

Effectively Communicating Your Research

Jeffrey Robens, PhD

Editorial Development Manager

24 October 2016



SPRINGER NATURE

About me...

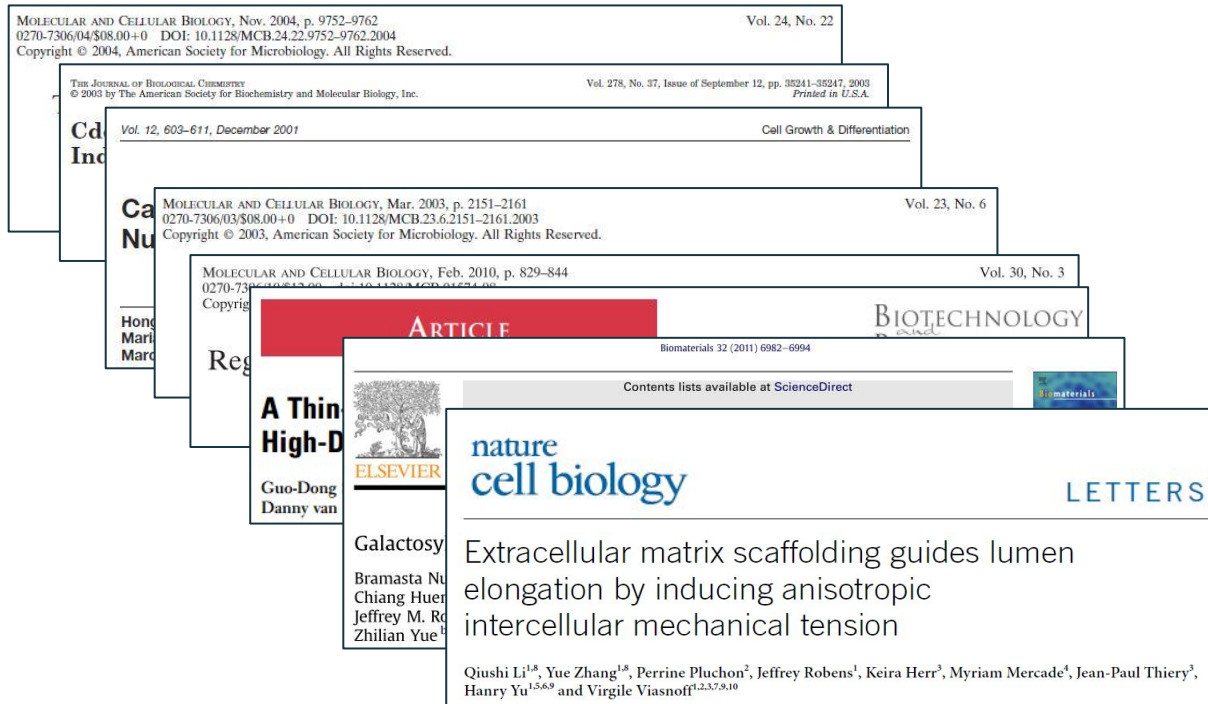
University of Pennsylvania



Agency for
Science, Technology
and Research



NUS
National University
of Singapore



Author

Peer reviewer

Academic editor

Editorial Development
Manager

Be an effective communicator

Your goal is not only to be published, but also to be widely read in your field

**Logical manuscript
structure**

**Efficient publication
strategy**

**Successful journal
submission**

Logical Manuscript Structure

Your readers have 4 key questions

Methodology

What did you do?

Results

What did you find?

Introduction

Why did you do the study?

