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BELGIAN JOURNAL OF  
HOSPITAL PHARMACY

# Hoe schrijf ik een kwalitatief artikel?

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**Dag van de Ziekenhuisapotheker**

**6 Februari 2018**

Who's who?  
Background  
Writing experience



# Scientific Presentation Formats

- Posters
- Oral communications
- Full presentations
- Key note presentations
  
- **Original article**
- Review | Systematic review
- Case Report
- Short report
- ...

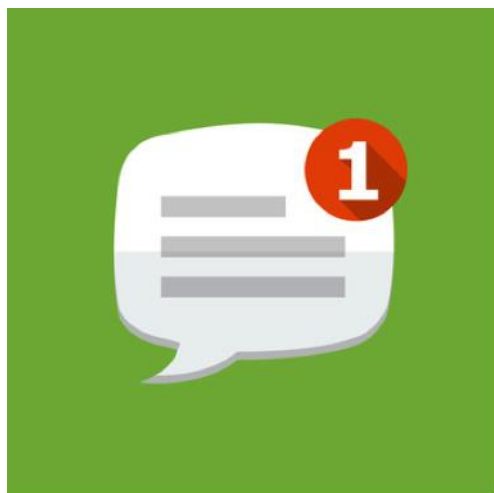
# Aim of (scientific) writing

- Not
  - To satisfy your supervisor
  - To torture yourself
  - To annoy your readers
- **To inform the scientific/professional community of your research/practice findings and/or opinion(s)**

# Is the paper worth writing?

- If the message is not new, the paper should expand or firm up existing knowledge
- Negative results are worth publishing (publication bias↓)
- Avoid publishing more than one article from data collected in one study/project:
  - only justifiable if a single article describing all findings will be too long
  - check with the editor

# Two essential questions before writing



What is your central message in simple words?



Who do you want to know your message?  
Who is your audience?

# The ideal paper

If I were to summarize the ideal scientific paper in four sentences, it would look like this:

- Look at this cool thing we did ...
- This is how we did the cool thing ...
- This is the cool thing ...
- Wasn't that cool?



# Parts of a publication

- Title
- Authors
- Abstract -> workshop last year
- Body -> according to type of manuscript
- Acknowledgements
- Conflict of interest
- References



# Original Paper

- Abstracts
- Introduction, including Aim | *Why did you do this?*
- Methods | *What did you do?*
- Results | *What did you find?*
- Discussion | *What does it mean?*
- Conclusion | *Did you reach your aim?*

I  
M  
R  
a  
D  
(C)

# How to get started

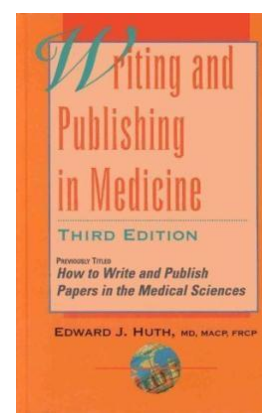
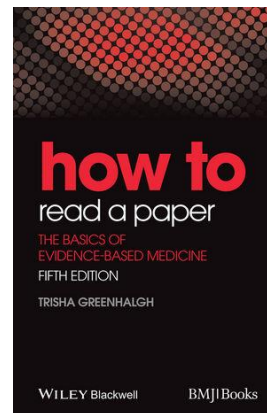
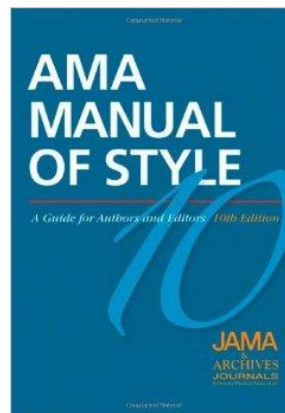
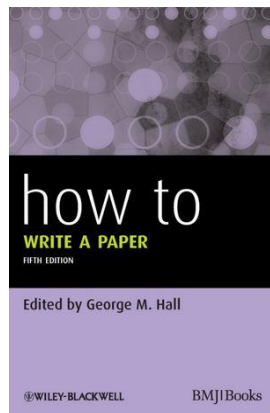
- Environment
- Guidelines of journal
- Submission procedure
- Check list
- Writing tips
- Involve your co-authors



Tip 1 - How to get started: choose the optimal environment!

