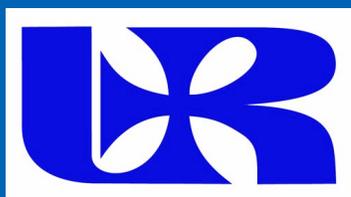


Scholarly Publishing for Success

Dan A. Oren M.D.
Yale University and University of Rzeszów



Dziękuję Polsko-Amerykańskiej
Komisji Fulbrighta



Dziękuję Professor Kurpas

SLIDE 2

Preliminary Notes

My own background:

I am not an editor, though I do many journal reviews.

There are many more people who are far more widely cited than me.

I am not an expert, on this topic.

I do have experience.

Examples are camouflaged:

Some key details have been changed in each of the specific examples to illustrate points.

They are not reproduced identically, as there is no reason for public embarrassment.

SLIDE 3

Ask Important Questions

What are the critical questions in your field?

How might your study help answer that question?

Your study might not be the answer.

But could it have something important to say about the topic?

Important for study design and for the paper.

If the question is unimportant, why are you doing the study?

If the answer is unimportant, why should a first-rate journal publish it?



SLIDE 4

Are the Answers Important?

Take a hard look at the data. If the answer is unimportant, why should a first-rate journal publish it?



SLIDE 5

Make Good Partnerships

Most of us in the academic world think we are pretty great.

Many of us think that we are “irreplaceable”.

But the cemeteries are full of irreplaceable people.

Make partnerships with other academics that will let you accomplish what is impossible for you to do on your own.

By reaching a higher level of success in partnership, you will increase your chances of making useful discoveries with potential high impact!



SLIDE 6

Negative Answers Can Be Important

Journals love positive results, but showing that a commonly accepted treatment or hypothesis is often scientifically more important than positive results!



SLIDE 7

Put Yourself in the Reviewers's Minds

“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

What is a reviewer looking for?

What does a reviewer not want to see?



SLIDE 8

Listen to the Reviewers

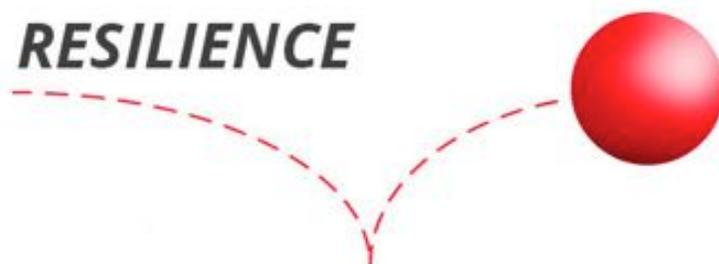
Use one journal's critique to guide the next



SLIDE 9

Find your inner resilience

RESILIENCE



SPREŻYSTOŚĆ

SLIDE 10

Example: The Fantasy Review

Dr. Oren: We love your manuscript. We are sending it for publication in the next issue! 😊

SLIDE 11

Example: The Reality

“Your manuscript has come back from review, and I enclose copies of the comments received. As you will note, substantial modification has been recommended of a degree that will require a good deal of work on your part without assurance of publication in the Journal. Consequently, you may wish to submit your work elsewhere.”

SLIDE 12

Example

“If, however, you are willing to take the suggestions under consideration and to modify your manuscript accordingly, we shall be happy to obtain further reviews of the new version.”

SLIDE 13

The Editor is a Human Being



SLIDE 14

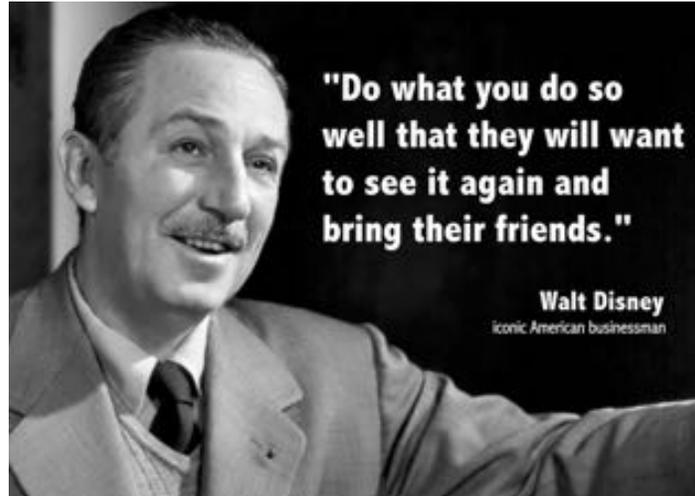
Cite Key Literature

“People don’t read articles anymore.”
Your citations prove that you know the literature.
Failure to cite begs the question of whether you know what you are doing.
Failure to cite your reviewer could lead him/her to be feel insulted.
But citing a discredited study can make you look out of touch.



