

# Summary of Jeffrey Robens' seminar on Effective Academic Editing

18 – 20 October 2017



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PhD Pharmacology

Editorial Development Manager

Springer Nature · Publishing Services

Overview

Contributions

Info

Scores

Research Interests

## About

Skills and expertise (8)

[View all](#)

Cell Biology

Kinase

Actin

Scientific Publishing

13

Research items

783

Reads

310

Citations

## Affiliation

### Springer Nature

Department

Publishing Services





# How to write clearly? – Structure

- 1 big idea = 1 paragraph (the idea is at the beginning, <7-9 pieces of new info)
- From general to specific: Introduce → Develop (with arguments) → State importance
- Link the paragraphs (put a hint at the next idea at the end of a paragraph)
- 1 idea = 1 sentence (don't break into two), <20 words, but varying length
- Subj + verb order
- Place adjectives/adverbs in front of the nouns/verbs they modify
  - We demonstrated that the rightward shift in the spectra was large.
  - We demonstrated a large rightward shift in the spectra.

# How to write clearly?– Content

## Use simple language!

- Write your article in English from the beginning
- Use simple language (Simple words ≠ informal words) – people from different countries should understand
- Reader should never read backwards!
- Use VERBs not NOUNs – sounds livelier
- Provide enough information to understand the context of new knowledge
- Don't worry about repetition too much, clarity is more important
- Use signposting (key words/phrases which guide the idea)
- Use active voice (75% / 25%, passive voice require more brain activity to understand)

# How to write clearly?– Content

- Don't use qualitative words, give examples (etc., some, few)
- Digits from 1 to 9 in words, but 6 ml (at the beginning with words)
- Hyphen “-” (compound noun), ex. up-to-date, nineteenth-century
- En dash “–” (Indicate a range or link two separate nouns),  
ex. –70–120 °C, Mann–Whitney U test
- Em dash “—” (instead of parentheses)
  
- Sounds like a vowel ‘an hour...’ not ‘~~a hour...~~’, “an MBA”
- Sounds like a consonant ‘a unique...’ not ‘~~an unique...~~”

# Как редактировать текст?

1. Разбить предложение на несколько, если оно большое.
2. Перестроить предложение (подлежащее + сказуемое, passive → active)
3. Заменить сложные слова и конструкции на простые, чтобы мог понять любой читатель (не только носитель языка)
4. Убрать лишние слова и конструкции, которые не влияют на смысл, но делают предложение длиннее
5. Вынести важную мысль в конец абзаца и связать абзацы между собой (в конце абзаца отсылка к следующей идее)
6. Прочитать вслух

# Editors do not read the paper!

1. Read cover letter
2. Read Introduction
  - 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph – is the paper in the scope of a journal?
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> + references (lit. review) – Is the topic currently interesting?  
Does the author know other researchers, can you trust him?
3. Tables & Figures
4. Last paragraph of conclusion – is the paper valuable for readers?

It takes from 4 to 5 h to edit a paper, they could change up to 20% of text.



# Reviewers focus on the methodology & results! (10 to 15 h)

1. Why study was done? / Introduction (don't cite all)
2. What was done? / Methods (cite sources, don't use rare & your abbrev.)
3. What are the results? / Results (importance, don't just list them)
4. How does study influence the field? / Discussions (summarize, interpret, negative=positive, don't change hypothesis, how to use)

## Abstract

Should we write the results? – yes, but the main

Should we include references? – no

## Acknowledgments

Thank those who contributed, but not enough to be an author.

# How to be accepted by a journal?

- Read the guidelines and follow them
- Read recent papers from that journal
- Cite latest relevant publications from that journal
- Don't overgeneralize the results

# How to increase citations?

- Relevant information should be contained in the title/s (short, useful not creative, SVO sample – variable – outcome, ~~the~~)
- Use 2-3 keywords in the abstract 3-4 times
- Cite latest relevant publications (and international)
- Write how to build on your work, what to do the next

# Useful resources

- Writing in the Sciences (Stanford University) – [Coursera](#)
- Google scholar – terms used in articles by years
- Springer Exemplar – terms with context, usability by countries
- Academic Phrasebank – synonyms, describing trends, figures, etc.

**THANK YOU!**  
**QUESTIONS?**