# Scientific/Professional writing

- Clarity
- Objectivity
- Accuracy
- Brevity



<http://www.scientificwritingtips.com/>



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## Nederlands: de schrijfserie

We hebben onze [Engelstalige serie](#) over het schrijven en publiceren van wetenschappelijke artikelen in het Nederlands vertaald. De serie verschijnt vanaf juli/augustus 2015 in het Vlaamse vakblad [Huisarts Nu](#) en is daar "open access" beschikbaar via onderstaande links.

1. [Het begin](#)
2. [Titel en abstract](#)
3. [Inleiding](#)
4. [Methoden](#)
5. [Resultaten](#)
6. [Discussie](#)
7. [Tabellen en figuren](#)
8. [Referenties](#)
9. [Auteurschap](#)
10. [Tijdschriftkeuze](#)
11. [Een artikel indienen](#)
12. [Reageren op referentcommentaar](#)

# Title & Abstract

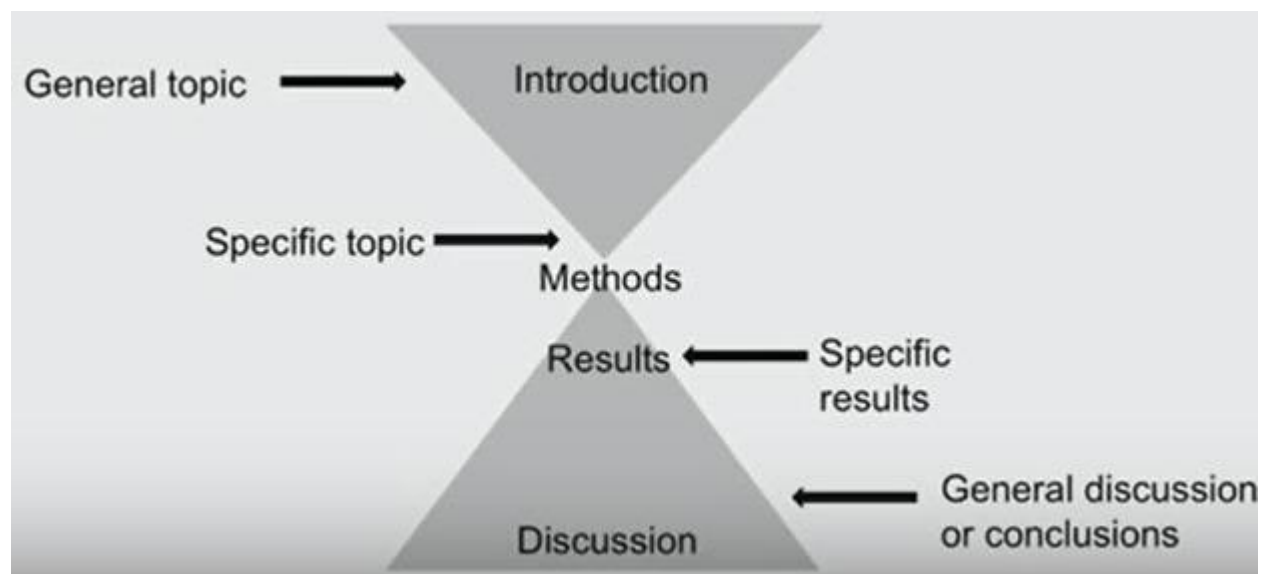
- Title
  - Informative / descriptive
  - Journal guidelines
  - Long / running title
  - ...
- Abstract -> **workshop 2017**
  - Condensed version of article
  - Highlights major items
  - Concise and easy to read
  - Write abstract last



Tip 2 - Title and abstract: sell your paper!

# Introduction

- Summary of published literature and opinions in the field
- Funnel shape:



Tip 3 - Introduction: work on that funnel shape!