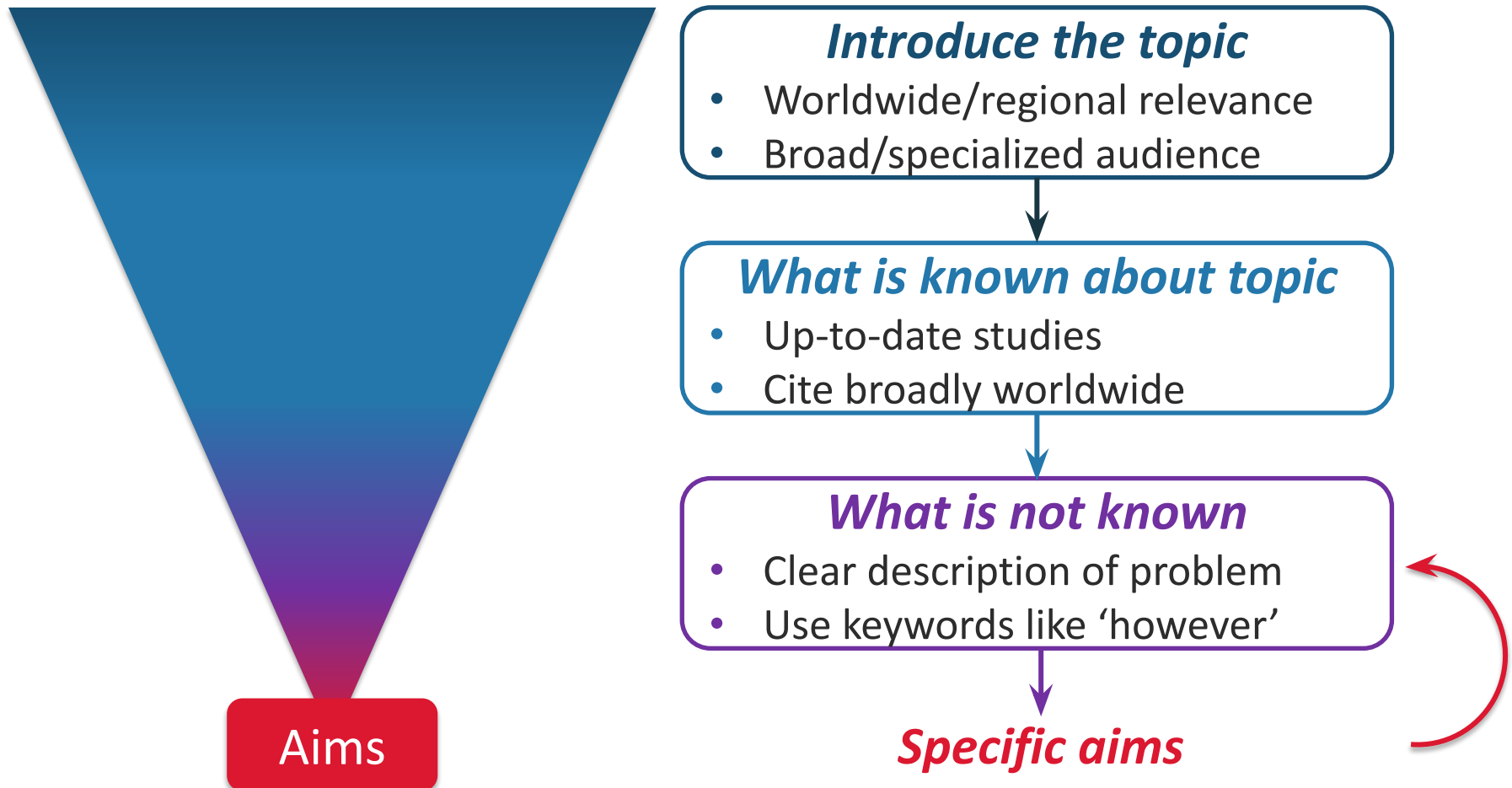


Discussion

How does the study advance the field?

Introduction

Why does your study need to be done?



Introduction

Your aims should directly address the problem

Problem in the field

However, the effectiveness of TiO_2 surface modification on reducing the microbial contamination of wastewater-treatment membranes has not been clearly characterised.

Variable

TiO_2 surface
modification

Outcome

Reducing
contamination

Sample

Wastewater-
treatment membranes

Introduction

Your aims should directly address the problem

Problem in the field

However, the effectiveness of TiO_2 surface modification on reducing the microbial contamination of wastewater-treatment membranes has not been clearly characterised.

Study aims

In this study, we evaluated if TiO_2 surface modification effectively reduced bacterial and fungal contamination of membranes after wastewater treatment for 3, 6, and 12 months.

Methods

What did you do?

Researchers in
your field

- Reproduce your findings
- Build on your research

Peer reviewers

- Evaluate your study design
- Validate your results

Methods

What do they need to know?

