

Manuscript Writing Tips

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1) Writing Routine

- Allocate blocks of time to write. Keep that time – do not let anyone steal it from you.
- Find a place to write – not your office or home, if you are likely to be disturbed – how about the library.
- Switch your phone to silent and only answer the most urgent of calls.

2) Title

- Choose a good title – one that captures what you want to say, and sounds interesting to read further.
- Ask your peer – can they understand it?
- Ask your adviser – can they improve it?

3) Structure

- The traditional structure is abstract, background, materials and methods, results, and discussion.
- This is what editors expect to see, so give them what they want.
- Use our templates as a guide for what to include.

Abstract

Background

Materials and Methods

Results

Discussion

You can download templates from our website www.ceb-rama.org

4) Abstract

- When you send your manuscript they look at the abstract to make a reject/ review decision.
- Try to make the abstract clear and concise. Cover the main points. Details go later.
- Most journals have a preferred format and word limit for abstracts. Follow them.

5) Background

- Explain why the topic is important. What is known/not known about this topic.
- Explain what new information your manuscript provides.
- Clearly state the research question / objectives.

6) Materials and Methods

- Your methods must be clear and complete. Another researcher should have enough information to repeat your research.
- Journals only want to publish research with good methodology.
- Describe the target population, and how it was selected and the sample size calculated.
- Mention ethics approval. Explain how you collected and analysed the data.

7) Results

- Give your results in a clear and concise form. In the text cover main points – show what is important.
- Use tables, charts and figures to summarise detailed information.
- Show all relevant results, positive, null and negative. Another researcher needs to know what works and does not work.

8) Discussion

- Answer the research question and objectives.
- Explain your important findings and the clinical application of them.
- Give both the strengths and weaknesses of your study.
- Suggest suitable further research to be carried out.

9) Peer review

- Before you can send your manuscript to a journal you need it peer reviewed by your adviser team and English proofreading.
- Check all your references are correct and in the required format for the journal.
- Add acknowledgements, authors' contributions, sources of funding, conflicts of interest.

10) Path to publication – journal

