

**How to Write a Paper for
Publication: A Few Tips from an
Editor**

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**1st Tip – Visualize Editor's
Desk**

Before sending off the manuscript, visualize
the editor's desk.



Maximizing Your Paper's Chances

Make sure your paper fits the journal's interests.

The paper should have new findings and/or better research methods.

Simple important things: follow instructions to authors and eschew grammatical and spelling errors.

2nd Tip – The Title

Think hard about the paper's title.

It is the most read part of your work.

Good Article Titles

- **Informative (remember computer indexes)**
- **Short (use subtitles if necessary)**
- **Catchy**

Submitted

The Role of Upright Tilt Table Testing in the Diagnosis and Management of Convulsive Syncope Mimicking Epilepsy

Published

Differentiating Convulsive Syncope and Epilepsy with Head-Up Tilt Testing

When Should Patients with Lethal Ventricular Arrhythmia Resume Driving?

An Analysis of State Regulations and Physician Practices

3rd Tip – The Abstract

Spend effort on the abstract.

It is the second-most read part of any article but usually dashed out at the last minute.

Even if a journal does not require structured abstracts, get all parts in the abstract.

Structured Abstracts

Original Research

Background
Objective
Design
Setting
Patients
Intervention (if any)
Measurements
Results
Limitations
Conclusion

Reviews

Purpose
Data sources
Study selection
Data extraction
Results
Conclusion

**4th Tip – Ensure Correct
Length and Content of Paper's
Sections**

Sections of a Research Article

- 1. Introduction (1/2 to 1 page)**
Capture interest
Why your study is important

Sections of a Research Article

2. Methods

Study design (figure)

Place & date

Subjects (inclusion & exclusion)

Intervention details

Outcome measurements

Statistical analysis

The Language of Modern Clinical Research

Relative risk

RCT

Attributable risk

Case control study

Number needed to treat

Prevalence study

Power

Confidence interval

Precision

Intention-to-treat

Confounding

Cost-effectiveness

Sensitivity/ specificity

Meta-analysis

Likelihood ratio

Multivariable analysis

Sections of a Research Article

3. Results

Baseline measurements of patients

Outcome results (figures)

