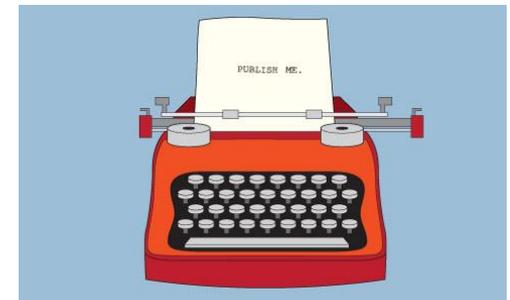


# **How to write a paper** **(for an academic journal)** **Introductory session**

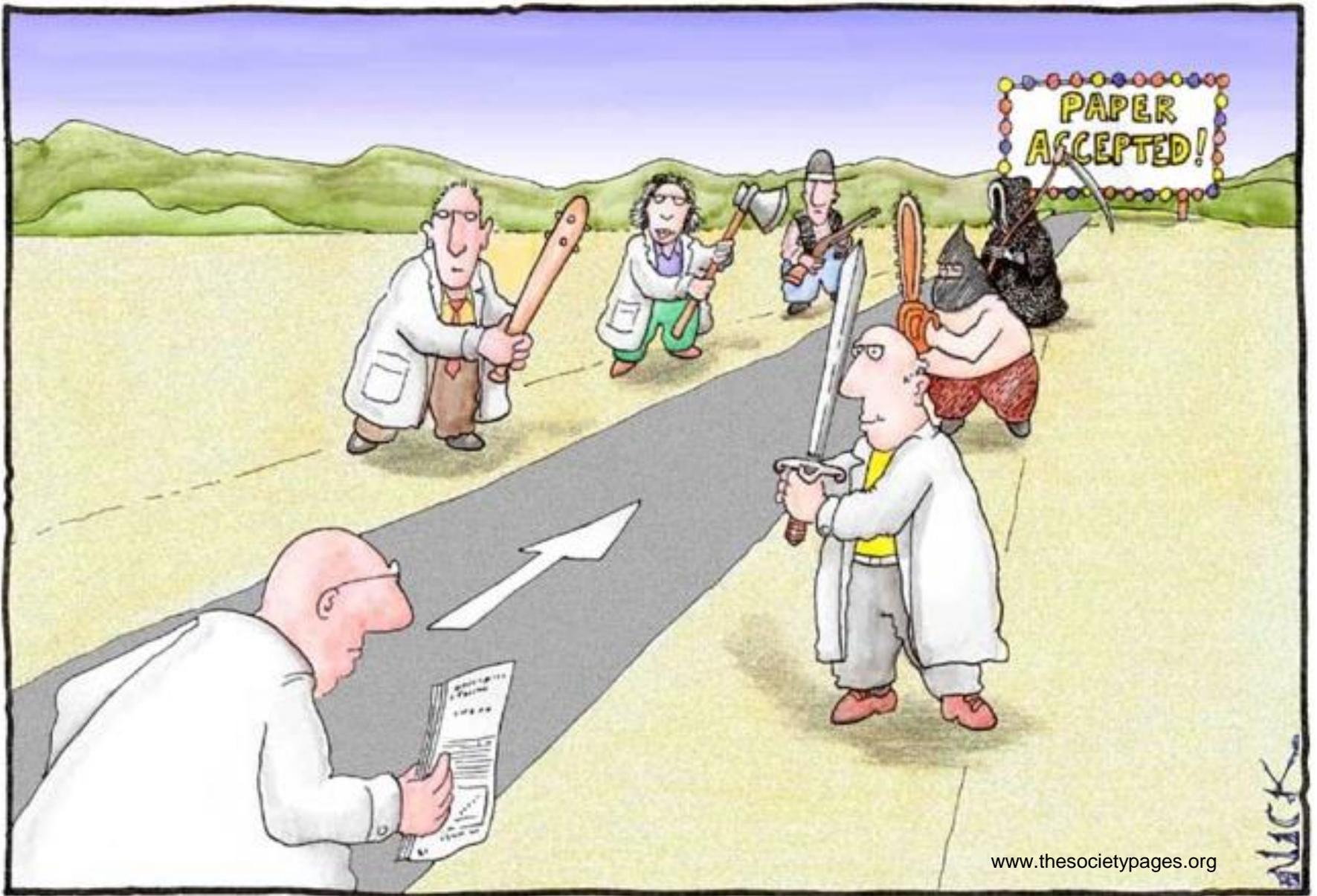
Najma Siddiqi & Trevor Sheldon



With thanks to Dr Jane Dalton- Research Excellence Training Team (RETT) for sharing slides

