

Tips on how to get published

- 1.** Editors receive far more papers than they can ever publish. Put yourself in their shoes and imagine how those who get to see the very best and worst of research in your field will judge your paper.
- 2.** Familiarise yourself thoroughly with the journal to which you are submitting. Don't just go by the journal title. Does it publish papers like yours? If not, find somewhere else.
- 3.** Step back from your paper and ask yourself ruthlessly: how important are my findings? How many people really would be fascinated to know about them? If my results were never published, would that diminish any important understanding in my field? Is anyone ever likely to cite the paper, or are there far better examples of the same sort of findings? These are the first questions editors ask.
- 4.** If you are submitting to an international journal, is your subject matter too local or parochial to interest an international readership? Or is there something about what you've done or found that is unique and which may indeed interest people in other nations? If the answers here are no, select a more appropriate national or provincial journal.
- 5.** Are there tell-tale signs in your paper that it has been written for another journal and rejected? (wrong referencing system used, paper too long, references "old", key recent events or papers absent?) If so, fix these problems. Otherwise, it will look like you don't hold out much hope for it yourself.
- 6.** If your paper has been rejected by other journals, have you addressed the criticisms made by the reviewers' reports? If so, explain this to the editors of the journal to which you are now submitting. Attach the reviews and a covering letter explaining how your paper has been improved. Editors will appreciate your candour.
- 7.** Titles and abstracts are very important. Often they will be the only parts of your paper that an editor reads. If they sink an editor's interest, the rest is history. Make them stimulate the reader to want to know more.
- 8.** If you are writing for a specialist journal, don't waste words explaining fundamentals. Your colleagues know these things. Cut to the chase.

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