

TOP 10

Tips for Effective Science Writing

Regardless of your path, one skill that will serve you well is writing effectively.

During the course of a scientific career, you will be called on frequently, at least monthly, and often daily, to write in the scientific style. Whether for a manuscript, a grant proposal, or in a public forum like a newspaper or press release, learning how to use the written word to convey your ideas effectively to different audiences will position you to shine. Follow these ten tips to start improving your writing today.

1 Clarify your purpose.

Before you start writing, make sure you are clear on the purpose of your writing. Where will this be published or shared? Who will see it? What do you hope to gain from sharing this information?



2

Know your audience.

Understand who the audience will be and cater your approach to that specific audience. Writing for peers who know your research well is different than writing for the general public.



3

Develop your key message.

Write a two-minute elevator pitch to help focus on the core message you want to deliver, and use this as the starting point for your longer written piece.



6

Apply the scientific argument approach.

Use the core principles of claim, evidence, and reasoning to write out your case.



5

Leverage your communication style.

Remember DISC (Dominant, Influential, Steady, or Compliant).



4

Read other works in the publication.

Become aware of the types of information, the style, and the level of information typically presented.



7

Include the appropriate level of detail.

Consider if the audience knows anything about your topic, and if so, what additional information do you need to provide to help them understand your message?



8

Answer your audience's key questions clearly.

Do not leave readers searching for answers. Always be clear and upfront with information you know your reader will need.



9

Sell your idea.

Identify and highlight the appealing aspects of your idea while remaining truthful.



10

Don't forget to proofread.

Proofreading multiple times and asking colleagues to read your drafts is a useful technique to identify errors, and to hone and clarify your message for the audience.