Who/what was used in the study

- Samples or participants
- Materials (where purchased)

How you conducted the study

- Methodology and techniques
- Discuss specific conditions and controls

How you analyzed your data

- Quantification methods/software
- Statistical tests (consult a statistician)

Guide your readers through your findings

Logical presentation

1. Initial observation
2. Characterization
3. Application

Example:

1. Fabricate new membrane for water treatment
2. Evaluate physical and chemical properties (e.g., under different temperatures/pressures)
3. Efficacy in removing particulate contamination

Guide your readers through your findings

One figure at a time

Results

Clear subheading 1

- Introduce experiment (figure 1)
- Discuss obtained data
- Summarize key finding

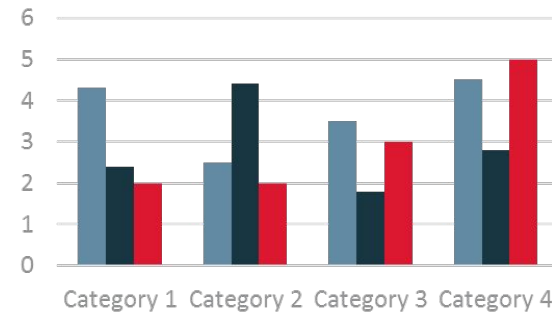


Figure 1. Descriptive figure caption

Clear subh

- Introduce
- Discuss o
- Summari

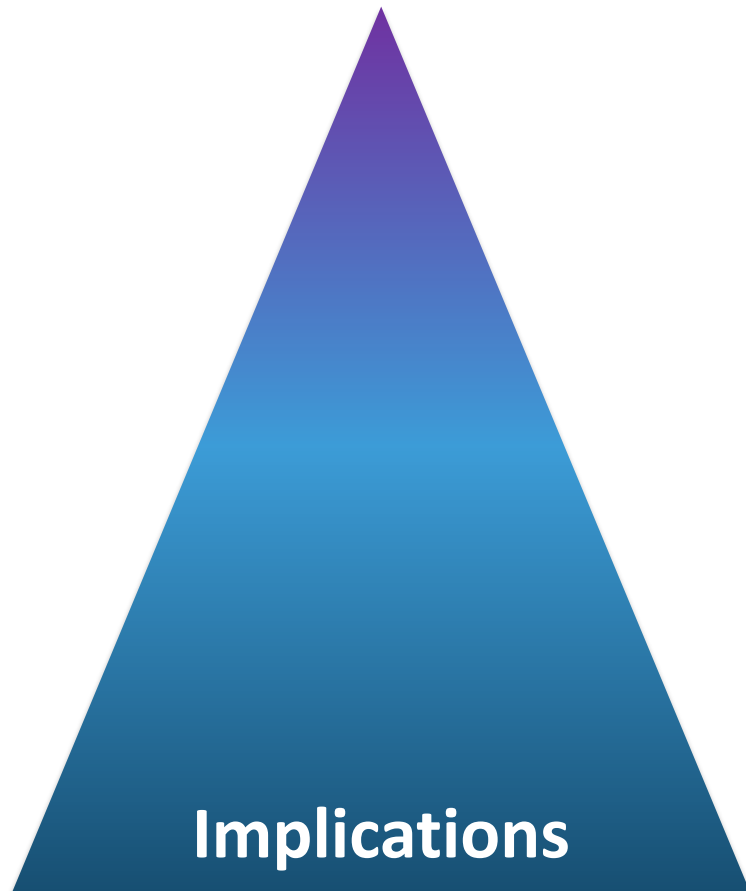
“Figure 1 shows [*description of experiment*].”

