How to Write a World-Class Paper
....and get it successfully published

2011 IEA–GHG Summer school
Champaign, Illinois

Clare Lehane
c.lehane@elsevier.com
Each year

• 3 million articles submitted
• 300,000 peer reviewers
• 1.5 million articles published
• 30 million readers
• 2 billion digital article downloads
• 30 million article citations

Source: Knowledge Networks and Nations: Royal Society 2011
Publishing landscape

- Solicit and manage submissions
  - Organise editorial boards
  - Launch new specialist journals
  - 5,000 new editors per year
  - 500 new journals launched per year
- Manage peer review
  - 2.5 million+ referees
  - 3.75 million+ referee reports per year
  - 50%+ of submissions rejected
- Edit and prepare
- Archive and promote
  - 3 million+ article submissions per year
  - 3 million+ article submissions per year
- Publish and disseminate
  - 1.5 million new articles produced per year
  - 350 years of back issues scanned, processed and data-tagged
- Production
  - 12 million researchers
  - 4,500+ institutions
  - 180+ countries
  - 1 billion+ downloads/year
  - 10 million+ printed pages/year
  - 125,000 editors
  - 350,000 editorial board members
  - 30 million+ author/publisher communications per year

Note: industry estimates based on known numbers for a subset of the industry that are then scaled to 100% based on the article share of the known subset.
The Research Cycle

Funding → Research → Analysis → Publication

- Funding: Financial support for research projects.
- Research: Conducting experiments or gathering data.
- Analysis: Interpreting the results of research.
- Publication: Sharing findings through academic journals or other media.

[Images of cash, laboratory equipment, books, and a computer screen illustrating the cycle.]
Growth of scholarly journals

“"This is truly the decade of the journal and one should seek to limit their number rather than to increase them, since there can be too many periodicals."

Neues medicinisches Wochenblatt fur Aerzte (1789)
The landscape

Your manuscript has a lot of hurdles to cross before it can join the above ranks.
But I am an engineer, I don’t write papers!

The same principals will apply, though your audience will be smaller and the feedback will be quicker.
Your article should be of value...

- **To the research/industry community**
  A research study is meaningful only if it is clear/understood/reproducible..... and **USED**

- **To yourself**
  Your article is your passport to your scientific community
Can I publish this?????

- Have you done something new and interesting?
- Have you checked the latest results in the field?
- Have the findings been verified?
- Have the appropriate controls been performed?
- Do your findings tell a nice story or is the story incomplete?
- Is the work directly related to a current hot topic?
- Have you provided solutions to any difficult problems?

If all answers are “yes”, a good, strong manuscript is what is needed next.
What is a good manuscript?

- A good manuscript makes readers grasp the scientific significance **easily**
- It has a **clear, useful** and **exciting** message
- It is presented and constructed in a **logical** manner

2009 Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine awarded to Elizabeth Blackburn
How to write a good manuscript:
Preparations before starting

Decide which type of paper is most appropriate

- Full articles/original articles/research articles
- Review papers/perspectives
- Letters/rapid communications/short communications
Full articles

- Standard for disseminating completed research findings
- Typically 8-10 pages, 5 figures, 25 references
- Draft and submit the paper to appropriate journal
- Good way to build a scientific research career
Review Paper

• Critical synthesis of a specific research topic
• Typically 10+ pages, 5+ figures, 80 references
• Typically solicited by journal editors
• Good way to consolidate a scientific research career
Short Communications

- Letters / Rapid Communications / Short Communications are usually published for the quick and early communication of significant and original advances; much shorter than full articles (usually strictly limited).
- There are also short communication or “letters” journals in some fields where authors can present short preliminary findings and then usually follow up with a full length paper.
Journal Selection

Selection of a journal will depend on many factors in addition to journal metrics

