteria to consider include the journal's scope (which helps ensure the article reaches an interested scientific community), impact factor, indexing,

language, publication fees, target audience, response time, acceptance rate, and publication frequency.

Reviewing prior issues of the journal allows you to assess thematic and stylistic alignment between the proposed manuscript and articles previously accepted by the journal. It is also advisable to consider the target readership from the outset. Creating a prioritized list of three to five journals can streamline the process in the event of rejections¹³.

TIP 8. KNOW AND FOLLOW THE JOURNAL'S GUIDELINES

Each journal has specific requirements regarding format, structure, and citation style. Following them to the letter is essential.

It is necessary to verify that the manuscript has a clear structure, meets length and formatting requirements, and that the title and abstract accurately reflect the article's content. If the author does not have a strong command of the language, it is advisable to seek review by a native speaker¹⁴.

TIP 9. PREPARE AN EFFECTIVE COVER LETTER

The cover letter is often the first element the editor reads. It should be brief, clear, and persuasive. It is recommended to include the manuscript title, a brief description of its relevance and contribution, and a justification of its fit with the selected journal.

It is important to state that the article has not been submitted to another journal and to disclose any potential conflicts of interest, if required by the instructions. Although it is often underestimated, a well-written letter can be a positive influence on the initial editorial decision¹⁴.

TIP 10. RESPOND PRECISELY AND RESPECTFULLY TO REVIEWERS

Reviewers' comments offer a valuable opportunity to improve the manuscript. It is recommended to respond point by point in a clear, structured, and respectful manner. This practice is critical, as it helps maintain academic rigor, demonstrate professionalism, and facilitate constructive dialogue between authors and reviewers.

It is advisable to thank the reviewers for their suggestions, incorporate the relevant changes, and indicate their location in the text. If there is disagreement with a comment, the authors should justify their position using up-to-date scientific evidence or solid methodological arguments. A well-prepared response reflects a commitment to scientific quality and improves the likelihood of acceptance¹⁵.

It is also essential to share the revised version with all coauthors before resubmission. By collectively reviewing and approving the new version, all coauthors assume ethical and academic responsibility for the final content, which is a central principle of scientific authorship.

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