“First we [*description of experiment*] (Figure 1).”

re caption

Discussion

How your study contributes to the field



Summarize what you did

- Begin with research problem
- Briefly describe study design
- Summarize key findings

Interpret your findings

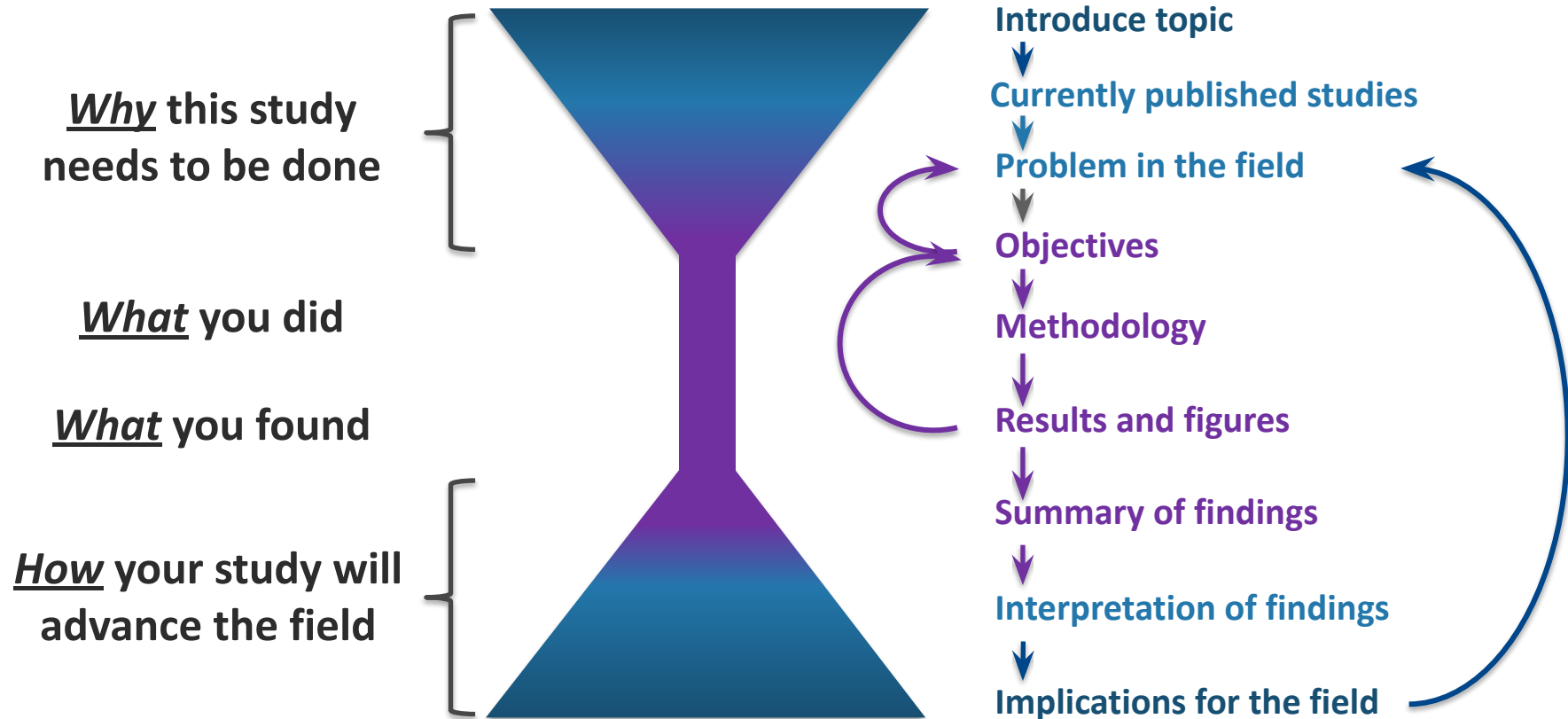
- Similarities & differences
- Unexpected/negative results
- Limitations

Why important to the field

- Main conclusion
- Implications

Logically linking your ideas

Answer the *four key questions* for your reader



Logically link your ideas throughout your manuscript

Abstracts – First impression of your paper

Aims

Importance of your topic

Results

Significance of your study

Conclusions

Relevance of your study

Clarity of your writing

Abstracts – Good first impression

What do you readers want to know?

Why did the study
need to be done?

Introduce topic and problem

What did you do?

Your aims and methodology

What did you find?

Key results

How study will
advance the field?