- The aims and scope of the journal
- The type of manuscript you have written (review, letter, articles)
- The specific subject area
- The significance of your work
- The prestige/quality of the journal
- The respect of the editors in the field
- The editorial and production speed of the journal
- The community and audience associated with the journal
- The coverage and distribution (regional, international)

“Never submit work to a journal that you do not read yourself. If you do, the chances are your work will be rejected. This is because you will not have the necessary ‘feel’ about what is appropriate. You won’t have the necessary sense of the ‘culture’. “(Prof Michael Curtis)
Preparations before starting:

Read the Guide for Authors

Apply the Guide for Authors to your manuscript, even to the first draft (text layout, paper citation, nomenclature, figures and table, etc.). It will save your time, and the editor’s.
An international editor says:

“The following problems appear much too frequently”

- Submission of papers which are clearly out of scope
- Failure to format the paper according to the Guide for Authors
- Inappropriate (or no) suggested reviewers
- Inadequate response to reviewers
- Inadequate standard of English
- Resubmission of rejected manuscripts without revision

Paul Haddad, Editor, Journal of Chromatography A
Constructing your article

Each section of a paper has a definite purpose

- Title
- Abstract
- Keywords

- Main text (IMRAD)
  - Introduction
  - Methods
  - Results
  - And
  - Discussions

- Conclusion
- Acknowledgement
- References
- Supporting Materials

Make them easy for indexing and searching (informative, attractive, effective)

Journal space is precious. Make your article as brief as possible. If clarity can be achieved in n words, never use n+ 1
The Title

- Tell readers what your paper is all about
- Attract the reader’s attention
- Be specific
- Keep it informative and concise
- Avoid jargon and abbreviations
### Title examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Title</th>
<th>Revised</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preliminary observations on the effect of Zn element on anticorrosion of zinc plating layer</td>
<td>Effect of Zn on anticorrosion of zinc plating layer</td>
<td>Long title distracts readers. Remove all redundancies such as “observations on”, “the nature of”, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action of antibiotics on bacteria</td>
<td>Inhibition of growth of mycobacterium tuberculosis by streptomycin</td>
<td>Titles should be specific. Think to yourself: “How will I search for this piece of information?” when you design the title.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabrication of carbon/CdS coaxial nanofibers displaying optical and electrical properties via electrospinning carbon</td>
<td>Electrospinning of carbon/CdS coaxial nanofibers with optical and electrical properties</td>
<td>“English needs help. The title is nonsense. All materials have properties of all varieties. You could examine my hair for its electrical and optical properties! You MUST be specific. I haven’t read the paper but I suspect there is something special about these properties, otherwise why would you be reporting them?” – the Editor-in-chief</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Abstract

- This is the **advertisement** of your article. Make it interesting, and easy to be understood without reading the whole article.
- You must be **accurate** and **specific**!
- A clear abstract will strongly influence whether or not your work is further considered.
- Keep it as **brief** as possible!!!
Keywords

Used by indexing and abstracting services

- They are the labels of your manuscript.
- Use only established abbreviations (e.g. DNA)
- Check the “Guide for Authors”

**Article Title**

“Silo music and silo quake: granular flow-induced vibration”

“An experimental study on evacuated tube solar collector using supercritical CO2”

**Keywords**

Silo music, Silo quake, stick-slip flow, resonance, creep, granular discharge

Solar collector; Supercritical CO2; Solar energy; Solar thermal utilization
Most of the previous investigations of emulsion stabilization by protein–polysaccharide conjugates have been concerned with model systems based on hydrocarbon oils or triglyceride oils under nearly ideal aqueous solution conditions. The present paper aims to demonstrate the potential of this type of conjugate for making and stabilizing more challenging and complex emulsion systems of low pH and raised ionic strength. The compositional conditions are focused here towards carbonated beverage systems based on an emulsified flavour oil in the presence of a commercial colouring agent.
Methods – how was the problem studied?

Include detailed information so that a knowledgeable reader can reproduce the experiment.

