

What Not to do When You Plan to Write a Scientific Article for First time in your Life

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Many of us are late starters as far as writing scientific manuscript is concerned. The medical council has put up the rules for publishing but all colleges lack the infrastructure and training that is needed to write a good manuscript. In this confusion it is easy to go wrong or take the long path. I have come across many such authors and have found that there are three usual mistakes that they commonly do. First is to start writing alone. Secondly starting with complex projects and thirdly starting without adequate training.

Any kind of writing requires a different kind of mind-set, especially scientific writing requires us to take into account many factors. Many of us simply start to write by simply reading some articles and trying to replicate. The correct approach would be to take help of someone who has already written articles. I would suggest you to create a local research group or join a larger research group where you can get feedback regarding research and writing manuscript. You can also discuss your doubts with the group and receive proper guidance. Also writing block is a real issue when we are sitting for long hours while preparing manuscript. It is always wise to send your manuscript to someone in your research group and have him review your article. This will be of immense help and will also help us learn many intricacies of scientific writing.

I have seen many potential authors start their scientific careers with a complex project. Randomised trials are the highest level of evidence but they are also equally complex to execute. Many authors take up such project but lose interest midway and leave the project, thus effectively snubbing their academic careers. I would suggest to start with simple things like case reports or technical notes. Case reports contain all the scientific writing headings and are much simpler to write. Plus they are easier to get published. Once you have the case report published, it will definitely boost your confidence and help you embark your journey on more complex projects.

Scientific writing requires a level of inherent training. Most of us are without such training and when we start writing for the first time, invariably we face a rejection letter which demotivates us in further pursuing academic writings. The simple solution to this is to attend training sessions for scientific research and writing. At Maharashtra orthopaedic association annual conference we regularly conduct these research workshops where we discuss these issues. The editors and editorial board of the journal is available to help the authors and guide them. All MOA members should take benefit from these sessions.

In future, scientific writing and publication will be a major factor on which our peers and our patients will judge us. We have to get ready for this future which is fast approaching.

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