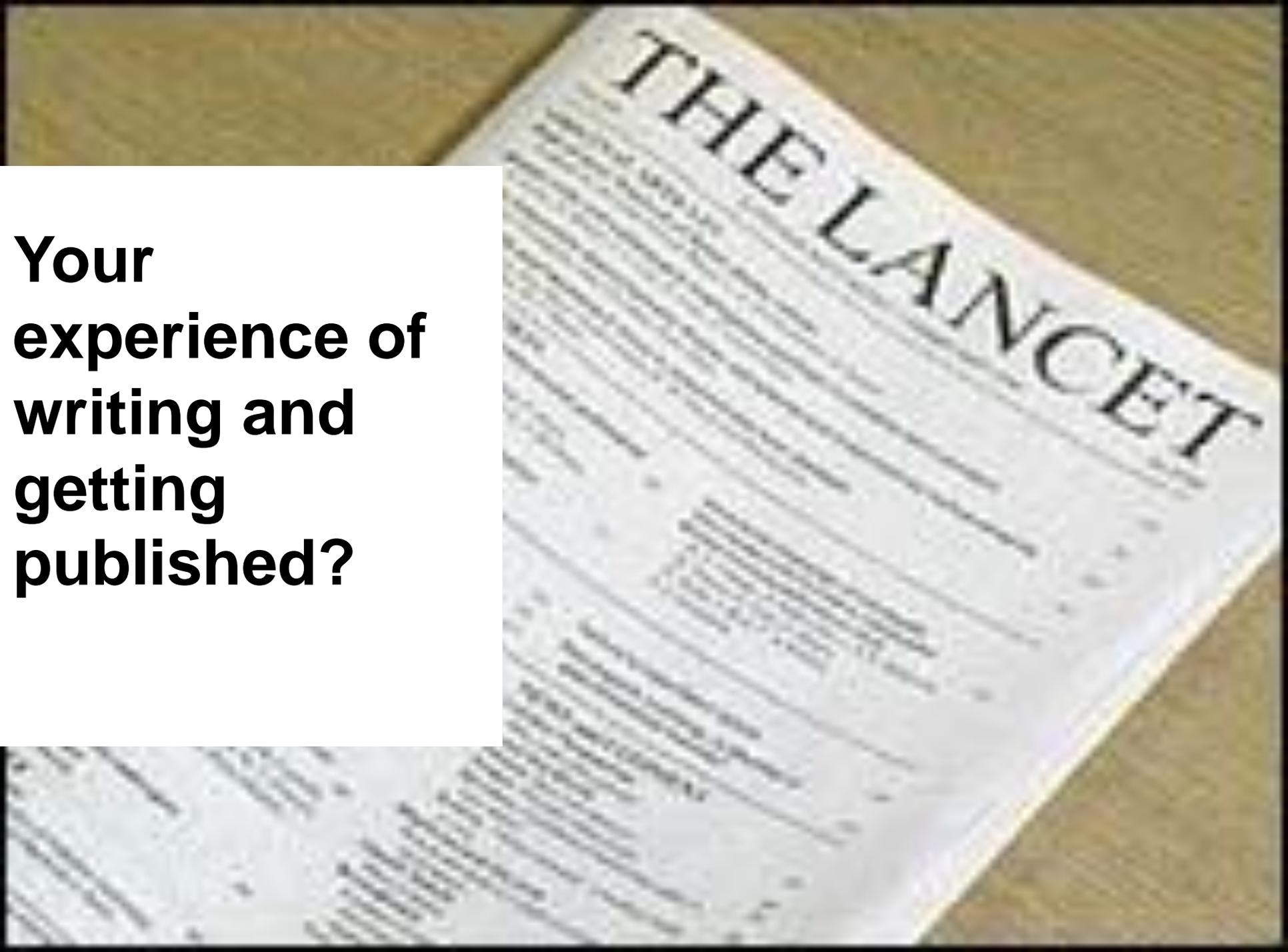
# Outline

- The publishing journey ... a brief introduction
- Structuring an argument for an academic paper
- Programme of support- identifying training needs and structure for programme

