

JAAPA

The Art of Medical Writing: Roadmap to Publication

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Learning objectives

- Identify reasons to write for publication
- Discuss what can be learned from JAAPA's author guidelines
- Recognize steps to increase the likelihood of publication

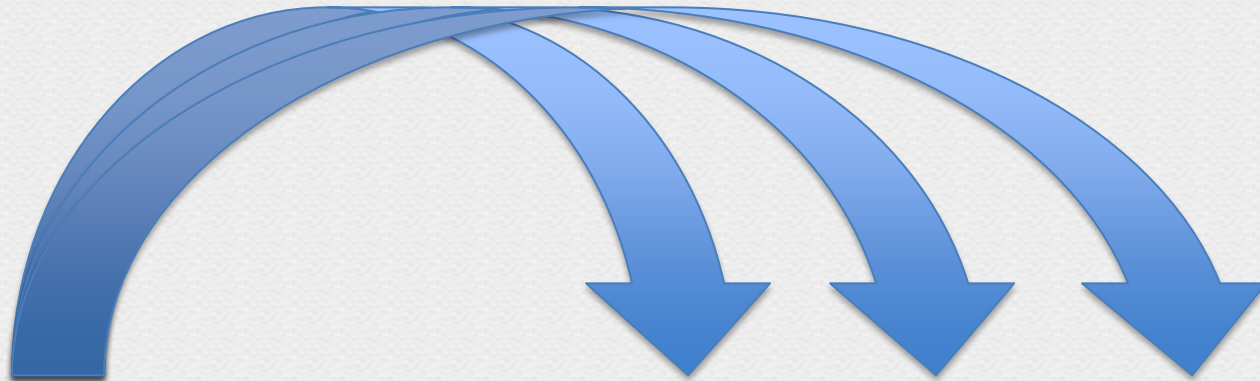
Why write?

- Establish/share expertise
- Improve patient care
- Elevate the PA profession
- Disseminate research findings

