

Practical rules for writing papers in the MMB lab (in no particular order and with some redundancy)

1. software - pages preferred, word accepted, google docs accepted
2. always use track changes when making revisions - it makes it much easier to review changes - **manuscripts not using track changes have a tendency to go the bottom of my review pile**
3. read Senturia's "how to avoid the reviewers axe," and then read it again before you start work on the next paper
4. the introduction is the most important part of the paper - think carefully about how you intend to "sell" the paper and make sure the introduction clearly maps out the specific scope and sell for the paper in the context of related work
5. the next most important part of the paper is the figures - make sure they are clear (and beautiful is helpful) with descriptive, self explanatory captions
6. at every level of the paper (whole, section, paragraph) follow the tell em what you are going to tell them, tell em, tell em what you told em
7. avoid pronouns - this is one of my pet peeves and for good reason as the use of pronouns leads to confusion - search & destroy all (or at least almost all) pronouns
8. focus - what is the main point of the paper? stay focused on that - don't try to make too many points in a single paper
9. when you send me a manuscript to edit and you are not using pages/keynote, please send in both doc/ppt and PDF formats (then if the formatting gets screwed up in conversion to pages I can still see what it was supposed to look like)
10. when manuscript is submitted, send me (and Alice and upload to Google Drive in submitted manuscripts) the final version in pages or word format, in PDF format and the figures as individual files in JPEG or TIFF format.
11. when manuscript is submitted, double check the following a) have you included all appropriate authors, b) have you listed appropriate funding sources in acknowledgements, c) have all authors with conflicts of interest state them, d) listed all approvals (IRB, biosafety) that apply
12. specific instructions for complying with NIH manuscript process are here:
<http://publicaccess.nih.gov/>
13. when responding to reviewers comments - remember the "reviewer" is the "customer" and they are always right; - whenever possible for each reviewer comment you want to say "we agree" and the very explicitly state and show what you changed
14. upload to Google drive both the final, accepted, unformatted version and the pdf of the manuscript in "Submitted, Approved Manuscripts w/o formatting" and "manuscript pdfs"