

PhD Professional Development Series: *Writing Tips*

- **Set deadlines for yourself:**

Example: Dear co-authors, I will send the first draft of my manuscript by XXXX.

- **Set deadlines for your co-authors too!!!**

Example: Dear co-authors, please read the final draft of my manuscript within two weeks. I will assume by XXXX that everyone interested has reviewed it.

- **At an early stage of writing, check the journal's submission template:**

Example: Number of words, format for figures, number of tables allowed, etc.

- **Set a specific period for writing:**

Example: You might find it easier to dedicate a full day to writing, or you may prefer writing a little each day (even just one sentence). Find the strategy that works best for you!

- **Reward yourself after writing:**

Example: Bake something and enjoy it once you're done writing.

- **Take breaks:**

Example: Writing for 45 minutes, then taking a 15-minute break can be a good routine.

- **Start with the easiest part:**

Example: The Materials and Methods section is often the easiest to begin with.

- **It may be easier to write after outlining your paper:**

Example: Using a bullet point method can help. Just started a new project?

- Create a Word file for your manuscript.
- Outline the entire structure (e.g., Intro, Methods, Results, Discussion).
- Fill in each section with bullet points throughout the process (from literature review to experiments). Write everything down!!!

Or start writing after creating a poster that presents your project.

- **Don't get stuck in the details; just write and revise later:**

Example: Your co-authors will likely edit the wording anyway.

- **Use ChatGPT:**

Example: To find the right word, synonym, or rephrase awkward sentences (you can ask it to write scientifically). But use it wisely!

- **If you're unsure how deep your literature review should go, use tools to explore available resources:**

Example:

https://www.connectedpapers.com?utm_source=share_popup&utm_medium=copy_link&utm_campaign=share_website

- **If your results section feels too short, expand by adding context:**

Example: Explain the purpose or a small story around it, like “these two individuals came from the same farm, and the model shows significant results for both...”

- **Get feedback from others:**

Example: Offer to read a colleague's draft if they'll read yours. You can also organize a writing workshop with colleagues – it's often easier to receive feedback verbally than through Word comments.

- **Be prepared for criticism!**

Example: From co-authors or reviewers. Google how reviewer comments typically look and how to respond. Don't take it personally.

- **Send drafts to co-authors at an early stage so their feedback is helpful.**