However, use references and supplementary materials to indicate the previously published procedures.

composite materials raised the thermal conductivities of materials compared to pure PEG materials, the thermal conductivity still need improved further.

In this paper, high conductivity polyethylene glycol (PEG)/Silica dioxide (SiO₂) composites with β-Aluminum nitride (β-AlN) as an additive were prepared. The structure and thermal properties of the blends were investigated by scanning electron microscope (SEM), polarization optical microscope (POM), Fourier transformation infrared spectrophotometer (FTIR) and different scanning calorimeter (DSC). The conductivity of composites improved due to high conductivity of β-Aluminum nitride powder.

2. Experimental

2.1. Materials

Reagent grade polyethylene glycol with molecular weights (1000) was purchased from Guangzhou Chemical Agent Company (Guangzhou, China). Silicon gel was purchased from Guangzhou People’s Chemical Company (Guangzhou, China). β-Aluminum nitride was obtained from Foshan Jingshi Company, imported from Japan. All the chemicals were analytical reagents and they don’t need further purification.

2.2. Preparation of the composite PCMs

Firstly, Silicon gel and polyethylene glycol with the mass ratio 15:85 was dissolved in water while stirring for 12 h. After that, the prepared solutions were added with β-Aluminum nitride at different ratios ranging from 5wt.% to 30wt.% and then mixed at room temperature for 2 h. Afterward, the mixed solution was put into an oven and heated at 100°C for 24 h. Finally, the solid composite was obtained by heating in a vacuum oven at 70°C for 24 h.

2.3. Characterization of the composite PCMs

The melting point and heat of fusion of the solid composite were determined using a differential scanning calorimeter (Perkin-Elmer DSC-2C) calibrated with an indium standard in the range from –30°C to 120°C. The velocity for scanning was at 10°C/min. The surface morphology of sample was examined using a scanning electron microscope (Philips Scanning Electron Micro-

Fig. 2. Experimental instrument for heat storage and release test.

2.4. Experiment of heat storage and release performance

Fig. 2 shows the experimental instrument for heat storage and release test. Polyethylene glycol and the composite PCM sample were put into two identical tubes, respectively. One thermocouple was placed in the middle of each tube. Firstly, the two test tubes were put inside the water at the room temperature at the beginning. Later, the two tubes were put into the water bath at the constant temperature of 80°C immediately. After the temperature of sample reached 80°C for a while, the two tubes were put into the water at the same temperature again. The temperature measured by thermocouple was recorded automatically by using Agilent data acquisition instrument.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Morphology characterization

Fig. 3 represents the SEM images of the composite PCM with no leakage of polyethylene glycol. From Fig. 3, it can be observed that the light area presents polyethylene glycol as phase change materials and the dark area represents silicon dioxide as supporting materials, respectively. Because silicon dioxide is a multi-pore material, polyethylene glycol was hold by porous supporting materials due to the capillary force and the surface tension force. The structure can be accounted for the great association of polyethylene glycol encapsulated by silicon dioxide, which helped to prevent leakage during the melting and freezing cycling. If there were no interaction between them, the composite PCM would not be able to keep the form.
## Results

### What have you found?

- Present essential/primary results
- Use sub-headings
- Use figures/illustrations
  - Graphs
  - Tables
  - Photos

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of attack</th>
<th>Classical (%)</th>
<th>Pop (%)</th>
<th>Jazz (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Echo addition</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise addition</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band equalization</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Fig. 1. A photograph of SEM of PTFE polymerized in solid state at 77 K with a dose of 700 kGy.

---


Zhang, XR; Yamaguchi, H. “An experimental study on evacuated tube solar collector using supercritical CO2” Applied Thermal Engineering © Elsevier
Discussion – what the results mean

Describe
• How the results relate to the study’s aims and hypotheses
• How the findings relate to those of other studies
• All possible interpretations of your findings
• Limitations of the study

Avoid
• Making “grand statements” that are not supported by the data
• Introducing new results or terms

Don’t ignore work in disagreement with yours – confront it and convince the reader you are correct
Conclusions – how the work advances the field – don’t repeat the abstract!

