

## Tips for Authors (especially those who are not native English speakers)

### Write well

- Apply guidelines for good writing, e.g. Strunk: The elements of style <<http://www.bartleby.com/141/index.html>>.
- Let experienced authors criticise your text.

### Write in English

- Write directly in English. Do not translate from your mother tongue, because different languages use different phraseology. Distrust translation machines.
- Make intensive use of a dictionary (in both directions, e.g. German-English and English-German) and an English thesaurus.
- Let a (near-) native speaker, with expertise in grammar and spelling, check your text.

### Write clearly

- Avoid vague and non-specific words. Remember that every term must have an exact meaning.
- Define important terms (such as mire, bog, rich, eutrophic...).
- Use one term for one concept and avoid synonyms.
- Use *would*, *should*, *could*, *may*, *might* and *can* only for expressing real uncertainty.
- Use definite, simple language and avoid abbreviations.
- Use sentences connected by *and*, *but*, *who*, *which*, *when*, *where*, and *while* only occasionally.
- Make text in Figures large enough to be readable even after reduction.

### Write concisely

- Make definite assertions; avoid tame, colourless, hesitant and ambiguous language.
- Omit needless words.
- Use the active voice.
- Use positive form, even for negative statements; e.g. "we ignored" rather than "we did not pay attention to".
- Wherever possible, present a complex idea in one sentence rather than in a series of sentences.
- Use Tables and Figures to structure and simplify the paper.
- Keep the text clear, but avoid 'telegram style'.

### Write paragraphs

- Deal with each topic in a separate paragraph.
- Start every paragraph with a sentence that either indicates the topic or provides a transition from the last paragraph.
- Present paragraphs in a logical order.

### Write modestly

- Avoid awkward adverbs and fancy words.
- Use nouns and verbs in preference to adjectives and adverbs.
- Use orthodox (non-experimental) English spelling.
- Avoid qualifiers like *unique*, *most optimal* (!), *rather*, *very*, *little*, *relatively*, *pretty*, *so*.
- Avoid exclamation marks.

### Refer correctly

- Use *cf.* (Latin *confer*, compare) when quoting indirectly.
- Use *modified from* to indicate Figures or Tables that have been modified from other publications.
- Use *after* when presenting data from another publication in a different form.
- Include all cited references, with complete bibliographic data, in the Reference List.

### Follow the standard outline

- 1) Title of paper; this should give a concise indication of the content.
- 2) Name, institutional and contact address of author(s).
- 3) Summary: gives a short overview of the content of the paper.
- 4) Keywords (up to 5): do not repeat words that appear in the paper's title.
- 5) Introduction: contains the background to and the formulation of the research question, and ends with a concise statement of the purpose of the paper.
- 6) Materials and methods: what was done; should include a description of any field area where the research was carried out.
- 7) Results: presents the results in an objective way, without discussion.
- 8) Discussion: discusses the results and their interpretation in the context of other research.
- 9) Conclusion: answers the research question.
- 10) Acknowledgements
- 11) References