Tips for Successful Publishing

*How to Prepare a World-Class Paper... and improve your chances of publication*

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Outline

- Are you ready to publish?
- Where should you publish?
- What is a good manuscript?
- How to write a good manuscript
  - Preparations before starting
  - The Guide for Authors
  - Some technical details that need special attention
  - Language
- Revision and response to reviewers
- Responsibilities of editors, authors and reviewers
- Ethical Issues
- Conclusion: what leads to ACCEPTANCE
Elsevier publishes more than 20 journals related to food across a number of different portfolios (food science, toxicology, neuroscience…)

In 2011, more than 23,500 papers were submitted to these journals; 6500 papers were published in these journals.

In the first 6 months of 2012, more than 13,600 papers were submitted.
Food Science output by country

- Brazil
- China
- Korea, Republic of
- Russian Federation
- Spain
- United Kingdom
- United States
Are you ready to publish?

You should consider publishing if you have information that advances understanding in a certain scientific field

This could be in the form of:

- Presenting new, original results or methods
- Rationalizing, refining, or reinterpreting published results
- Reviewing or summarizing a particular subject or field
Can I publish this?????

- Have you done something new and interesting?
- Have you checked the latest results in the field?
- Have the findings been verified?
- Have the appropriate controls been performed?
- Do your findings tell a nice story or is the story incomplete?
- Is the work directly related to a current hot topic?
- Are the results of interest to a wide audience?
- Have you provided solutions to any difficult problems?
An international editor says:

“The following problems appear much too frequently”

- Submission of papers which are clearly out of scope
- Failure to format the paper according to the Guide for Authors
- Inappropriate (or no) suggested reviewers
- Inadequate response to reviewers
- Inadequate standard of English
- Resubmission of rejected manuscripts without revision

Paul Haddad, Editor, *Journal of Chromatography A*
...and my own publishing advice is:

- Submit to the **right journal**
- Submit to **one journal** only
- Do **not** submit “salami” articles
- Pay attention to **journal requirements** and structure
- Check the **English** – ask a native English speaker for help
- Pay attention to **ethical standards**
- Ask your **colleagues** to proof read the article
- Be **self-critical**
Where should you publish??

- Do you want to reach specialists, multidisciplinary researchers, or a general audience? You will need to adjust information and writing style accordingly.
- Journals, even in similar subjects, reach readers with different backgrounds.
- Each journal has its own style; read other articles to get an idea of what is accepted.
- Is the readership worldwide or local?
What about the Impact Factor?

- the IF can give guidance but should NOT be the sole reason to submit to a journal.
- The IF indicates the cites to recent items / number of recent items (published in a 2 year period) in a journal

**2011 Impact Factor**

Cites in 2011 to articles published in: 2010 = 834  Number of articles published in: 2010 = 316
2009 = 788  
2009 = 199
Sum: 1622  
Sum: 515

Calculation: Cites to recent articles  1622 = 3.150
Number of recent articles  515
What influences the Impact Factor?

- **Editorial policies** of journals can influence the number of citations/article, which in turn will influence the IF.
- The **turnover of research** in a certain **field** influences the IF as more recent citations will be made in a very “fast” area like genetics (bear in mind the IF window of two years).
- The **article type** influences the IF, reviews are generally better cited.
WARNING!

- **DO NOT** gamble or take risks by submitting your manuscript to several journals. Only submit once!
- International ethical standards prohibit multiple/simultaneous submissions, and editors **DO** find out – and your paper will be rejected.
- **DO NOT** resubmit a paper rejected by another journal without undertaking major revisions.
What is a good manuscript?

- A good manuscript makes readers grasp the scientific significance **easily**
- It has a **clear, useful and exciting** message
- It is presented and constructed in a **logical** manner

2009 Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine awarded to Elizabeth Blackburn
How to prepare a good manuscript

Decide which type of paper is most appropriate

- Full articles/original articles/research articles
- Review papers/perspectives
- Letters/rapid communications/short communications
Preparations before starting:
Read the Guide for Authors

CRITICAL ADVICE

Apply the Guide for Authors to your manuscript, even to the first draft (text layout, paper citation, nomenclature, figures and table, etc.). It will save your time, and the editor’s.
**Introduction**

Journal of Food Engineering is a premier journal in the area of food engineering. Hence any manuscript submitted to the journal should have a clear engineering orientation. It could include engineering/design/modeling/experimental aspects of all aspects of food from preparation to production to processing to consumption. It can also emphasize on all aspects of preservation from traditional canning, freezing, dehydration, and irradiation to more current and emerging technologies such as high pressure processing, and the use of pulsed electric fields. In the context of preservation, processing and handling of foods, all aspects related to chemistry, biochemistry, microbiology, and nutrition are welcome and acceptable. However, traditional scientific manuscripts such as those directly discussing chemistry, biochemistry,
Some technical details

- Pay attention to length of manuscript
- Consider supplying data as supplementary material
- Text layout
  - Always number the pages, and number the lines
- Abbreviations
- Names of potential reviewers – authors in your subject area, not collaborators or friends, international
- Include a strong cover letter with your submission

Check the Guide for Authors of the selected journal for specific instructions – not all guides are the same!
Characteristics of good writing

- Good writing possesses:
  - Clarity
  - Conciseness
  - Correctness (accuracy)

- Good writing avoids:
  - Repetition
  - Redundancy
  - Ambiguity
  - Exaggeration
Do publishers correct language?