Conclusions and implications

Abstracts – Good first impressions

Numerous systemic treatment options exist for patients with mycosis fungoides (MF) and Sézary syndrome (SS); however, the comparative efficacy of these treatments is unclear. We performed a retrospective analysis of our cutaneous lymphoma database to evaluate the treatment efficacy of 198 MF/SS patients undergoing systemic therapies. The primary end point was time to next treatment (TTNT). Patients with advanced-stage disease made up 53%. The median follow-up time from diagnosis for all alive patients was 4.9 years (range 0.3–39.6), with a median survival of 11.4 years. Patients received a median of 3 lines of therapy (range 1–13), resulting in 709 treatment episodes. Twenty-eight treatment modalities were analyzed. We found that the median TTNT for single- or multiagent chemotherapy was only 3.9 months (95% confidence interval [CI] 3.2–5.1), with few durable remissions. α -interferon gave a median TTNT of 8.7 months (95% CI 6.0–18.0), and histone deacetylase inhibitors (HDACi) gave a median TTNT of 4.5 months (95% CI 4.0–6.1). When compared directly with chemotherapy, interferon and HDACi both had greater TTNT ($P < .00001$ and $P = .01$, respectively). In conclusion, this study confirms that all chemotherapy regimens assessed have very modest efficacy; we recommend their use be restricted until other options are exhausted.

Modified from: Cannegieter et al. Blood. 2015; 125: 229–235.

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Methods/aims

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- In this study, we used [*methodology*] to evaluate [*aim*].
- In this study, we evaluated [*aim*] using [*methodology*].

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It was found that the median TTNT for single- or multiagent chemotherapy was only 3.9 months (95% confidence interval [CI] 3.2–5.1), with few durable remissions. α -interferon gave a median TTNT of 8.7 months (95% CI 6.0–18.0), and histone deacetylase inhibitors (HDACi) gave a median TTNT of 4.5 months (95% CI 4.0–6.1). When compared directly with chemotherapy, interferon and HDACi both had greater TTNT ($P < .00001$ and $P = .01$, respectively).

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Conclusion, this study confirms that all chemotherapy regimens assessed have very modest efficacy; we recommend their use be restricted until other options are exhausted.

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Abstracts – Good first impressions

Numerous systemic treatments have been evaluated in patients with cutaneous lymphomas, including mycosis fungoides (MF) and Sézary syndrome (SS). **Why this study needed to be done** We performed a retrospective analysis of our cutaneous lymphoma database to evaluate the treatment efficacy of 198 MF/SS patients undergoing systemic therapies. The primary end point was time to next treatment (TTNT). The median follow-up time was 11.4 years (range 0.3–39.6), with a median survival of 11.4 years. Patients received a median of 3 lines of therapy (range 1–13), resulting in 709 treatment episodes. Twenty-eight treatment modalities were analyzed. **What you did** **We found** that the median TTNT for single- or multiagent chemotherapy was only 3.9 months (95% confidence interval [CI] 3.2–5.1), with few durable remissions. **What you found** α -interferon gave a median TTNT of 8.0 months (95% CI 6.8–9.2), and histone deacetylase inhibitors (HDACi) gave a median TTNT of 4.5 months (95% CI 4.0–6.1). When compared directly with chemotherapy, interferon and HDACi both had greater TTNT ($P < .00001$ and $P = .01$, respectively). **How advances the field** **In conclusion**, this study confirms that all chemotherapy regimens assessed should be restricted until other options are exhausted.

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☑ *Logically organized manuscript*

Where to submit?



Efficient Publication Strategy

Publication goals

Publish quickly and have impact in the field

Choose the most appropriate journal

- Novelty of your findings
- Relevance of your findings

Communicate study's relevance

- In your manuscript
- In your cover letter

Choose the appropriate journal

Where are the findings relevant?

Worldwide

Choose an *international* journal to reach a worldwide audience

Locally

Choose a *regional* journal to reach a local audience

Choose the appropriate journal

*Should regional findings **only** be published in regional journals?*

NO!

Choose the appropriate journal

*If regional findings have worldwide relevance, they should be published in **international** journals*

You must emphasize the global implications of your regional findings in your manuscript

Choose the appropriate journal

For whom are the findings relevant?

Your field only

Choose an **specialized** journal to reach readers in your field

Your and other fields

Choose a **broad-focused** journal to reach readers across disciplines

Choose the appropriate journal

How much accessibility do you need?

