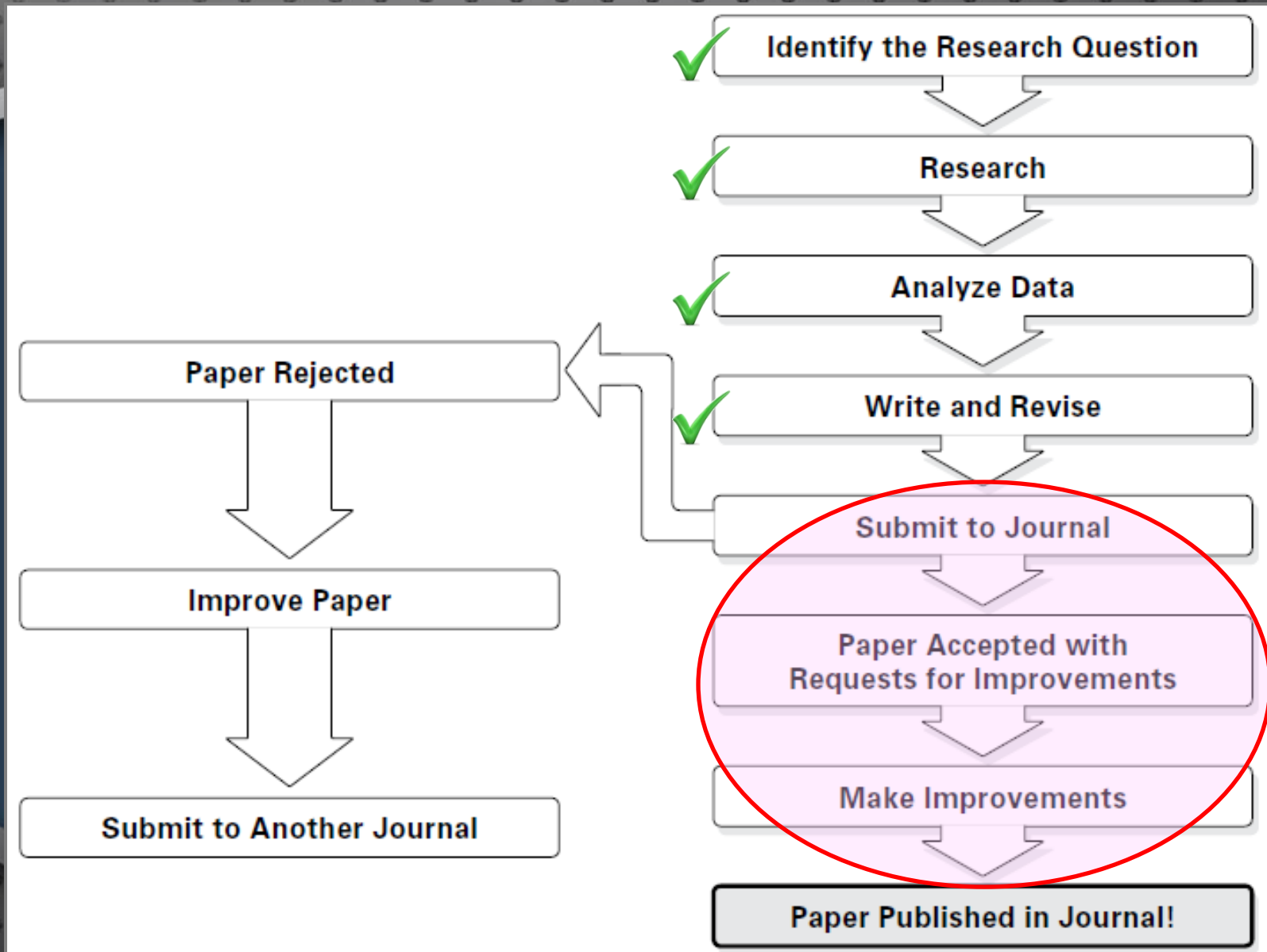




Writing for publication; A retrospective view

Dr. Mohamed Abdel-Galil

The process at a glance



Behind the Scenes: Peer-review process



The editorial office

- The office screens the manuscript for:
 - Paper format.
 - Section titles.
 - Paper flow.
 - Word and file-size limits.
 - Completeness of all required sections .
 - e.g. research highlights, graphical abstract, reviewers list.
 - Reference format.
 - **Plagiarism??!**

The editor in-chief

- Very Busy, Big Shot, Famous name...etc
- Used to read the abstract, now reads the research highlights, sometimes only the title.
- Mainly distributes the manuscripts to the assistant editors according to their field of expertise, contracts, geographical areas, rejection %.
- Keeps the "easy ones" for himself!!
- Sometimes you have the right to avoid certain assistant editors or you are always allowed to write to the editor in-chief about any conflict of interests with one of his assistants.