- **Aim**

# Methods

- Core elements:
  - Study design
  - Setting
  - Participants
  - Data collection
  - Data analysis
  - Ethics



Tip 4 - Methods: provide a cookbook with the study's ingredients!



# Results

- Opponent of methods section
- Description of sample
- Needs to answer your research question (aim)
- Report in a systematic way
- Report n and %
- Report statistical test value + significance (if relevant)
- No interpretation

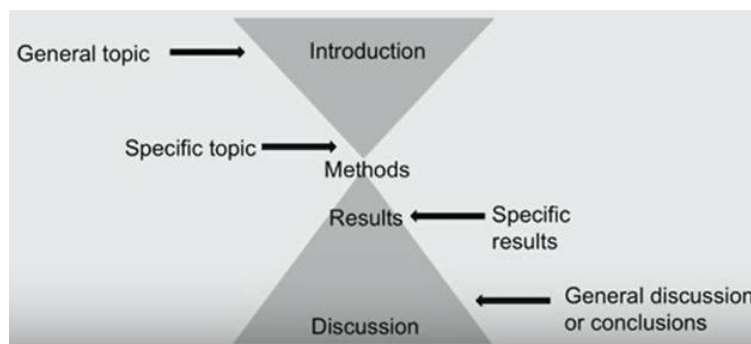


Tip 5 - Results: present findings without interpretation!



# Discussion

- Put main findings in context:
  - Remarkable findings and their possible explanation;
  - Compare your findings to similar studies (nationally and internationally)



- Limitations
- Strengths
- Implications for practice
- Implications for research



Tip 6 - Discussion: be frank in acknowledging limitations!

# Tables and figures

- Good selection
  - Right amount of tables/figures
  - Right amount and type of information
- Logical order (number)
- Caption
- Self-explanatory
- Lean



Tip 7 - Tables and figures: make them self-explanatory!

# Acknowledgements

- Acknowledge only people and organisations who have somehow contributed significantly to your study
- Some journals require permission from people being acknowledged
- If there are possible conflicts of interest, mention how you have dealt with them or how they might have affected the study, the outcome of the study or the publication



# Conclusion

- Only a couple of sentences:
  - Did the study answer your research question
  - What was the answer



# References

- Software can support you
- Use of DOI number
- Reference style of journal
- Number of references -> good selection
- Double check references before submission



Tip 8 - References: always go back to the original source!

# Authorship – 4 criteria ICMJE

- Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; AND
- Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND
- Final approval of the version to be published; AND
- Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.



Tip 9 Authorship: discuss it within the team!



# Journal

- Audience
- Open access
- Impact factor
- Priority list



Tip 10 - Choice of journal: define a list of target journals!

# Common reasons for rejection

- Submission of papers which are clearly out of scope
- Failure to format the paper according to the journal's submission guidelines
- Inadequate standard of English
- Inadequate response to reviewers
- Resubmission of rejected manuscripts without revision



# Language



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## Don't use :

based on the fact that  
for the purpose of  
fact  
Prove  
plays an important role  
decreased number of  
time period  
longer time period  
brown in color  
round in shape  
a number of  
has been shown to be  
by means of  
it is possible that  
in order to  
despite the fact that  
first of all

## Better:

because  
for / to  
evidence  
support  
is important  
fewer  
time  
longer  
brown  
round  
some  
is  
by  
may  
to  
although  
first

# Tenses

- Abstract: past tense
- Introduction:
  - Background information accepted as fact: present tense
  - When referring to previous research: past tense
- Methods & Results:
  - What was done/found → simple past tense (often passive for Methods))
  - When referring to figures/tables explaining methods/results: present tense
- Discussion
  - Summary of findings: past tense
  - Explaining significance: present tense
  - When referring to results: past tense
- Conclusion: combination (“what you did/found”, “what you conclude”, “what you will do next”)
- Avoid too much passive tense



## In summary

- Any publication of scientific work should be logical, leading from problem to conclusion.
- A conclusion should be in line with the aim and objectives.

*A full research paper should have enough information that the reader is able to repeat the study in the same population, and reach the same conclusion.*

# Ready for submission?



