

Writing for professional publication.

Part 12: summary of the series

John Fowler



Over the past six months, this series has examined the process of professional publication. The articles are listed below.

If this was the *Desert Island Discs* radio programme, I would spend a few minutes telling you why I chose each piece of music and why it played a significant part in my life. If you apply the *Desert Island Discs* idea to this series, I would say how each topic has been written from my experience of over 30 years of writing articles, books and conference presentations and supporting others to do the same.

Each article can easily be read in five minutes. If writing for publication is an ambition of yours, make time to read them.

Part 1: Motivation

Work out why you want to publish an article. There are many reasons, all valid. If you are not truly motivated, the hard work and the setbacks will soon make you give up.

Fowler (2010) 19(16): 1026

Part 2: Subject matter

Write about a topic that you understand or that you have an opinion on. If you are a student or junior staff nurse, that is your area of expertise. You do not have to be a clinical nurse specialist before you can write for publication.

Fowler (2010) 19(17): 1121

Part 3: Following journal guidelines

All journals publish guidelines on publication. Make sure you read and follow them.

Fowler (2010) 19(19): 1260

Dr John Fowler published his first article as a staff nurse 30 years ago. He has written more than 50 articles and edited seven textbooks. He has supported over 40 nurses in writing for publication.

Abstract

The previous articles in this series have explored the practical issues of writing for professional publication. In this final article, John Fowler, an experienced nursing lecturer and author, summarises the series and presents an overview of the practicalities of writing for publication.

Keywords: Writing ■ Publication ■ Motivation ■ Professional development

Part 4: Supporting your statements

There are different ways to support the content of your article. These range from clinical experience and best practice guidelines to randomized controlled trials. Understand the difference and write accordingly.

Fowler (2010) 19(21): 1374

Part 5: Creating interest

It's all very well writing a learned article but, if no one reads it, what is its use? An interesting title, diagram or picture will attract interest.

Fowler (2011) 10(1): 49

Part 6: Writing the abstract

What is the structure and purpose of an abstract? There are definite rules in writing an abstract. Do not leave this to the last minute and just write a quick summary.

Fowler (2011) 20(2): 120

Part 7: Structure and presentation

It is important to have a logical structure and plan before you begin to write.

Fowler (2011) 20(3): 190

Part 8: Targeting the right journal

There are numerous journals on the market. A little research will help you write your article to meet their requirements and submit it to the journal most likely to accept it.

Fowler (2011) 20(4): 254

Part 9: Client case studies

Client case studies are interesting to read and can be written by all levels of nurses.

Fowler (2011) 20(5): 330

Part 10: Project reports

These require a different style of writing, and are an important way of communicating certain aspects of nursing and operational management.

Fowler (2011) 20(6): 371

Part 11: Conference abstracts

A successful conference abstract results in you being invited to present your work at the conference. This is an extremely important way of publishing and sharing your work and ideas.

Fowler (2011) 20(7): 451

If we were still on the writing for publication equivalent of *Desert Island Discs*, I would now tell you which of the above was the most important.

The answer is the first – motivation. If you really want something and are prepared to work for it, then I'm sure you will achieve it. I have seen many nurses not achieve their goals or ambitions because they lacked motivation.

Motivation is important, and not just in publication. It provides energy and focus. Without it, many nurses become worn out and burnt out. Motivation is an essential element of achieving your ambitions. There are others—but that's another series. Watch this column.

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