Decision Letter (es-2011-02572t)

From: est@uu.nl

To: [redacted]

CC: est@uu.nl, est@uiowa

Subject: Final decision on ES-2011-02572t

Body: 28-Jul-2011

What am I gonna do?!

Revise & Resubmit

Journal: Environmental Science & Technology

Manuscript ID: [redacted]

Title: [redacted]

Author(s): [redacted]

Dear Dr. [redacted]



Thank you for considering Environmental Science & Technology for your manuscript submission. After careful consideration, I regret to inform you that the manuscript cannot be accepted for publication in ES&T.

Although the topic of the manuscript is interesting, the presentation of the data has some weaknesses. All data in tables and figures in the manuscript are presented as average values without an indication of the variability in the data. Without information of the standard error or standard deviation in these numbers and without statistical testing, the validity of the conclusions is highly uncertain.

If further analysis, and revisions allow you to address these concerns in full I would be happy to consider a revised manuscript within 180 days that included such data and analysis (assuming no related data is published in the interim). If you do choose to revise and resubmit the manuscript, please refer to the original submission in your cover letter and provide a detailed, point-by-point response to the reviewer comments.

The Editor (Phase 1)

Ms. Ref. No.: TAL-D-12-03080

Title: [REDACTED]

Talanta

Dear Dr. [REDACTED]

We have received expert re
cannot accept the paper for
We receive many more man

acceptance with revision, we must make editorial decisions on which we can proceed with,
based on numbers of manuscripts received and using established guidelines of novelty,
substantial improvements in existing technology, demonstrated applicability, etc. Please see our
Aims and Scope for more details. Many of the papers we are unable to accept represent sound
studies, and may in fact be well suited for more focused applications journals.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to consider your work.

Yours sincerely,

Yep! Sounds like
a REJECTION



[REDACTED] regret that based on the evaluation, we

Although referees may suggest

The Editor (Phase 1)

- Distributes the manuscript to the reviewers (peers)
 - From the Journal database (using your keywords).
 - At least one from your suggested reviewer's list.
 - From the reference list.
 - From his own contacts.
 - At least 2 peers are required (usually 5 are contacted).
- Note : You always have the right to avoid a certain peer.

The Reviewer

The aims are not clear. The authors are trying to make a case for their study throughout the introduction but I find it quite confusing. It's evident that the 6 main enantiomers of HBCDs have been adequately base-line separated using different chromatographic systems [1-4]. Corrections to the EFs by Marvin's group [5] managed to account for matrix-related effects in the ESI ion source. Several authors

of the article. 1 = Meaningful; 2 = Not Meaningful; 3 = Not Provided. For more information, see www.elsevier.com/highlights.

There is no evident improvement of the proposed methodology over the methods reported in literature. The same chiral column is being used and the same solvents are

2. Is, in your opinion, the paper clearly presented and well organized? YES

As a net result, it seems that a complicated and time-consuming method is being proposed to achieve a certain aim that can be reached with far more simple and quick methods.

Please note that your recommendation and reviewer report are expected to cover the Highlights and Graphical Abstract if submitted with the manuscript.

Comments:

The Reviewer

Table 3 Issues of manuscripts to assess during the review process and questions to address them (adapted from references 33, 39)

Importance of the research question	The reviewer's knowledge of the field is central for judging the importance of the question. However, when the topic of the study is too close to the reviewer's own research special attention is necessary. Is your personal interest in the topic weighting too much on your judgment?
Originality of the work	Do use bibliographic searches and systematic reviews on topics related to the manuscript to assess originality. What is new in this manuscript? The question? Any methods? Does the data shed light to a pending controversy?
Relevance for the journals' readers	Put yourself on the role of the Editor: would the readers of this particular Journal be interested in this paper?
Usefulness for medical practice, teaching and science	A paper may be used to inform clinical decisions, for teaching purposes and for improving scientific knowledge. How useful will this manuscript be for each of these purposes?
Strengths and weaknesses (content, methodological, ethical)	How accurate and complete are the contents of the paper? Are the methods used able to answer the study question? What are the limitations of the study methods? Did the authors follow the research ethical principles and practices applicable to the study?
Validity of results and adequacy of its interpretation	Did the study methods and the way it was carried out ensure the quality of the results? Are there methodological checklist/guidelines that can help in assess the validity of the study? Do the authors' conclusions match the results observed and the aims described?
Clarity of the paper - structured, interesting writing and good, relevant tables and figures	Is the paper well structured? What about each paragraph? Is the writing style direct and appealing? The authors have chosen the best format (text, table, or figure) for the data presented? Are there too many (or irrelevant) tables or figures?
Suitability for publication	Considering all the various issues, is the manuscript quality adequate for scientific publication?