Subscription

Only academics with access to the journal can read your article

Open access

Freely available to everyone worldwide

Benefits of open access

- Fulfill funder or institutional *mandates*
- Increase *accessibility* to your findings worldwide
- Increase the number of *downloads* of your article
- Allows you to retain the *copyright* to your work
- Published *quickly* online
- *Fewer restrictions* on word and figure limits

Not all open access journals are good

How to identify a trustworthy journal?

Reputable publisher

Springer Nature, Elsevier, PLoS, etc.

Editorial board

International and familiar

Indexed

Indexed by common databases

Authors

Do you recognize the authors?


Fees

Only paid ***after*** acceptance

Think – Check – Submit (www.thinkchecksubmit.org)

The screenshot displays the Think-Check-Submit website. At the top, a navigation bar features three large buttons: 'THINK' (red with an exclamation mark icon), 'CHECK' (orange with a checkmark icon), and 'SUBMIT' (green with a right-pointing arrow icon). Below these buttons, the text 'Choose the right journal for your research' is visible. A dark navigation menu contains links for 'Home', 'Think', 'Check', 'Submit', 'About', and 'FAQ'. The main content area on the left includes a paragraph about sharing research results and a checklist to choose trusted journals. Below this, the 'THINK' button is shown again, followed by a large 'CHECK' button with a checkmark icon. The text 'Use our [check list](#) to assess the journal' is present. At the bottom of this section, the 'SUBMIT' button is shown, followed by the text 'Only if you can answer 'yes' to the questions on our [check list](#)'. On the right side, there is a sign-up form for news and updates with fields for 'Full name' and 'Email address', and a 'SEND' button. Below the form, a 'Latest news' section lists three articles: 'Think. Check. Submit. at the 2015 Frankfurt Book Fair' (dated 15th October 2015), 'New study highlights need for researcher support' (dated 1st October 2015), and 'Think. Check. Submit. at PUBMET2015' (dated 25th September 2015).

Think – Check – Submit (www.thinkchecksubmit.org)


CHECK

Reference this list for your chosen journal to check if it is trusted.

- Do you or your colleagues know the journal?
 - Have you read any articles in the journal before?
 - Is it easy to discover the latest papers in the journal?
- Can you easily identify and contact the publisher?
 - Is the publisher name clearly displayed on the journal website?
 - Can you contact the publisher by telephone, email, and post?
- Is the journal clear about the type of peer review it uses?
- Are articles indexed in services that you use?
- Is it clear what fees will be charged?
 - Does the journal site explain what these fees are for and when they will be charged?
- Do you recognise the editorial board?
 - Have you heard of the editorial board members?
 - Do the editorial board mention the journal on their own websites?
- Is the publisher a member of a recognized industry initiative?
 - Do they belong to the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)?
 - If the journal is open access, is it listed in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)?
 - If the journal is open access, does the publisher belong to the Open Access Scholarly Publishers' Association (OASPA)?
 - Is the publisher a member of another trade association?

Only submit to a journal if you can answer **yes** to all of these questions!

- ☒ ***Appropriate journal***
- ☒ ***Logically organized manuscript***

Ready to submit!

Journal editors are busy!



Successful Journal Submission

Journal editors are busy!

Most journal editors are not full-time journal editors

Full-time professors
Department heads

Journal editors when
they have time

You are competing with many other researchers
for the journal editor's *limited time*

Make the best first impression for journal editors

Cover letter

**Significance and
relevance of study**

Suitable to be published by
their journal

Interesting to their readers?

Clear and concise writing style?

Cover letters – What to include (~1 page)