Write for IMPACT



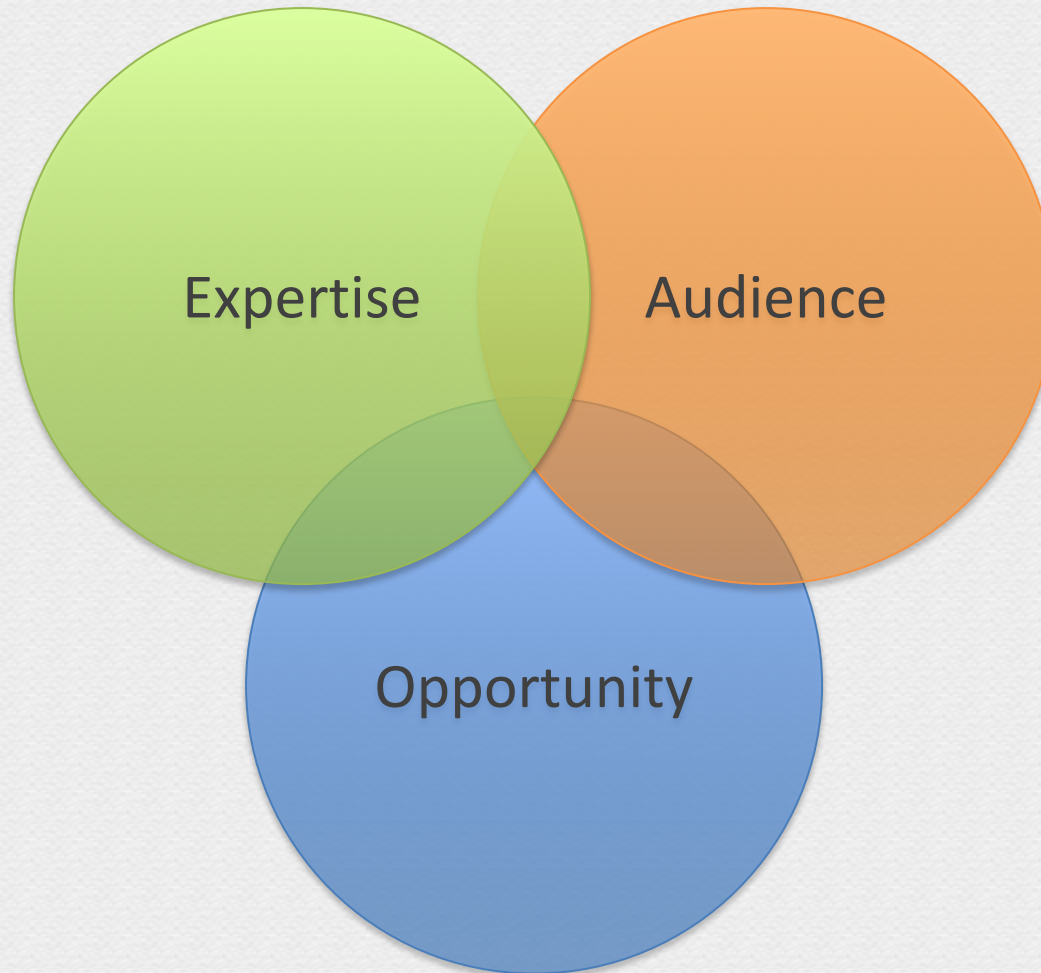
Publication



Impact

Incremental benefit, smaller projects, new opportunities

WHAT DO I WRITE?



10 Steps

1. Identify a problem or need
2. Consider your expertise
3. Consider your audience
4. Narrow your topic
5. Choose your outlet
6. Perform the research
7. Write a thesis statement
8. Plan, then write
9. Revise
10. Finishing touches



Step 1: Identify a problem or need

- A gap in literature
- An unanswered question
- An error to address
- An unwritten perspective



Step 1: Identify a problem or need

Examples

- “Shock is a complex clinical condition with no universal algorithm or system to guide treatment.”
- “PAs may be unaware of recent legislative changes that will affect their practice.”
- “Underrepresentation of marginalized groups is prevalent in the healthcare professions.”

Step 2: Consider your expertise

- Training
- Knowledge/Skills
- Experience
- Perspective



Step 2 Example

- “I am a well-trained clinician with years of experience in critical care who regularly encounters and treats undifferentiated shock.”
- “I have experience with the legislative process and am familiar with the laws that affect PA practice in my state.”
- “I have insight into the experiences of marginalized and underrepresented people in a healthcare profession.”

Step 3: Consider your audience

- Consumer or layperson
- Clinicians
 - Generalist or Specialist?
 - Novice or experienced?
- Scientists or researchers
- Administrators or policy experts

- *A diverse or mixed professional audience?*

Step 3 Example:

- “I will address undifferentiated shock for experienced clinicians in the inpatient setting who do not often encounter shock.”
- “I will address patients and laypeople in Maryland who may be affected by changes in state law.”
- “I will address current and future PA faculty members who make decisions regarding the admissions process to PA school.”

A real world example...

COMMENTARY

Diversity requires an admissions process overhaul

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Step 4: Narrow your topic

- Select a topic that addresses the problem for your audience utilizing your expertise.
- Narrow the topic by adding specific areas of focus. This should decrease the scope and increase the novelty.

Step 4 Example:

- Complications of Liver Failure



- Hepatic Encephalopathy



- Management of Acute Hepatic Encephalopathy



- A Review of the Evidence behind Pharmacologic Management of Acute Hepatic Encephalopathy for Hospitalists

ACTIVITY #1: Finding a Topic

1. Think of a broad healthcare topic or choose one from the list provided
2. Write down a problem and audience relevant to this topic. Consider your own expertise.
3. Add specific elements to make this topic narrow and novel.
4. Write down a final, refined article idea.

ACTIVITY #1: Finding a Topic

Broad topics:

- Atrial Fibrillation
- COPD
- Sexual Health
- PA Billing Issues
- PA Education
- Diversity in Medicine

Step 5: Choose your outlet

- **Medium**: Journal article, blog, podcast, video
- **Format**: Commentary, review, original research
- **Journal**
 - Read the journal
 - Search for similar articles
 - Read author guidelines- consider word count

ACTIVITY #2:

Choosing Article Types

1. Review the *JAAPA* Author Guidelines and consider the different articles types
2. Select an article type that you feel is most appropriate for your focused topic
3. Try to rework the same or similar topic for a new article format

In the *JAAPA* guidelines:

- Descriptions of article types
- Word count and format
- Preparation and submission instructions
- Details on the publishing process