The Reviewer



Paper Review Worksheet

Stuck reviewing papers for your advisor? Just add up the points using this helpful grade sheet to determine your recommendation.

No reading necessary!

Paper title uses witty pun, colon or begins with "On..." (+10 pt)	
Paper has pretty graphics and/or 3D plots (+10 pt)	
Paper has lots of equations (+10 pt) (add +5 if they look like gibberish to you)	
Author is a labmate (+10 pt)	
Author is on your thesis committee (+60 pt)	
Paper is on same topic as your thesis (-30 pt)	
Paper cites your work (+20 pt)	
Paper scooped your results (-1000 pt)	
TOTAL	

Points	Recommendation
< 0	Recommend, but write scathing review that'll take them months to rebuff.
0-120	Recommend, but insist your work be cited more prominently.
>120	Recommended and deserving of an award

Replying to Reviewer comments (Top Tips)

- Don't be disheartened/ Don't take it personal.
- Put it aside for a couple of days.
- Avoid annoying the editor. if you don't agree with some of the points raised, **politely** say why you don't agree and give appropriate reasoning.
- Be objective. Don't try to reply to the person of the reviewer –*even if u managed to identify his character.*
Remember , the manuscript may be sent back to him.
- Oblige to all formatting/tying corrections.
- Make use of the wider community available to you.

Replying to Reviewer comments

ADDRESSING REVIEWER COMMENTS

BAD REVIEWS ON YOUR PAPER? FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES AND YOU MAY YET GET IT PAST THE EDITOR:

Reviewer comment:

"The method/device/paradigm the authors propose is clearly wrong."

How NOT to respond:

✗ "Yes, we know. We thought we could still get a paper out of it. Sorry."

Correct response:

✓ "The reviewer raises an interesting concern. However, as the focus of this work is exploratory and not performance-based, validation was not found to be of critical importance to the contribution of the paper."

Reviewer comment:

"The authors fail to reference the work of Smith et al., who solved the same problem 20 years ago."

How NOT to respond:

✗ "Huh. We didn't think anybody had read that. Actually, their solution is better than ours."

Correct response:

✓ "The reviewer raises an interesting concern. However, our work is based on completely different first principles (we use different variable names), and has a much more attractive graphical user interface."

Reviewer comment:

"This paper is poorly written and scientifically unsound. I do not recommend it for publication."

How NOT to respond:

✗ "You #&@*% reviewer! I know who you are! I'm gonna get you when it's my turn to review!"

Correct response:

✓ "The reviewer raises an interesting concern. However, we feel the reviewer did not fully comprehend the scope of the work, and misjudged the results based on incorrect assumptions."

www.phdcomics.com

Replying to Reviewer comments (Useful phrases)

- First, we would like to thank all the reviewers for their valuable and constructive comments. We will below address each comment separately .
- This is a valid point. However, it's very difficult to address in practice due to.....
- While the reviewer's comment is pertinent, we believe this part to be outside the scope of the current manuscript under the given word count regulations. The reader is referred to a recent review for further information.
- With all due respect, we disagree with the reviewer's opinion because...

Reviewer Decision

Decision	What it really means?
Accept, no revision required	U r a blooming GENIOUS!!
Minor corrections required	>75% success. Revised version will only be checked by the editor.
Major corrections required	40-60% success. Revised version will be sent to reviewer(s).
Revise and resubmit/reconsider after major revision	<25% success. Outcome in doubt. U have a good thing but needs a lot of work.
Reject	Find another journal!!

The Editor (Phase 2)

Journal: Environmental Science & Technology

Manuscript ID: es-2010-02490s

Title: " [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear Dr. [REDACTED]

Thank you for considering Environmental Science & Technology for your manuscript submission. It has been forwarded to reviewers for their consideration, and the reviews are enclosed. After careful consideration, I regret to inform you that the manuscript cannot be accepted for publication in ES&T.