Introduce your manuscript

- Manuscript title
- Article type

Why study is important

- Brief background
- Research problem & aims

What you found

- Study design
- 1 or 2 key findings

Why suitable for the journal

- Conclusion
- Interest to the readership

Additional information

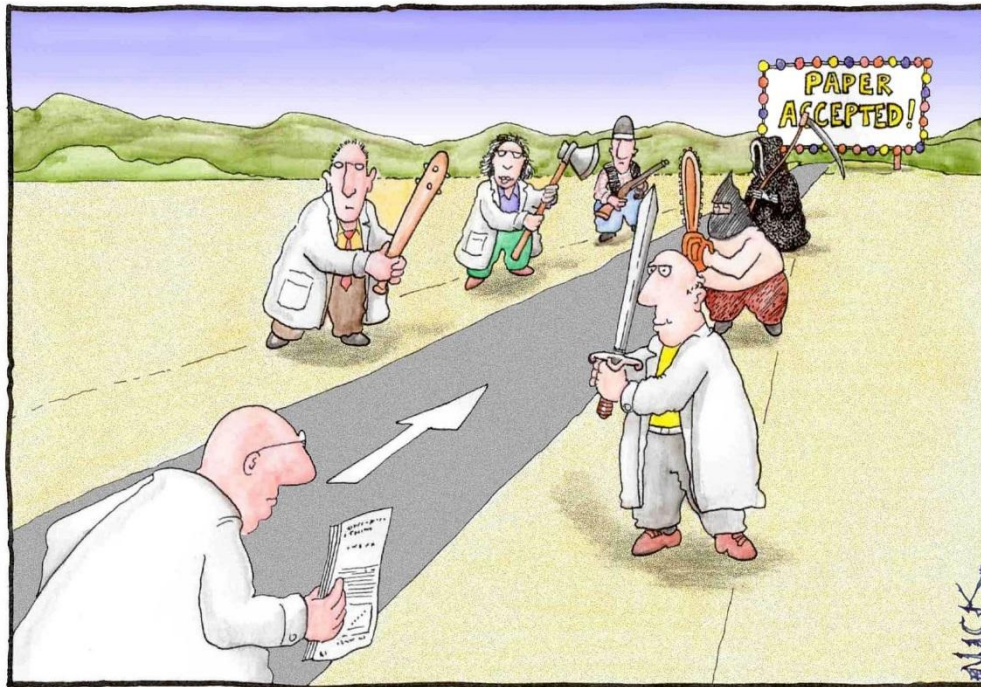
- Include/exclude reviewers
- Publication ethics

Convince journal editor
manuscript is suitable



Peer review

Peer review is a positive process



Most scientists regarded the new streamlined peer-review process as “quite an improvement.”

Cartoon by Nick D Kim, scienceandink.com. Used by permission.

Experts give advice on how to **improve** your study and your manuscript

Ensures only **relevant** studies are published

Peer review helps to **advance** the field

Writing response letters

Clearly discuss all of your revisions

Most common
mistake

Only state that revisions have been done,
not what the revisions were



Writing response letters

Clearly discuss all of your revisions

Most common
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Only state that revisions have been done,
not what the revisions were

Journal editors are very busy!

Make revisions
easy to review

- ✓ Briefly state what was revised
- ✓ Always refer to page and line numbers
- ✓ In manuscript, highlight revised text

Once you are published, now you just have to wait for all those citations to start rolling in...



Promote your article after publication

Don't wait for people to find it!

Present at conferences

- Interact with others in your field
- Key target audience
- Establish new collaborations

Promote on social media

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NATURE CELL BIOLOGY | LETTER

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Associated links

Extracellular matrix scaffolding guides cell elongation by inducing anisotropic intercellular mechanical tension

Qiushi Li, Yue Zhang, Perrine Pluchon, Jeffrey Robens, Kei Paul Thiery, Hanry Yu & Virgile Viasnoff

[Affiliations](#) | [Contributions](#) | [Corresponding author](#)

Nature Cell Biology 18, 311–318 (2016) | doi:10.1038/ncb331
Received 26 October 2015 | Accepted 08 January 2016 | Published

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Content sharing – Enabling access worldwide

The screenshot shows the Springer Nature website interface for an article in *Nature Cell Biology*. The article title is "Extracellular matrix scaffolding guides lumen elongation by inducing anisotropic intercellular mechanical tension". The authors listed are Qiushi Li, Yue Zhang, Perrine Pluchon, Jeffrey Robens, Keira Herr, Myriam Mercade, Jean-Paul Thiery, Harry Yu, and Virgile Viasnoff. The page includes a navigation bar with options like "Sign In", "Download PDF", "Add To Library", "Supplements", "References", and "Cited By". A red box highlights the "Download PDF" button with the text "Can download if have subscription to journal". Another red box points to the "References" link with the text "Useful article information". On the right side, there is a vertical toolbar with icons for sharing, downloading, and other actions. A "Related Articles" section is visible at the bottom right.

*Even without subscription access,
still read article online for free*

If at first you don't succeed...

