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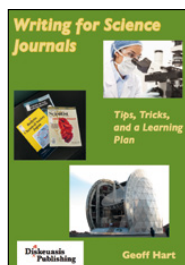
Tips, Tricks, and a Learning Plan

By **Geoff Hart**

Diaskeuasis Publishing (2014), Printed version: 422 pages. ISBN 978-1-927972-01-4.

PDF version: 635 pages ISBN 978-1-927972-03-8, EPUB version: 635 pages on iPad Air. ISBN 978-1-927972-02-1.

Reviewed by **Jean Rollinson MISTC**.



"An interesting read if you're actually planning to submit an article to a scientific journal."

Having edited articles for science journals as a part-time job for about 10 years, I found this a very interesting read. I was also impressed by how often the author said that this book is based on his experience but that science journals vary considerably in their requirements so it is always best to check (and double check) what they want from you. I absolutely agree with this, as science journal style guides can be very different in not only how they want articles submitted but also the language, styles, layout, length of abstract and (most important for the copyeditor) references.

The book has 24 relatively short chapters that cover all of the main parts of an article and the steps required to get from first draft to publication. In addition, the opening chapters cover the author's background and experience, ethics,

choosing a journal for your article and advice on using your word processor efficiently. The last of which is, I think, an essential read for most academics (but equally, I suspect most of them would skip it).

The tone of the book is conversational, with the author addressing the reader directly. I quite like this informality and it suits the material, as it doesn't feel as if the author is lecturing or talking down to you.

Having said that, I didn't find anything in the book that was particularly useful to me as a seasoned technical communicator. A lot of the advice seemed to me like common sense and things that I would do anyway such as setting out a structure, writing an outline and so on. The parts that were aimed specifically at scientific papers don't apply at all to technical writing, for example planning your experiments and making sure your data is reproducible. Although I suppose you could extend that to mean ensuring that you have all the information you require to write a document, that it is correct and complete and that all your SMEs agree. However, in my experience this would fall in to the 'peer review' stage of the process as you only normally

find out about missing information and disagreements when a document is reviewed.

In summary, I would say this is an interesting read in itself, but you probably don't need a copy unless you are actually planning to submit an article to a scientific journal. But that's fine, because that is what the book is for. And I do wish it had been available when I was doing academic copyediting, as I would definitely have recommended that most of the academics I worked with should have bought a copy.

Rating:

Well-written book: ★★★★★

Relevance to a technical communicator: ★★☆☆☆

About the author:

Geoff Hart is an experienced writer, editor and technical communicator. In his career, he has helped authors publish over 6000 articles and monographs in peer-reviewed journals. In addition to his editing work, Geoff also works as a translator and technical writer.

W: www.geoff-hart.com/books/journals/journal-book.htm



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