

Tackling the Writing Process

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Scientific Publications



Research Medical Library
Your Research Starts Here

What we will cover

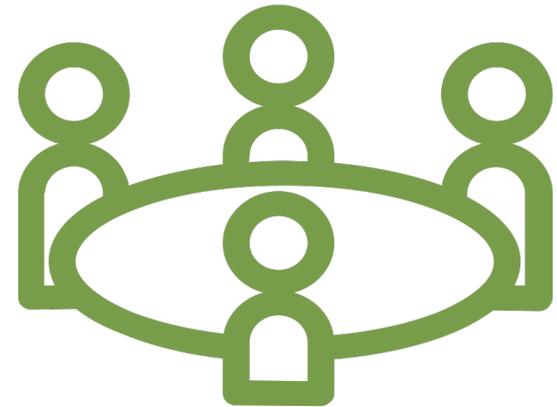
- Planning the writing process
- Using order and comfort when writing
- Avoiding and overcoming writer's block

Plan your writing process

- Discuss the project with your co-authors
 - Saves time
 - Prevents frustration
 - Helps you meet deadlines
- List the decisions you'll have to make and when you'll have to make them

Talk to your co-authors

- Identify authors and roles
- Choose a target journal
- Agree on the key message



Discuss the project with your PI

- Are my hypothesis/purpose statement and conclusion accurate?
- Should I write the article for this target audience?
- What are the authors' writing responsibilities?
- Do I need more/less material?
- When is the first draft due?

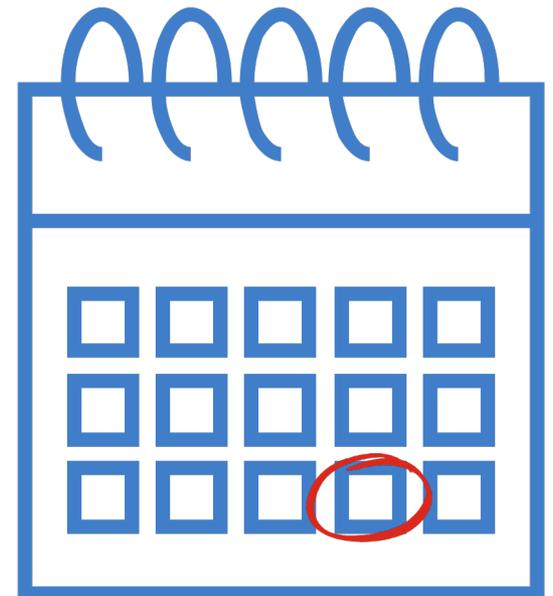
Gather and organize materials

- Lab notes
- Tables and figures
- Author/applicant instructions



Create your writing schedule

- Estimate and multiply your time
- Set a submission date and work backward
- Write one portion at a time



Use order and comfort when writing

- Create a comfortable environment
- Use a routine or ritual
- Create and use an outline

Create a comfortable environment

- Find a spot conducive to writing
- Ensure access to all necessary materials
- Take regular breaks



Use a routine or ritual

- Set aside dedicated time for writing
- Create a ritual to ensure consistency
- Have a specific goal in mind when writing
- Take notes after writing sessions

Create and use an outline

- Write down all elements
- Write down short descriptive phrases
- Write notes to yourself
- Don't worry about the format

Outline example #1

Title of article

Introduction

- Known fact about the topic
- Background fact #1 (references)
- Background fact #2 (references)
- Hypothesis

Materials and Methods

- Sources of materials
- Lab/clinical procedures
- Particularly important method used
- Statistical analysis

Results

- Figures that will be used
- Tables that will be used
- Best findings

Discussion

- Conclusion
- How the present study differed from those cited above
- Possible clinical implications
- Limitations
- Future directions

Other outlining suggestions

- Write the title or topic at the top of the page
- Write down all ideas
- Keep writing until you're out of ideas
- Read the ideas you wrote down
- Analyze your ideas and write notes

- Known fact about the topic
- Background fact #1 (references)
- Background fact #2 (references)
- Hypothesis

Introduction

- Sources of materials
- Lab/clinical procedures
- Particularly important methods used
- Statistical analysis

Materials and Methods

Gap in knowledge

Results

- Figures that will be used
- Tables that will be used
- Key findings

Discussion

- Conclusion
- How the present study differed from those cited above
- Possible clinical implications
- Limitations
- Future directions

Writing the first draft

- Just write
- Expand upon your outline
- Don't wait until your research is done/materials are collected
- Begin with the easiest section to write

Making initial revisions

- Ask co-authors for revisions/feedback
- Focus on the content
- Check for anything omitted/extraneous
- Check the word count
- Make sure sections are in the correct order
- Re-evaluate the title

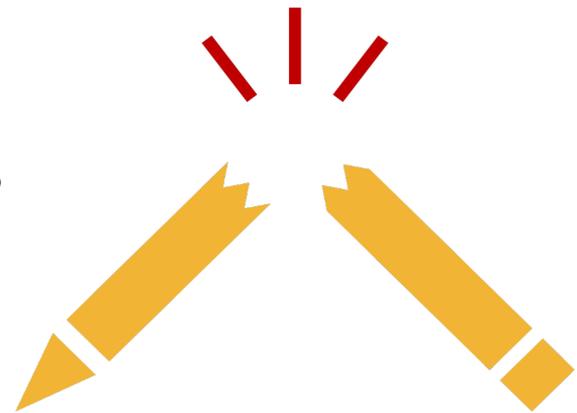
Making final revisions

- Wait
- Read it out loud
- Have co-authors review and approve it
- Take the reader's view
- Don't restart your drafts

Avoid and overcome writer's block

How does writer's block happen?

- Too much time between writing sessions
- Overthinking
- Trying to be perfect
- Running out of writing topics



Before you write

- Set frequent, separate deadlines
- Budget your time correctly
- Read for inspiration

While you write

- Write parts of the project early
- Just start writing
- Use templates
- Dictate what you want to write
- Vary writing times/locations

While you write

- “Never a day without a line”
- Change your writing tools
- Talk with a trusted colleague
- Free-write
- Write a letter
- Write the ending/conclusion first

After you complete writing

- Review your writing process
- Determine what did/did not work
- Apply your knowledge in the future



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