4. Conclusions

A high conductivity form-stable phase change material was prepared by blending polyethylene glycol, silica gel, and aluminum nitride powder. The composite PCMs exhibit desirable thermal properties including desirable heat latent and thermal conductivity.

Thermal conductivity of the composite PCMs was improved using β-Aluminum nitride additive with great conductivity heat transfer promoter. The value of thermal conductivity changed from 0.3847 W m⁻¹ K⁻¹ to 0.7661 W m⁻¹ K⁻¹ with the increase mass ratio of β-AlN from 5% to 30%. Correspondingly, the heat of various composite decreased in this case. However, properties of the composite PCM were not affected too much by the additive of high conductivity powder.

As the thermal conductivity enhanced by adding β-AlN additive, and the heat latent of fusion keep suitable value, the composite PCMs can be considered as a promising PCMs candidate for energy storage.

Acknowledgements

- Acknowledge anyone who has helped you with the study, including:
  - Researchers who supplied materials or reagents, *e.g.* vectors or antibodies
  - Anyone who helped with the writing or English, or offered critical comments about the content
  - Anyone who provided technical help

- State why people have been acknowledged and ask their permission

- Acknowledge sources of funding, including any grant or reference numbers
Typically, there are more mistakes in the references than any other part of the manuscript. It is one of the most annoying problems, and causes great headaches among editors…

- Cite the main scientific publications on which your work is based
- Do not inflate the manuscript with too many references
- Avoid excessive self-citations
- Avoid excessive citations of publications from the same region
- 30-40 references are appropriate for a full text article
Who is the first author?

- General principles for who is listed first
  - **First Author:**
    - Conducts and/or supervises the data analysis and the proper presentation and interpretation of the results
    - Puts paper together and submits the paper to journal
  - **Co-Author(s):**
    - Makes intellectual contributions to the data analysis and contributes to data interpretation
    - Reviews each paper draft
    - Must be able to present the results, defend the implications and discuss study limitations

- Abuses to be avoided
  - **Ghost Authors:** leaving out authors who should be included
  - **Gift Authors:** including authors when they did not contribute significantly
Conflicts of interest

These all present potential conflicts

- **Conflicts of interest can take many forms:**
  - Direct financial
    - Employment, stock ownership, grants, patents
  - Indirect financial
    - Honoraria, consultancies, mutual fund ownership, expert testimony
  - Career & intellectual
    - Promotion, direct rival
  - Institutional
  - Personal belief

- The proper way to handle potential conflicts of interest is through **transparency** and **disclosure**
- At the journal level, this means disclosure of the potential conflict in your cover letter to the **journal editor**
Cover letter

This is your chance to speak to the editor directly

- Submitted along with your manuscript
- Mention what would make your manuscript special to the journal
- Note special requirements (reviewers, conflicts of interest)
- Indicate approval of all authors for submission

---

Professor H. D. Schmidt
School of Science and Engineering
Northeast State University
College Park, MI 10000
USA

January 1, 2008

Dear Professor Schmidt,

Enclosed with this letter you will find an electronic submission of a manuscript entitled "Mechano-sorpitive creep under compressive loading – a micromechanical model" by John Smith and myself. This is an original paper which has neither previously nor simultaneously in whole or in part been submitted anywhere else. Both authors have read and approved the final version submitted.

Mechano-sorpitive is sometimes denoted as accelerated creep. It has been experimentally observed that the creep of paper accelerates if it is subjected to a cyclic moisture content. This is of large practical importance for the paper industry. The present manuscript describes a micromechanical model on the fibre network level that is able to capture the experimentally observed behaviour. In particular, the difference between mechano-sorpitive creep in tension and compression is analysed. John Smith is a PhD-student who within a year will present his doctoral thesis. The present paper will be a part of that thesis.