SLIDE 15

Pay Attention to Detail



SLIDE 16

Pay Attention to Detail



Tim Cook 
@tim_cook

 Follow

Remembering Steve on his birthday: "Details matter, it's worth waiting to get it right."

8:07 PM - 24 Feb 2014

4,810 RETWEETS 2,707 FAVORITES



SLIDE 17

Pay Attention to Detail

Rigorous study design is critical

Rigorous carrying out of the design is critical

Writing with care is critical.

The fewer typos the better.



SLIDE 18

Do Not Mistake False Precision for Accuracy

A trial of Snake Oil for the Treatment of Depression

	Active	Placebo
Sample Size	50	52
Mean Age	38.625	39.139
Mean Change in Depression Score (\pm SD)	12.591 (3.472)	12.477 (3.583)

SLIDE 19

Do Not Mistake True Precision for the Finding

A trial of Penicillin for the Treatment of Pneumonia

$p = 0.01254$

Vs.

$p < 0.05$

SLIDE 20

Be Your Own Critic

Acknowledge design flaws—criticize yourself and acknowledge limitation before others do so.

SLIDE 21

Make it Readable

There are some exceptions...

SLIDE 22



Less is more.

SLIDE 23

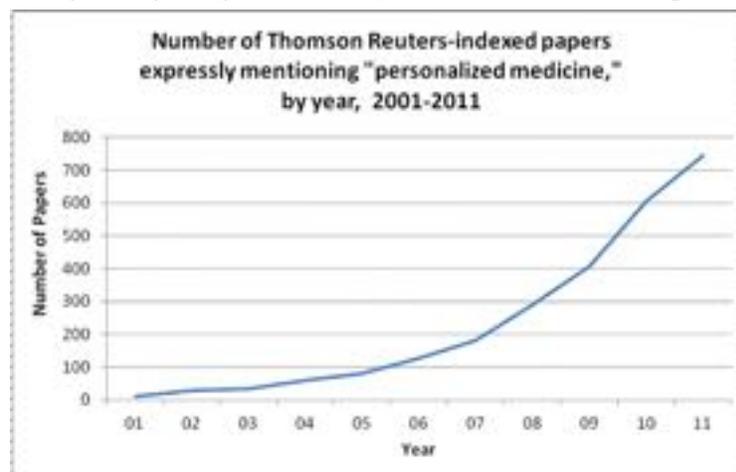
Less Can Be More

Use supplements
Use tables
Don't repeat

SLIDE 24

Make figures readable

Label figures clearly (Fig 1, 2, ...)—Don't test the reviewers' patience
Make figures big enough to read easily—Don't test the reviewers' patience



SLIDE 25

Follow Directions

An example from the Eighth Grade

SLIDE 26

Follow Directions: An Example

1. Read this entire page before beginning any of the assignment.
2. Go to the library, and look up in the encyclopedia the following subject and write a paragraph describing....
3. Solve this mathematical problem...
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
14.

SLIDE 27

Tell a Story

Don't just throw data at the reader.

Don't confuse the reviewers.

SLIDE 30

Make it intelligible

Paragraphs must be coherent

They need not just six or seven sentences, but a clear flow.

Do what we were taught in secondary school:

- Have a topic sentence.

- Support the topic.

- Conclude the sentence.

SLIDE 31

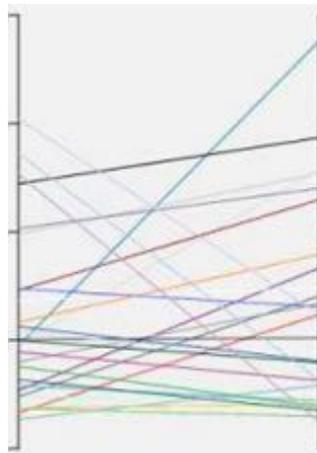
Conclusions must fit the data

Conclusions should be consistent with the study.
A result gives you the right to speculate a little in the discussion, but the farther you go beyond the data, the more the reviewers will be distracted from your result.

SLIDE 32

Example

Muscle
Cramp Incidence
Winter



Muscle
Cramp Incidence
Summer

No Significant Difference

SLIDE 33

Example

A study of muscle cramp incidence: summer vs. winter in a climate with widely varying temperatures

Retrospective analysis of frequency of student athletes having muscle cramps during the summer vs. winter months.

Result: Ambient temperature does not affect the rate of muscle cramps

Conclusion: Therefore it is not necessary for student athletes to do warm-up exercises in the winter months to avoid winter cramping.

SLIDE 34

How to Live Life

SLIDE 35