Write like a Winner: Working with the Office of Scientific Writing to Improve Your Proposals and Manuscripts

Hot Topics in Research
April 25, 2017

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Director, Office of Scientific Writing
Agenda for this Hot Topics session

- Introduction to the Office of Scientific Writing
- The process of working with OSW
- Other resources from OSW in the near future
- Your ideas & suggestions
- Short break
- Exercise: Readability Statistics to improve clarity in your writing

Twitter hashtag => #writingatuthsc

Questions before we get started?
Introduction to the OSW

Staff:

Rich Redfearn, PhD
- Organic chemist with biochemistry knowledge
- Rhodes College, Assoc. Prof.; University of Arkansas, Grant Training Manager (Office of Sponsored Programs)

Patti Smith, MPH
- Writer with journalism, NPO management, community health experience
- Healthy Shelby, interim Director; Community Foundation of Greater Memphis, VP; Commercial Appeal, reporter

Website: look for us on the Office of Research page…

http://www.uthsc.edu/research/scientific-writing/

Research Offices and Resources
OSW process for editing your work

1. Contact Scientific Writer (RR or PS) regarding a submission of a proposal or manuscript.
2. We will advise whether a Copy Editing or Scientific Writing request is indicated.
3. Submit the appropriate request form with the first draft of your proposal or manuscript.
4. We will negotiate a delivery date for returning a marked-up copy of your proposal or manuscript back to you.
5. Delivery of your markup - and request for a performance evaluation - will occur on or before the agreed date.

Due to the anticipated high demand for services, we require a two-week lead time for scientific writing assistance, prior to the internal submission deadline set by the Office of Grants and Research Agreements. – from OSW website.
OSW services: two ways to view the benefits

Copy Editing vs. Scientific Writing editing…

• “Copy Editing” will correct errors in spelling, grammar, and standard English usage.
• ”Scientific Writing” editing will also deliver copy editing, but also suggest revisions for clarity & enhanced persuasion.

Grant proposal vs. manuscript editing…

• Editing proposals is more time-bound…we will try to provide fast turnaround, depending on workload.
• Editing manuscripts is usually not against a deadline, but will almost always involve “scientific writing” editing.
Other Resources....

Writing winning proposals:
• Sample NIH proposals (NIAID)
• “The Buck Starts Here” – 2005 CHE article (KM Markin)
• “How Your Grant Proposal Compares” – 2009 CHE article (DA Stone)
• BioScience Writers – NIH Grant Applications: Specific Aims

Publishing your manuscript:
• “Becoming a Successful Principal Investigator” – 2010 CHE article (DA Stone)
• “How to Write a Scientific Masterpiece” - 2010 JCI article (US Neill)
• “Publishing Your Manuscript” – Slide deck from SR Goodman (download from OSW site)
Print Resources: OSW will establish a lending library

Examples:

- *The Elements of Style* - Strunk and White
- *The Art of Styling Sentences* - Longknife and Sullivan
- *Grant Seeking in Higher Education* - Licklider, et al.
“No amount of grantsmanship will turn a bad idea into a good one…
…but there are many ways to disguise a good idea.”

Dr. William F. Raub, past Deputy Director for Extramural Research and Training, NIH
Final slide before a fun active learning exercise – how can OSW help YOU?

Questions…?

Ideas…?

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