- Sometimes…
  - Publishers often provide suggestions of resources for authors who are less familiar with the conventions of international journals, but these are generally author-pays services. Traditional copyediting by the publisher is rare.
  - Some publishers may perform technical screening prior to peer review
- But…
  - It is the author’s responsibility to use proper language prior to submission
  - Copyediting is only done after an article is accepted and is done by typesetters, not editors
Final checks before submission

- Ask colleagues to read and be critical
- All requirements from Guide for Authors are met
- Scope of paper is appropriate for journal
- Have your manuscript checked for language, either by a native English speaker or an editing service
- Ensure that the literature cited is balanced and that aims, purpose and significance of results are clear
- All listed authors agree to the submission
- Use a spellchecker!
Example from one journal’s Guide for Authors

“…..The Editor-in-Chief and Editors have the right to decline formal review of the manuscript when it is deemed that the manuscript is 1) on a topic outside the scope of the Journal, 2) lacking technical merit, 3) focused on foods or processes that are of narrow regional scope and significance, 4) fragmentary and provides marginally incremental results, or 5) is poorly written.”

Make sure your manuscript does not fall in any of these categories or it will fall at the first hurdle!
How to respond to a request to revise your paper

- Be positive – the reviewers think there is merit to your paper, or it would have been rejected
- Prepare a detailed letter of response
- State specifically what changes you have made to the manuscript.
- Provide a scientific response to the comment you accept; or a convincing, solid and polite rebuttal to the point you think the reviewer is wrong.
- Revise the whole manuscript
- Minor revision does NOT guarantee acceptance after revision.
…and if your paper is rejected

- Don’t be desperate – it happens to everybody
- Try to understand WHY, consider reviewers advice
- Be self-critical
- If you want to submit to another journal, begin as if you are going to write a new article. Read the Guide for Authors of the new journal, again and again.
Editor, reviewer and author responsibilities towards each other

- All parties should carry out their duties with respect and fairness
- Every effort should be made to handle papers and make editorial decisions within a reasonable amount of time
- Authors should undertake to complete revisions within the expected timescale
- Expectations should be managed realistically
- Problems should be reported to the journal/editor within a reasonable timeframe
Accepting rejection – and moving on

Suggested strategy for submitting elsewhere:

- In your cover letter, declare that the paper was rejected and name the journal
- Include the referees reports and show how each comment has been addressed
- Explain why you are submitting the paper to this journal; is it a more appropriate journal?
Unethical behaviour can earn rejection and even a ban from publishing in some journals. Unethical behaviour includes:

- **Scientific misconduct**
  - Falsification of results

- **Publishing misconduct**
  - Plagiarism
    - Different forms / severities
    - The paper must be original to the authors
  - Duplicate/multiple submission
  - Redundant publication
  - Failure to acknowledge prior research and researchers
  - Inappropriate identification of all co-authors
  - Conflict of interest
Publishers have tools to detect plagiarism.
Consequences of breaking ethical rules

Authors of this article committed plagiarism. It won’t be removed from ScienceDirect. Everyone who downloads it will see the reason for retraction.
What leads to acceptance???

A ttention to details
C heck and double check your work
C onsider the reviewers’ comments
E nglish must be as good as possible
P resentation is important
T ake your time with revision
A cknowledge those who have helped you
N ew, original and previously unpublished
C ritically evaluate your own manuscript
E thical rules must be obeyed

Nigel John Cook
Editor-in-Chief, Ore Geology Reviews
A final thought.....

If your paper is accepted, you may be asked to review papers for the journal in future.

Please accept this invitation – your accepted paper is only published thanks to the work of editors and other reviewers, and your participation in the review process will be a positive contribution to the scientific community.
For more information

- Each journal has its own website with information on aims and scope, and links to guides for authors
- Visit www.elsevier.com/foodscience for a list of food science journals and links to these pages
- Visit the Authors Home page for even more information: www.elsevier.com/authors
- Learn more about advancing your research career at http://www.biggerbrains.com/
- Download the free book “Charting a Course for a Successful Research Career” from http://www.biggerbrains.com/featured
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Understanding the Publishing Process in Scientific Journals

Contents
Elsevier's History
Innovation
Open access
How to write a scientific article
What type of manuscript
Main text
Language editing and quality
Scientific illustration services
Revision before submission – checklist
Choosing the right journal, article formatting and cover letter
Elsevier editorial system (EES) and peer review
After your article has been accepted
Authors' rights and responsibilities
Ethics and plagiarism
Cross check
Online products – Sciverse ScienceDirect and Sciverse Scopus
Impact Factor and other quality measures
Helpful websites

Elsevier's History
Elsevier, the modern publishing company, was founded in 1634. It has evolved from a small Dutch publishing house to a multinational company with over 10,000 employees in 70 countries worldwide. Elsevier's product portfolio includes over 2,000 journals, 25,000 book titles, and 11,000 mobile apps.

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Innovation
Article of the Future
Through the Article of the Future project, Elsevier is developing a number of publishing innovations which can be relevant to you.

Depending on the journal, a number of innovative features are available. For instance, authors can now add their own discipline-specific and rich content such as interactive plots, chemical compounds, or interactive maps. Furthermore, new possibilities such as graphical abstracts and highlights enable users to more efficiently scan articles.

The content-element offers authors opportunities to add a range of valuable connections to the published article, for example related research-data sets, author information and research groups. Commonly used entries in the article can also be tagged and linked to databases, e.g. GenBank and Protein Data Bank, and content can also be pulled from these databases into the article. While many of the new content and content features will apply to all journals, others will be domain-specific.

Further reading: www.elsevier.com/ArticleOfTheFuture

Article-based publishing
In 2010 we began introducing article-based publishing for journals, including free-of-charge articles outside the subscription, and improving their discoverability. Articles will be published as soon as possible without waiting for an issue to be compiled, they will appear in an “issue in progress.”

Further information: www.elsevier.com/abp

www.elsevier.com/authors

32
Any questions?

Thanks for listening!!