Three potential independent reviewers who have excellent expertise in the area of this paper are:

Dr. Fernandez, Tennessee Tech, email1@university.com
Dr. Chen, University of Maine, email2@university.com
Dr. Singh, Colorado School of Mines, email3@university.com

I would very much appreciate if you would be able to review this submission for the International Journal of Science.

Sincerely yours,

A. Professor

---

Suggested reviewers

Final approval from all authors

Explanation of importance of research
Language – Why is it important?

Correct use of language saves your editor and reviewers the trouble of guessing what you mean.

Complaint from an editor:

“[This] paper fell well below my threshold. I refuse to spend time trying to understand what the author is trying to say. Besides, I really want to send a message that they can't submit garbage to us and expect us to fix it. My rule of thumb is that if there are more than 6 grammatical errors in the abstract, then I don't waste my time carefully reading the rest.”
Do publishers correct language?

- Yes...
  - Publishers often provide resources for authors who are less familiar with the conventions of international journals, but these are generally author-pays services. Traditional copyediting by the publisher is rare.
  - Some publishers may perform technical screening prior to peer review.

- But...
  - It is the author’s responsibility to use proper language prior to submission.
  - Copyediting is only done after an article is accepted and is done by typesetters, not editors.
Final checks before submission

- Ask colleagues to read and be critical
- All requirements from Guide for Authors are met
- Scope of paper is appropriate for journal
- Have your manuscript checked for language, either by a native English speaker or an editing service
- Ensure that the literature cited is balanced and that aims, purpose and significance of results are clear
- Use a spellchecker!
Review process

Many journals adopt a system of initial review by the editor. Editors may reject a manuscript without sending it for review.

Why?

The paper may not be of sufficient quality to go forward for peer review: reviewers are limited resources!
Example from one journal’s Guide for Authors

“…..The Editor-in-Chief and Editors have the right to decline formal review of the manuscript when it is deemed that the manuscript is 1) on a topic outside the scope of the Journal, 2) lacking technical merit, 3) focused on foods or processes that are of narrow regional scope and significance, 4) fragmentary and provides marginally incremental results, or 5) is poorly written.”

Make sure your manuscript does not fall in any of these categories or it will fall at the first hurdle!
Different Types of Peer Review

1. “Single blind” peer review
2. “Double blind” peer review
3. Open peer review

A nano-porous carbon was prepared by carbonization of a novel synthesized mesoporous polypyrrole (PPy) polymer without any additional activation process, and used as electrode materials for supercapacitor double layer capacitors (EDLCs). This novel PPy-polymer-based carbon shows high specific surface area with high capacitance yield (~90%), and excellent specific discharge capacity over 200 F/g. The effect of R/C ratio (i.e. molar ratio of reduced to oxidizing agent) on the specific surface area, pore size distribution, microstructure and electrochemical performance was studied, respectively. The results show that a higher R/C ratio yielded carbon with higher specific surface area, larger specific capacitance, and broader pore size distribution. The higher specific surface area of ~828 m²/g and specific capacitance exceeding 200 F/g were found at R/C ratio of 9/6. The electrochemical behaviors were characterized by means of galvanostatic charging/discharging, cycle voltammetry and impedance spectroscopy. The activation between electrochemical properties and pore structure was investigated. Due to the excellent capacitance properties, low cost and simple process, this PPy-polymer-derived carbon would be a promising material for EDLC applications.

© 2007 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Comments:

1. “………” 5 star rating
2. “………” 3.5 star rating

And the reviewer is…
Overview of Peer Review Process

- Possible reviewer recommendations:
  - Rejected due to poor quality, or out of scope
  - Accept without revision
  - Accept, but needs revision either:
    - Minor
    - Major

Article Submitted → Confirmation of Receipt → Initial Decision by Editor → Decide to Review → Reviewers Assigned → Reviewers Accept Invite → Reviews Completed → Reject

Article sent to Publisher → Revision Received → Revise → Accept

Revision Checked → Notification to Author → Revise → Accept

Reject
Reviewer comments and revisions

Carefully study the comments of the reviewers and prepare a detailed letter of response.

