



Tips for Productive Writing:

Making the Most of the Writing Club

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Welcome!





Introductory Items

- A writing club having groups with guidance by mentors: an excellent opportunity
- Talk will focus on making the most of it
- Main content
 - General tips for productive writing (especially as facilitated by a writing club)
 - Tips: working productively in a writing club
 - Tips: working productively with a writing mentor
 - Questions, answers, and your tips

General Tips for Productive Writing



Set aside times to write.

- Identify open times in your schedule.
- Consider when you tend to work best.
- Choose some times accordingly.
- Reserve those times in your calendar.
- *Note: Meetings of a writing group can be a good incentive to schedule times to write.*



Keep learning more about research writing.

- A resource: materials from HETC workshops
- A meta-resource: AuthorAID Resource Library (<http://www.authoraid.info/en/resources/>)
 - See, for example, “Core Presentations on Research Communication” (<http://www.authoraid.info/en/resources/details/653/>) and “Some Key Resources from the AuthorAID Resource Library” (<http://www.authoraid.info/en/resources/details/1189/>) .

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AuthorAID is coordinated by INASP.

 **Rhoune's View**
"Through the AuthorAID website, I met my mentor – a PhD student at the University of Michigan. She has been very dedicated in offering me guidance on how to improve my writing skills."
Rhoune Ochaku, Kenya

The AuthorAID community includes over 8100 researchers from around the world. If you are looking for help, want to share your expertise or are searching for someone to work with, then the AuthorAID community can help!

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Latest News

 **Resource of the Week #189:** An Infographic on Avoiding Predatory Publishers
A colorful aid for authors
By Barbara Gastel | Nov. 22, 2014

 **Tip of the Week #208:** Discuss what?
By Bernard Appiah | Nov. 19, 2014

 **It's a Listicle!**
Or maybe a list-entation
By Barbara Gastel | Nov. 17, 2014

Featured Researchers

 **Maji Hailemariam**
Research interests: Sociology, Health Sciences
Looking for a mentor

 **Asegedew Shemelis**
Research interests: Development, communication, health communication,
Looking for a mentor

 **Niyousha Farzinmoatamed**

Upcoming Events

 **MRC/DFID African Research Leader scheme 2014/15**
Sept. 29, 2014
The UK Medical Research Council and the UK Department for International Development announce a further call for proposals for the ...

Discussion list

 **World Social Sciences Forum 2015 - Call for Abstracts**
Nov. 20, 2014

Consider preparing a “glossary”.

- List key terms and phrases in your research area, so you can easily use them in drafting your work.
- *If others in your writing group are in the same research area, consider sharing or combining glossaries.*



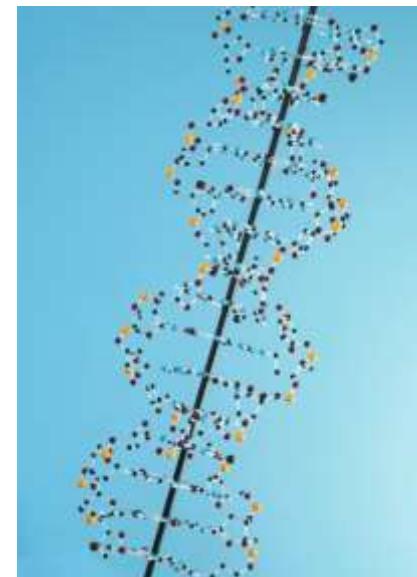
Obtain—and use—instructions.

- Identify a target journal early.
- Obtain its instructions to authors.
- Consult these instructions before, during, and after the drafting of your paper.
- *Note: A writing group or writing mentor can aid in identifying suitable target journals.*



Use suitable models.

- For instance, find a paper analogous to the one you want to write.
- Analyze such models, and follow them as examples.
- *Note: A writing group or writing mentor may be able to suggest suitable models.*



Organize information first.

- Writing a scientific paper: largely a matter of organization
- Organizing information before you write can help.
- *Note: A writing group or writing mentor may be able to help you organize information.*



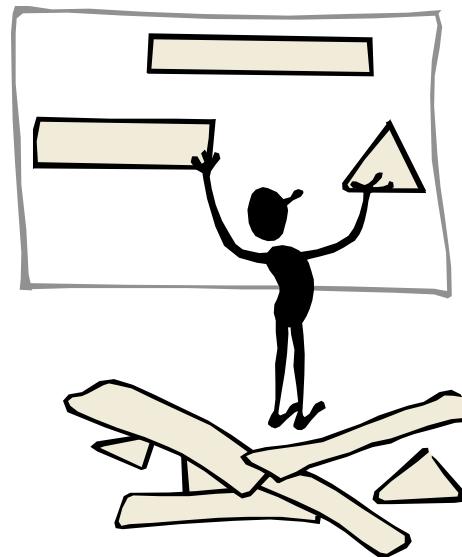
Know that a draft is just a draft.

- Just get something written.
- Don't worry that it still needs work.
- You can—and should—revise.



Revise your work.

- Good writing—largely the result of good revision



Get feedback, and revise more.

- Serves as pre-submission peer review
- *An excellent role for writing clubs and writing mentors*



Tips for Working Productively in a Writing Club



Gear the group work to the writing stage.

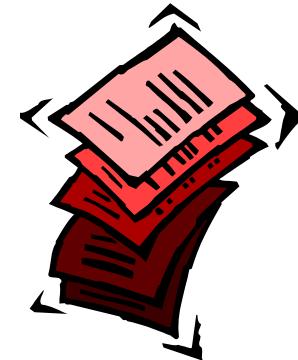
Examples of stages:



- Defining the focus of the paper
- Identifying potential target journals
- Trying to organize content
- Seeking feedback on an early draft
- Seeking feedback on a near-final version
- Responding to comments from peer reviewers

If appropriate, have homework.