Step 6: Perform the research

- Broad and comprehensive search
- Critical appraisal of literature
- Current, primary sources
- Avoid cherry-picking the answer you want

Activity #3: References

- Review the “References” section of the article provided
- Appraise the value of each reference (primary source, age, reliability, conflict of interest, etc.)
- Decide which references represent good sources and how the others could be improved

Step 7: Write a thesis statement

- Represents your central topic AND your stance on that topic
- Be specific and clear
- Demonstrate the need and novelty

Step 7: Thesis statement examples

- “A simple mental framework can assist unfamiliar clinicians with the management of undifferentiated shock.”
- “Knowledge of state laws affecting medical care can help patients and clinicians take an active role in the legislative process.”
- “Flaws in the PA school admissions process have contributed to a lack of diversity in the profession.”

Step 8: Plan, then write

- Create an outline or working plan
- Understand the limits of word count and audience attention
- “Get it down, then get it good”
 - Avoid perfectionism and editing as you go

ACTIVITY #4: Thesis and Outline

1. Write a thesis statement for your narrow topic.
2. Describe the main (3-5) supporting parts in an outline form.
3. Try to re-organize your supporting points into the most logical flow for your manuscript

Step 9: Revise

- Cut big, then small
- Diction/Syntax: Word choice matters
- Simple fixes: use active voice, cut adverbs, proofread
- Don't be your own/only editor

Activity #5: Revision

1. Examine a “first draft” passage submitted to a medical journal.
2. Edit and revise the passage
 - Delete unnecessary sentences/phrases/words
 - Suggest areas that require clarity
 - Look for active voice and grammatical errors

Activity #5: Revision

Regarding Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), it is a preventable and treatable disorder which is a clinical issue but also a global public health problem, too. Each year, COPD unfortunately kills an estimated 3 million people and is projected to become the 3rd leading cause of death by 2020, worldwide. COPD will be encountered by physician assistants or PAs, in many different clinical specialties, and they should be able to make a diagnosis and management plan. This article will explain just that.

COPD development and progression is affected by several risk factors, and many are modifiable. It is impacted the most by tobacco smoking, though outdoor air pollution and indoor air pollution and occupational exposures also play a big role for some. Clinicians should remember, however, that non-smokers can develop COPD and that non-modifiable factors like genetics and intrinsic airway hyper-responsiveness contribute significantly to the pathogenesis.

146 Words

Activity #5: Revision

~~Regarding~~ Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), ~~it~~ is a preventable and treatable disorder which is a clinical issue but also a global public health problem, ~~too~~. Each year, COPD ~~unfortunately~~ kills an estimated 3 million people and is projected to become the 3rd leading cause of death by 2020, worldwide. COPD **will be encountered by** physician assistants or PAs, in many different clinical specialties, and they should be able to make a diagnosis and management plan. ~~This article will explain just that.~~

COPD development and progression **is affected by** several risk factors, ~~and many are modifiable~~. It **is impacted the most by** tobacco smoking, though outdoor air pollution and indoor air pollution and occupational exposures ~~also play a big role for some~~. ~~Clinicians should remember, however, that~~ non-smokers can develop COPD and that non-modifiable factors like genetics and intrinsic airway hyper-responsiveness contribute **significantly** to the pathogenesis.

Activity #5: Revision

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is a preventable and treatable disorder that represents a clinical challenge and a global public health burden. Each year, COPD kills an estimated 3 million people worldwide and is projected to become the world's 3rd leading cause of death by 2020. Physician assistants (PAs) in a variety of clinical specialties will encounter this disease and should be familiar with its diagnosis and management.

Several modifiable risk factors contribute to COPD development and progression. Tobacco smoking has the highest impact, though outdoor and indoor air pollution and occupational exposures also contribute. However, non-smokers can also develop COPD and non-modifiable factors like genetics and intrinsic airway hyper-responsiveness contribute to the pathogenesis.

114 Words

Step 10: Finishing touches

- Formatting and referencing
- Avoiding plagiarism
- Submission timeline
- Editorial correspondence



Tips from the Editors

- Understand how peer review works
- Inquire before you submit
- Expect to revise/re-submit
- Expect to be edited
- Respond promptly if contacted
- Provide what is requested



Thank You!

Questions?

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