Consider reviewing as a discussion of your work.

Learn from the comments, and join the discussion.
How to respond to a request to revise your paper

- Prepare a detailed letter of response
  Copy-paste reviewer comments and address one by one. Don’t miss any point.

- State specifically what changes you have made to the manuscript.
  Give page and line number.
  A typical problem—Discussion is provided but it is not clear what changes have been made.

- Provide a scientific response to the comment you accept; or a convincing, solid and polite rebuttal to the point you think the reviewer is wrong.

- Revise the whole manuscript not just the parts the reviewers point out

- Minor revision does NOT guarantee acceptance after revision. Do not count on acceptance, but address all comments carefully
...and if your paper is rejected

- Don’t despair – it happens to everybody
- Try to understand WHY, consider reviewers advice
- Be self-critical
- If you want to submit to another journal, begin as if you are going to write a new article. Read the Guide for Authors of the new journal, again and again.
Accepting rejection

Suggested strategy for submitting elsewhere:
- In your cover letter, you can declare that the paper was rejected and name the journal
- Include the referees reports and show how each comment has been addressed
- Explain why you are submitting the paper to this journal; is it a more appropriate journal?
Ethics in publishing

Unethical behaviour can earn rejection and even a ban from publishing in some journals. Unethical behaviour includes:

- **Scientific misconduct**
  - Falsification of results

- **Publishing misconduct**
  - Plagiarism
    - Different forms / severities
    - The paper must be original to the authors
  - Duplicate/multiple submission
  - Redundant publication
  - Failure to acknowledge prior research and researchers
  - Inappropriate identification of all co-authors
  - Conflict of interest
Ethics in Publishing

“Copy from one, it's plagiarism; copy from two, it's research”
Wilson Mizner 1876-1933 Playwright

“One journal reported rejecting 23% of accepted submissions after checking for plagiarism”
Nature 466, 167 (2010) online July 5th

Elsevier deals with over 400 suspected ethics case per year
Data fabrication and falsification

- **Fabrication** is making up data or results, and recording or reporting them.
- **Falsification** is manipulating research materials, equipment, processes, or changing/omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.
“Plagiarism is the appropriation of another person’s ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit, including those obtained through confidential review of others’ research proposals and manuscripts”

Federal Office of Science and Technology Policy, 1999

“Presenting the data or interpretations of others without crediting them, and thereby gaining for yourself the rewards earned by others, is theft, and it eliminates the motivation of working scientists to generate new data and interpretations”

Bruce Railsback, Professor, Department of Geology, University of Georgia
Multiple submissions

- Multiple submissions waste editor and reviewer time
- The editorial process of your manuscripts will be completely stopped if the duplicated submissions are discovered
- Competing journals constantly exchange information on suspicious papers
- DO NOT send your paper to a second journal until you receive the final decision from the first
Redundant publication

- An author should not submit for consideration in another journal a previously published paper.
- Re-publication of a paper in another language is acceptable provided there is full and prominent disclosure of its original source.
- At the time of submission authors should disclose details of related papers, even if in a different language, and similar papers in press.
- Avoid **salami slicing** - the practice of creating several papers out of material that could have been published in a single paper or review.
Helping journals to get their houses in order

COPE is a forum for editors and publishers of peer-reviewed journals to discuss issues related to the integrity of work submitted to or published in their journals. It supports and encourages editors to report, catalogue and instigate investigations into ethical problems in the publication process.

Publication Ethics Blog

New guidelines for reporting of animal studies - the ARRIVE guidelines

_PLOS Biology_ has just published a paper and an editorial on an initiative to improve the reporting of studies that report research that involves animals - the ARRIVE guidelines.