Sections of a Research Article

4. Discussion (3-4 pages)

Summary of major results

Literature review

Strengths of study

Limitations of study

Generalizeability of results

Significance of study

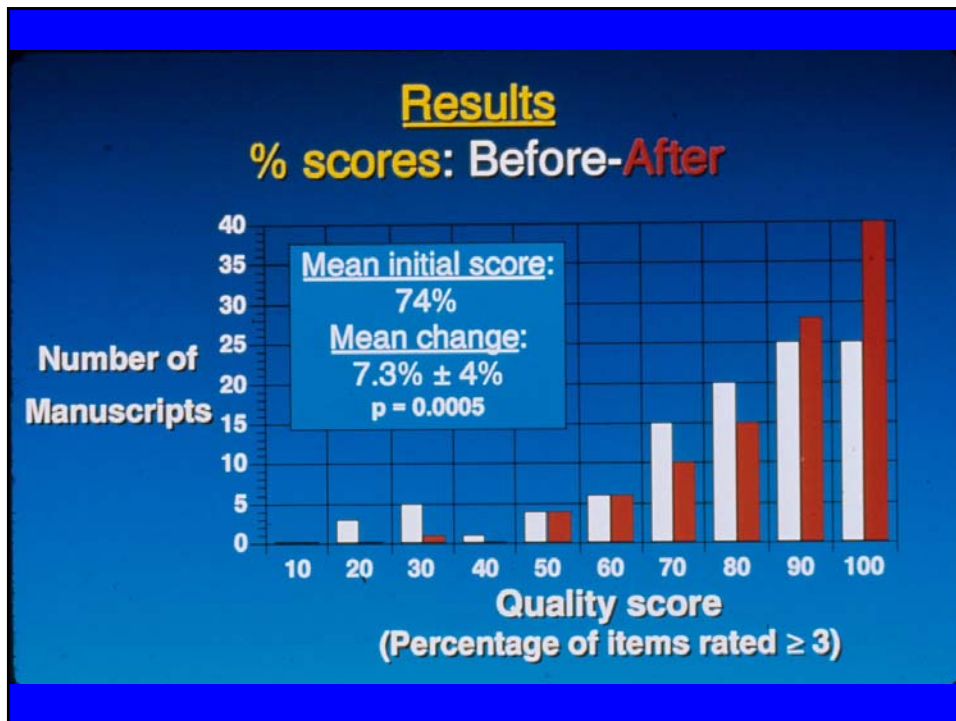
5th Tip – Good Figures

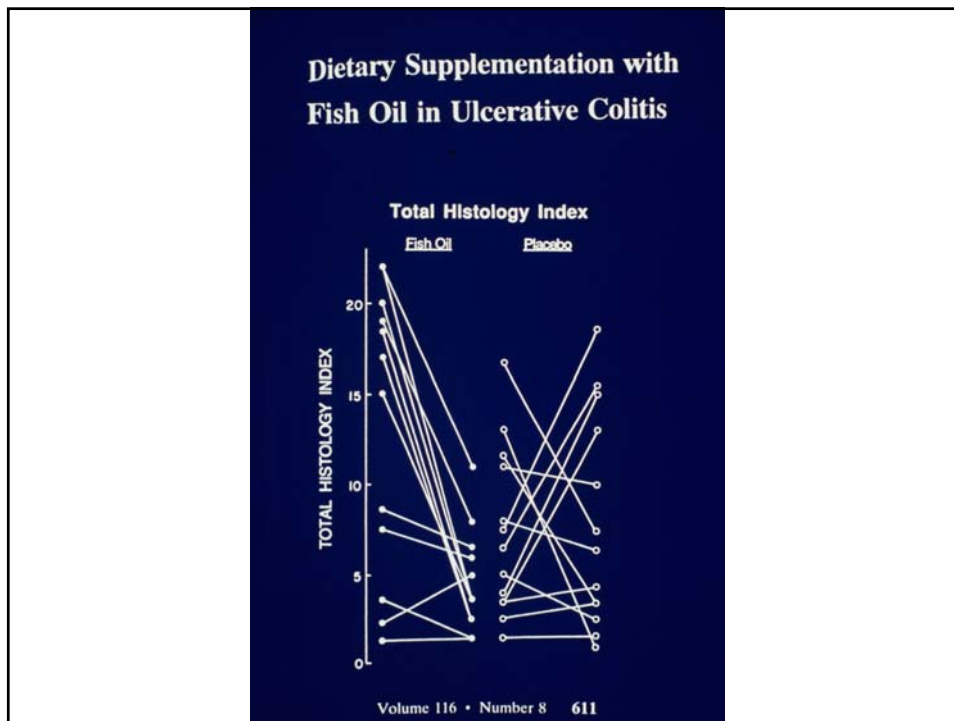
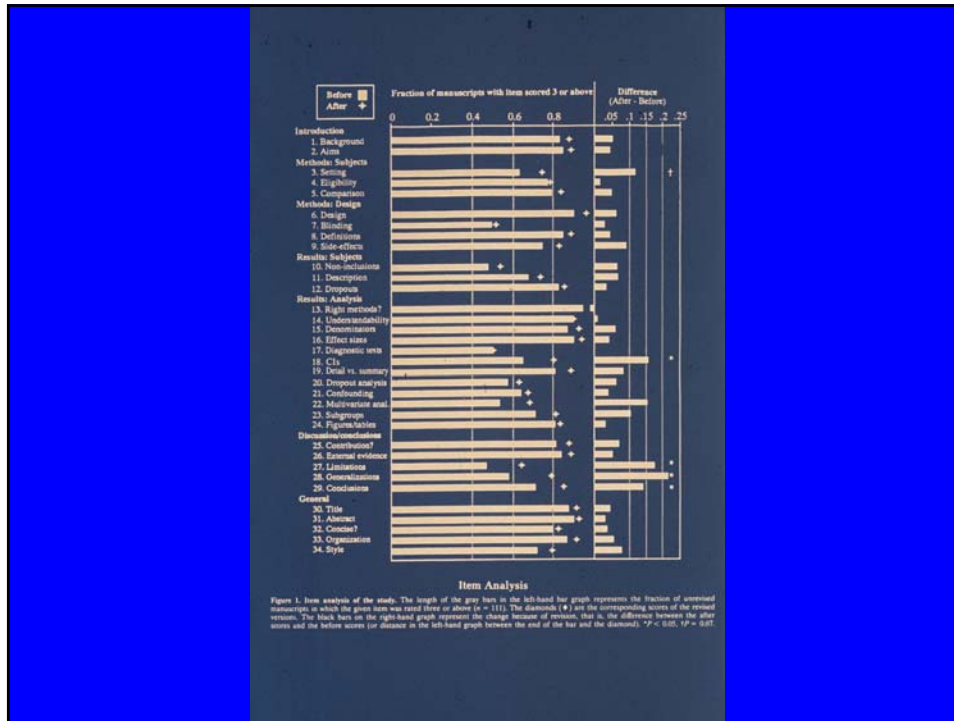
A powerful way to summarize the results of a study.

