

SD4H Scientific Writing Course
October 31- November 4, 2022

Title Page

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Monday, 31 October 2022



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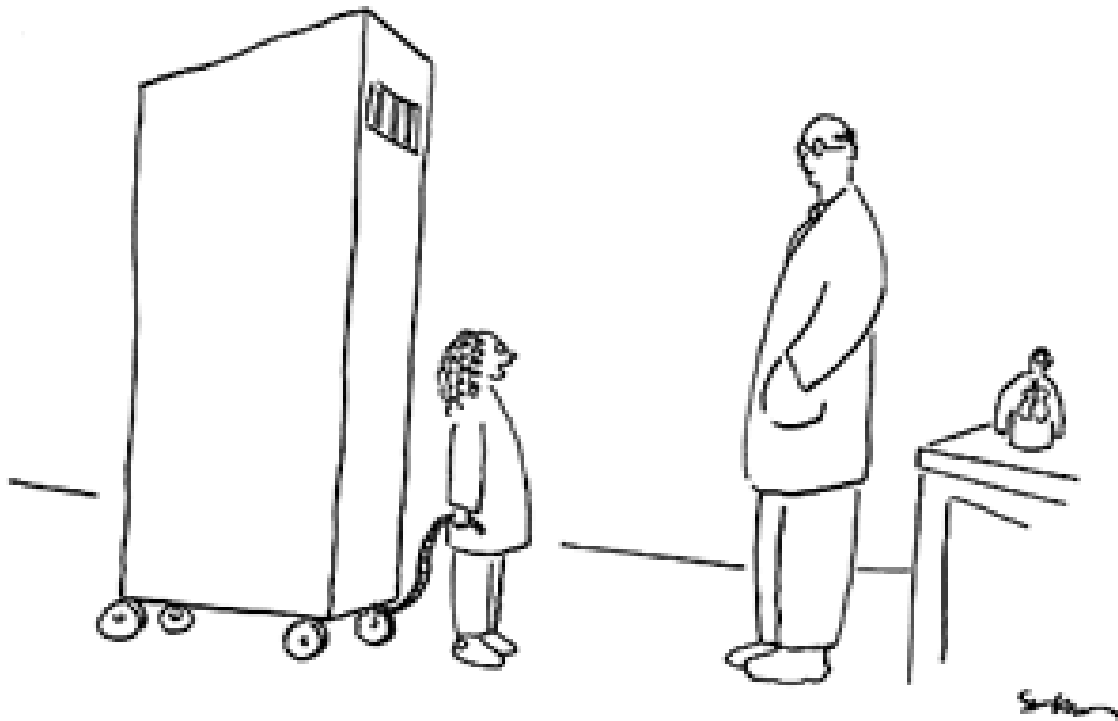
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Title page includes...

- Title (today)
- Authors (more later)
- Authors' affiliations
- Corresponding author's address
- Word count text, word count abstract
- Disclosures, conflicts of interest, funding, previous presentations

The title

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"The title of my science project is 'My Little Brother: Nature or Nurture.'"

Attracts readers.

Identifies the main topic and/or message of the paper.

Types of titles

- Explanatory
- Interrogatory
- Declarative
- Cute and Catchy

The explanatory title

- Says exactly how the study was done
 - Study design
 - Main outcome
 - Main predictor
 - Study population, site
- Advantages
 - Most common, recognized, standard
 - Sometimes required by journal
 - Targets relevant audience with key title words
- Disadvantages
 - Can be boring, long

Examples of explanatory titles

Descriptive: Using HIV voluntary counselling and testing data for monitoring the Uganda HIV epidemic, 1992-2000.

Analytic: The association between alcohol use, sexual risk behaviour, and HIV infection among men attending beer halls in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Intervention: Impact of a single session of counselling on partner referral for sexually transmitted disease treatment, Harare, Zimbabwe.

The interrogatory title

- Poses the most important question
- Advantages
 - Catches interest
 - Focussed
- Disadvantages
 - You better answer the question in the paper!
 - Says little about the design
 - May not be allowed by journal

Examples of interrogatory titles

HIV seroconversion among factory workers in Harare: Who is getting newly infected?

Is there a heterosexual HIV epidemic in the United States? (Note: this paper did not answer the question)

Are recent increases in sexual risk behaviour among older or younger men who have sex with men? Answer: Both. (Note: question and answer in title)

The declaratory title

- Says the main finding as a simple sentence
- Advantages
 - No one misses the point
 - Interesting, provocative, focussed
 - Good for conference abstracts
- Disadvantages
 - May not be allowed by journal
 - Invites disagreement

Examples of declarative titles

HIV infection may adversely affect clinical response to chloroquine therapy for uncomplicated malaria in children

Deferral of blood donors with HIV risk factors saves lives and money in Zimbabwe

Low socioeconomic status is associated with a higher rate of death in the era of highly active antiretroviral therapy, San Francisco

The cute and catchy title

- Uses a pun, humor, or trendy term
- Advantages
 - Catches attention, interesting, provocative
 - Good for conference abstracts
- Disadvantages
 - Glib, flippant, sometimes in bad taste
 - May not be allowed by journal
 - Do not facilitate retrieval with electronic searching

Examples of cute and catchy titles

Cruising on the Internet highway

A tale of two futures: HIV and antiretroviral therapy in San Francisco

Dark green blood in the operating theatre

4-week headache after 60 pints of beer

The cute and catchy title

A silent sponge speaks



Titles: Class participation

- Volunteer to present their explanatory titles
- Volunteer to present their interrogatory titles
- Volunteer to present their declarative titles
- Volunteer to present their cute and catchy titles

So, back to the explanatory title

Template: "Effect of X on Y in Z"

Independent variable you manipulated (**X**)

Dependent variables you observed or measured (**Y**)

Animal or population and material on which you did the work (**Z**)

The title should be precise

Do not use *Effect of...* when you mean *Proliferation of...*, *Increase in...*, or *Reduction in*.

Be careful with "and" and "with" when joining the independent and dependent variables...

The title should be precise

Ambiguous

Bronchoconstriction and Hypoxia with
Methacholine

The title should be precise

Clear

Bronchoconstriction and Hypoxia Induced by
Methacholine

The title should be precise

Ambiguous

Airway Caliber and the Work of Breathing in
Patients with Tuberculosis

The title should be precise

Clear

The Airway Caliber is Associated with the Work of Breathing in Patients with Tuberculosis

Additional tips for titles

- Are the title and main research finding closely related?
- Is the title objective in tone?
- Are special features of the study mentioned?
 - E.g., Randomised, population-based, unique population, new method

The Rest of the Title Page

Running Title

- journal will ask for shorter version of the title to be used as a “running head”, usually < 40 character spaces.
- Include all main words from the title, specifying independent and dependent variables.

The Rest of the Title Page

Running Title: Example

Shorten

Association Between Method of Delivery and
Maternal Rehospitalization

To

Delivery Method and Postpartum
Rehospitalization

The Rest of the Title Page

- Disclosures, conflicts of interest, funding, previous presentations

Follow the journal's instructions exactly

The Rest of the Title Page

Authors' Names and Affiliations

- your full name, preferably with a middle initial [your “publishing identity” for bibliographic indexing]
- your coauthors, named by their preferred “publishing identities”
- authors' affiliations *at the time the study was done*, with a footnote to different current addresses if relevant

Key Words

- the words selected are the best possible to define the paper
- the words provided do not exceed the number specified by the journal
- Use bibliographic database categories [eg, United States National Library of Medicine MeSH headings] as key words, and also in the title and abstract, to increase likelihood of the paper's rapid retrieval in a literature search.