Relax, revise, and resubmit

And we can help!

The Transfer Desk



Has your manuscript ever been rejected because it was too interdisciplinary or too specialized, not sufficiently novel or because it didn't exactly match a journal's aims and scope? Manuscripts that are scientifically sound can be rejected for various reasons other than quality, which can be very frustrating. Our Transfer Desk can help!

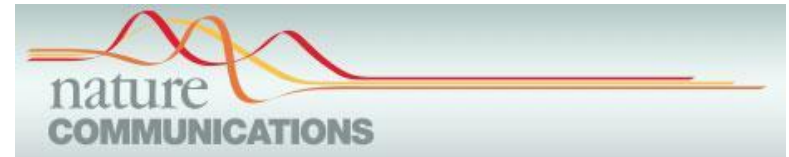


<https://www.springer.com/gp/authors-editors/journal-author/the-springer-transfer-desk>

Journal transfer at Nature

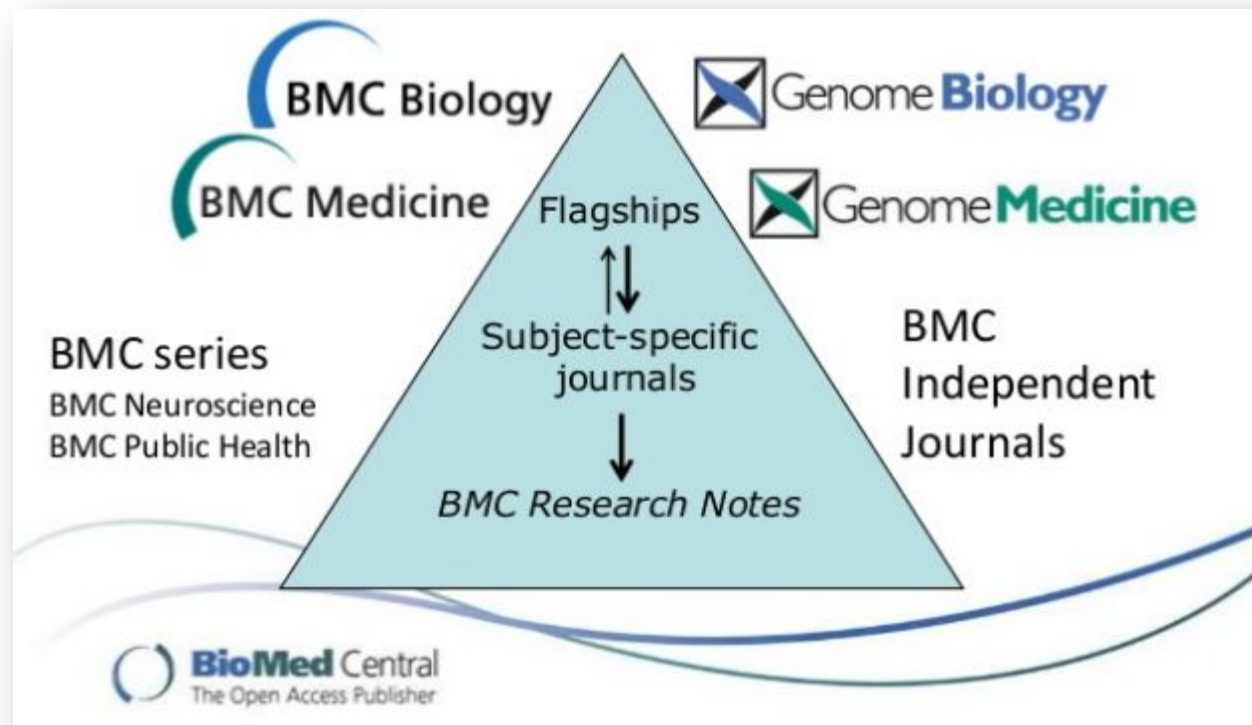
nature

REJECTED



SCIENTIFIC REPORTS


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50–250 students in natural & social sciences
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Editing services



Language Editing

Native English-speaking editors, matched to your subject area, improve your written English



Scientific Editing

Nature-standard editors provide expert advice on the science in your papers and grant applications

Thank you!

Any questions?



Dr. Jeffrey Robens

Editorial Development Manager

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