Posted by Virginia Barbour, COPE Secretary on July 5th 2010

Login to post comments  Read more

Ghostauthors, ghost management and the manipulation of medical research

There are three articles in the June issue of _Bioethics_ on different
An author anxious about a competing paper contacted journals A and B (and perhaps others) about possible fast-track consideration of his study. Journal A said it would be as fast as possible; Journal B actually had the competing study under consideration so agreed to look at this study very fast. The author submitted to journal B, the article was refereed in less than a week, and journal B offered to publish the article if the author would cut it from full-length to short communication format.

The author withdrew his paper formally from journal B and submitted it to journal A, where review took 3 weeks. During this 3 week period, the author’s anxiety about the competing paper increased and, fearing that journal A might not move fast enough on his paper, he re-contacted journal B, to know whether publication there (in short form) was still a possibility. The editors said it was, and there followed an exchange of emails in which journal B reiterated its acceptance in principle of the article, editors and author discussed copy editing and formatting requirements, and the author agreed to a deadline by which resubmission was required.

Journal A then completed peer review and accepted the article in principle, followed by formal acceptance when the author submitted a final version a couple of days later. The author wrote to journal B after formal acceptance by journal A, to say that the article was accepted elsewhere. The editors of journal B knew from informal conversations with the author that he had considered journal A, and therefore contacted the editors of journal A about the possibility of duplicate submission.
Question?

Resolution
Advice:
The Forum commented that the author had behaved badly and was in the wrong. All agreed that this was definitely a case of duplicate submission. The editor informed the Forum that an “official letter of censure” had been issued by journal B. The Forum suggested that the editors of journals A and B should write to the author’s institution jointly, informing them of the time wasting methods of the author and the general misuse of the editorial service.

Follow Up:
Journal B considered the matter closed with its formal letter of censure. Journal A wrote to the author and requested that he inform his institution and all coauthors of the outcome.
As an aside, the work has now been published by a third journal, to which it was submitted on the day of withdrawal from Journal A.
Resolution:
Case Closed

You can find cases like this on the COPE website, www.publicationethics.org. This case can be found at http://publicationethics.org/case/duplicate-submission-1
What to do if you suspect redundant (duplicate) publication

(a) Suspected redundant publication in a submitted manuscript

Reviewer informs editor about redundant publication

Thank reviewer and say you plan to investigate
Get full documentary evidence if not already provided

Check degree of overlap/redundancy

Major overlap/redundancy (i.e. based on same data with identical or very similar findings and/or evidence authors have sought to hide redundancy, e.g. by changing title, author order or not citing previous papers)

Contact corresponding author in writing, ideally enclosing signed authorship statement (or cover letter) stating that submitted work has not been published elsewhere and documentary evidence of duplication

Author responds

No response

Unsatisfactory explanation/admits guilt

Attempt to contact all other authors (check Medline/Google for emails)

Minor overlap with some element of redundancy or legitimate reanalysis (e.g. sub-group/extended follow-up/discussion aimed at different audience)

Contact author in neutral terms/expressing disappointment/explaining journal’s position

Explain that secondary papers must refer to original
Request missing reference to original and/or remove overlapping material
Proceed with review

Inform reviewer of outcome/action

No significant overlap

Discuss with reviewer
Proceed with review

Note: ICMJE advises that translations are acceptable but MUST reference the original
CrossCheck from CrossRef

- 83 publishers
- 25.5 million articles
- 48,157 journals, books, conference proceedings
- Papers are run through iThenticate which matches the document against the Crosscheck database and major data providers and the open web
- Get a report displaying degree of similarity to other documents and a link to the fulltext of the matching documents
- Cannot detect plagiarism but can identify a manuscript of concern
Summary

• Make sure you have something new to publish
• Pick the right journal to submit to
• Follow the guide for authors
• Get feedback before you submit
• Only submit to one journal
• Cite and acknowledge correctly

Good luck!