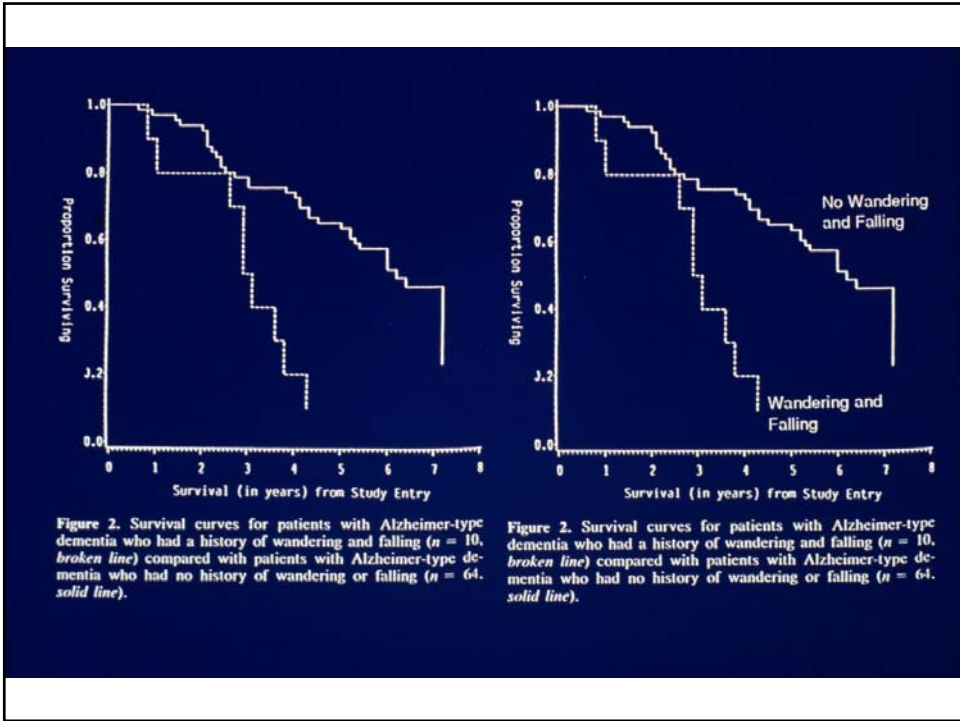
Even if editor ultimately deletes it, a well constructed figure can get across the message of the paper quickly.

Figures in papers can be much more complex than those in talks.

Good figures summarize the data clearly, but also give important details.







6th Tip – Write More Clearly



Gunning Fog Index

<u>Grade level</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Example</u>
5	Very easy	Reader's Digest
6	Easy	Time
7	Fairly easy	U.S. News
9	Standard English	New York Times
12	Fairly difficult	H James' <i>The Ambassadors</i>
14-16	Difficult	Corporate report
>16	Very difficult	Legal contract

Readable English Writing

Words

Short

Learned early in life

Anglo-Saxon origin

Concrete meanings

Non-technical

Familiar

Sentences

Short

One idea per sentence

Subject-verb-object
construction

No more than 3
numbers

No more than 3
prepositional phrases

Readability of Manuscripts Annals of Internal Medicine

	<u>Submission</u>	<u>Publication</u>
Fog Index*	17.2	16.8
Syllables/word	1.8	1.8
Words/sentence*	22.0	21.0
Total words*	3057	3138

—————
P<0.01

Summary for Authors

- **Remember the editor's desk**
- **Stress what is new/better in your paper**
- **Improve your titles**
- **Improve your abstracts**
- **Use strongest clinical research method**
- **Use short words and sentences**
- **“A (good) figure is worth a thousand words”**