- Author: might provide items such as background information and drafts
- Other group members: if agreed, should review materials beforehand in the way requested
- An option to consider: having “lead discussants”



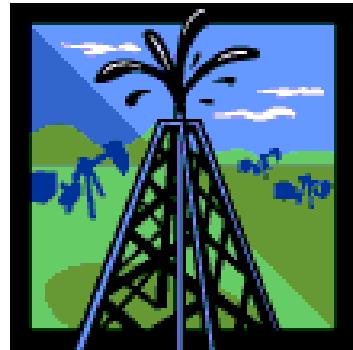
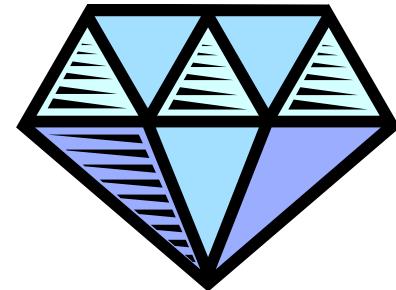
Consider using the sandwich approach for feedback.

- **Praise**
 - To encourage the author
 - To learn from strengths
- Then **criticism**—constructive suggestions
- Then more **praise** and encouragement



Share resources.

- Readings
- Websites
- Audiovisuals
- Tips
- Other



Follow up.

- Report on progress.
- Collaborate in overcoming obstacles.
- Celebrate successes!



Tips for Working Productively with a Writing Mentor



Establish expectations.

- Type(s) of guidance sought
- Mechanism(s) for receiving guidance
 - In person
 - Other
- Time frame
- Other aspects
- *(However, stay somewhat flexible.)*



Make the most of meeting time.

- Prepare—for example, by listing questions to ask your mentor.
- Don't waste time asking your mentor things that you could look up yourself.
- If appropriate, help the mentor to prepare.
 - By providing items to review in advance
 - By identifying major questions or discussion topics beforehand



Learn from your mentor's experience.

- Find out about publication challenges your mentor has faced—and how your mentor addressed them.
- If your mentor has been a peer reviewer or editor, gain his or her advice from that perspective.



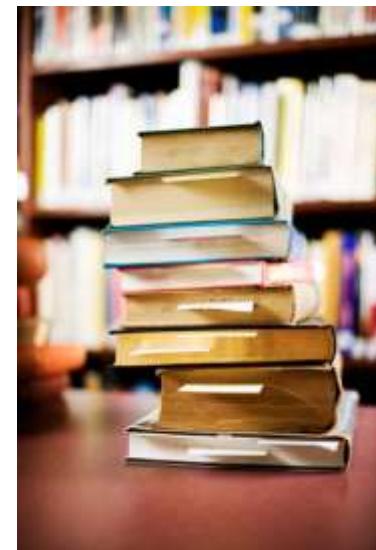
Be considerate of your mentor.

- If you want your mentor to review drafts, provide them early.
- Realize that the mentor has limited time.
- Show appreciation, for example by thanking your mentor in the acknowledgments.

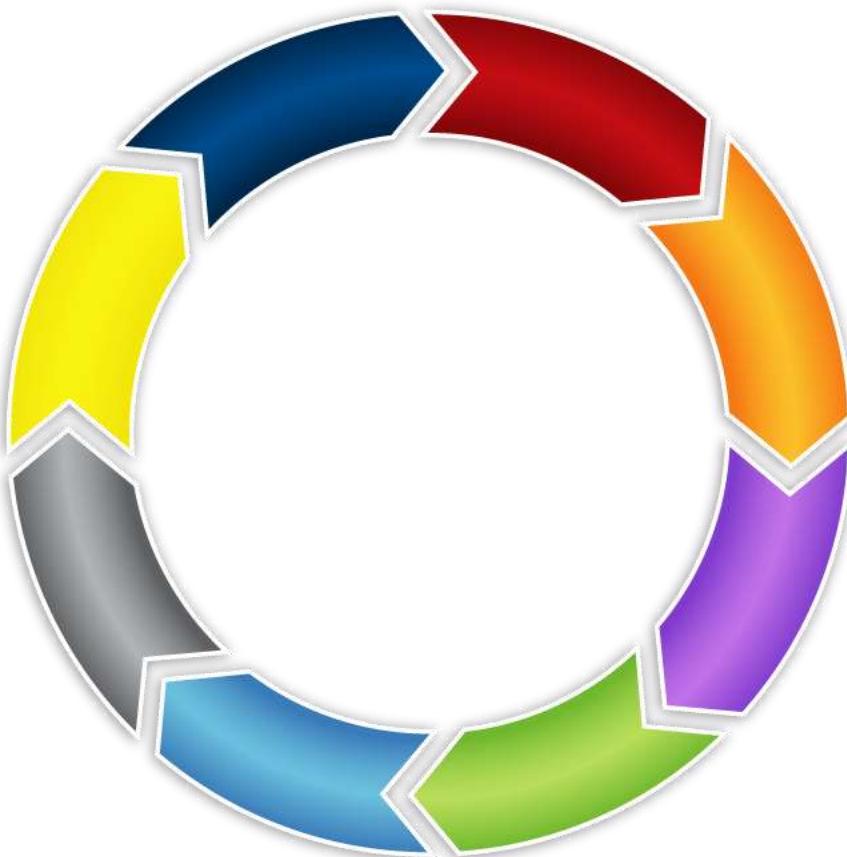


Also be a resource for your mentor.

- A benefit of mentorship: opportunity to continue learning
- So, for example, share readings that might interest or aid your mentor.



Go on to mentor others.



Questions, Answers, and Your Tips





Wishing all of you
much success!