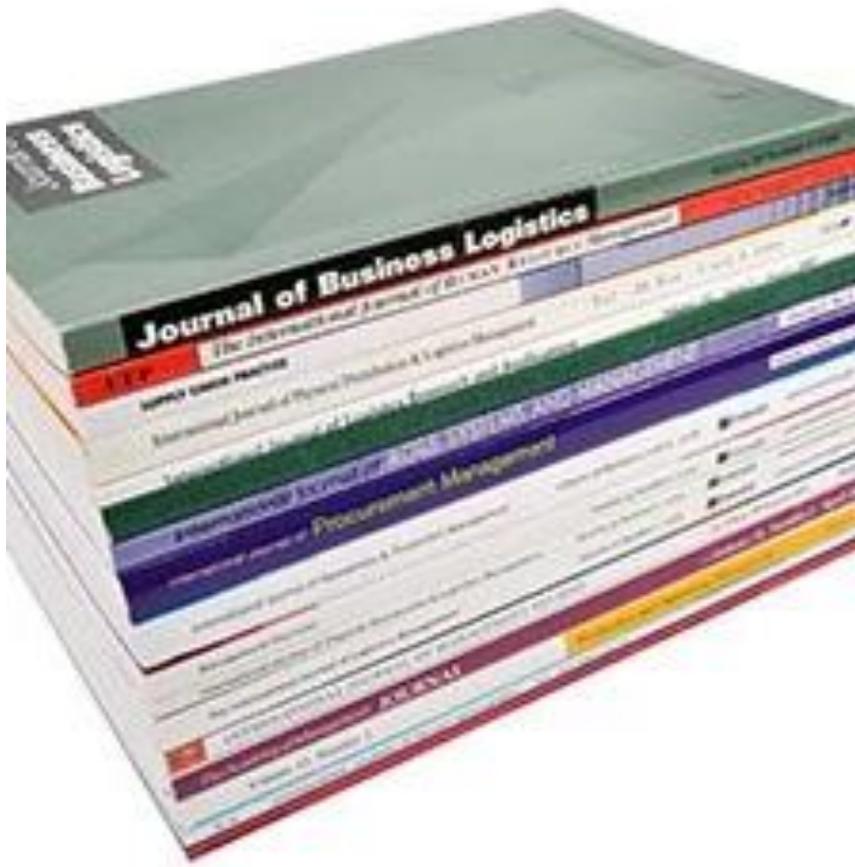


[www.thesocietypages.org](http://www.thesocietypages.org)

**Your  
experience of  
writing and  
getting  
published?**



**THE LANCET**



# CHOOSING WHERE TO PUBLISH

# Choosing a journal...

- Citations of relevant research
- What sorts of contributions/topics are accepted?
- Read several issues of the journal
- Readership?
- Impact factor?
- Open Access?
- Follow journal authors instructions
- Be prepared for it to get rejected!
- Time: 6 months- year at least



Look at the journal's home page on the publisher's website



**ELSEVIER**

**SPRINGER NATURE**

# A paper should answer four key questions:

- Why?
- How?
- What?
- So What?



# REVIEW STRUCTURED SUMMARIES

# Writing Prompts

1. Who are intended readers?
2. What did you do? (50 words)
3. Why did you do it? (50 words)
4. What happened? (50 words)
5. What do results mean in theory? (50 words)
6. What do results mean in practice? (50 words)
7. What is the key benefit for readers (25 words)
8. What remains unresolved? (no word limit)
9. What figures/data/evidence do you need?

# **Writing style:** Follow guide for authors

- Write clearly, logically and sequentially.
- Word length
- Layout/format/headings
- Audience
- Academic style

<http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/>

- Cite relevant previous work respectfully
- References

# Clarity and simplicity

- Think about it from the point of view of the reader
- Place key statements at the beginning of a paragraph
- Aim for paragraphs 5–7 sentences long
- Choose figures/tables with care
- Limit the use of acronyms, or define them
- Select references with care
- Have the manuscript critiqued before submission.

# Being clear in Tables and Figures

- Include only what is necessary
- Refer to all figures, tables
- Number all figures, tables
- Explain, carefully, all terms used
- Caption each figure and table
- Explain all the lines and symbols in figures

# Common reasons for immediately rejecting a manuscript:

1. Author guidelines not followed
2. Not thorough
3. Title of manuscript
4. Bad writing: clarity and style
5. Subject of little interest to readers
6. Nothing sufficiently original
7. Poor statistics, tables, figures
8. Written at the wrong level

# What are referees looking for?

- Is the research sufficiently novel?
- Are the results significant enough?
- Is the research reported timely?
- Is the paper likely to be of interest to the journal's readership?
- Is the paper written in a clear and concise style?
- Is the methodology clear and valid?

# Check out some “How to...” guides for authors



[http://www.emeraldinsight.com/authors/  
guides/write/index.htm](http://www.emeraldinsight.com/authors/guides/write/index.htm)

# Related resources

- Writing and Language Skills Centre

<https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/support/writing/>

- Royal Literary Fund Fellows

<http://www.york.ac.uk/english/newsevents/news/royalliteraryfundwritingfellows/>

- Open Access Training - Library

- Copyright- Library guide

<http://subjectguides.york.ac.uk/copyright/welcome>

## Extra links that maybe of interest:

**Interesting articles that cover the peer-review process:**

<http://editorresources.taylorandfrancisgroup.com/category/peer-review/>

**Guide to reviewers on how to give feedback:**

<http://editorresources.taylorandfrancisgroup.com/reviewers-guidelines-and-best-practice/>

**How to write a scientific paper:**

<https://www.ease.org.uk/publications/ease-toolkit-authors/how-to-write-a-scientific-paper-for-peer-reviewed-journals/>