Your manuscript received two reviews from peers. Both Reviewers question the novelty/originality of the work. ES&T highly values originality and novelty and while the work may be quite sound, the originality/novelty of the work is insufficient to warrant publication in ES&T given this existing literature.

The Editor

- The

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General structure of a scientific paper

- **Introduction**

- Setting and context: Why this work is important? necessary? interesting? timely?
- Background: what available research/expert opinion says?
- Rationale: Identify a research gap, pose a research question and/or present your hypothesis.
- Aims and objectives.

- **Materials & Methods**

- What materials did u use and where did u get them.
- Brief description of methodology and techniques applied
- Statistical treatment of data.

General structure of a scientific paper

- **Results & Discussion**

- A clear distinction between results and discussion. Results go first!!
- Compare your data to previous research in your area and place them within the general context of the current state-of-the art.
- Stress the advances, improvements and or additions provided by your study to your field of research.

- **Tables and figures**

- Clear, self-indicating, pertinent, illustrative and ELEGANT.

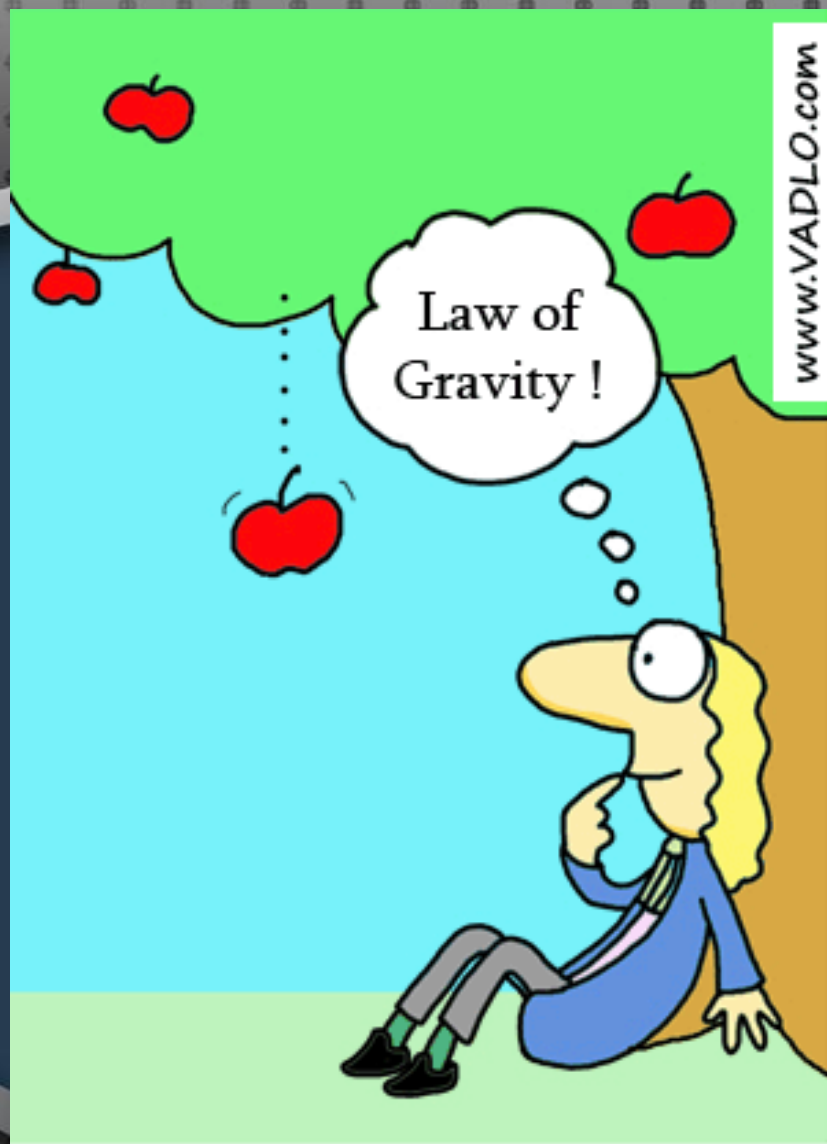
Note: The abstract should be summarizing the main aim of the work, highlight the methodology and present the major outcomes of the proposed research.

How to choose a journal?

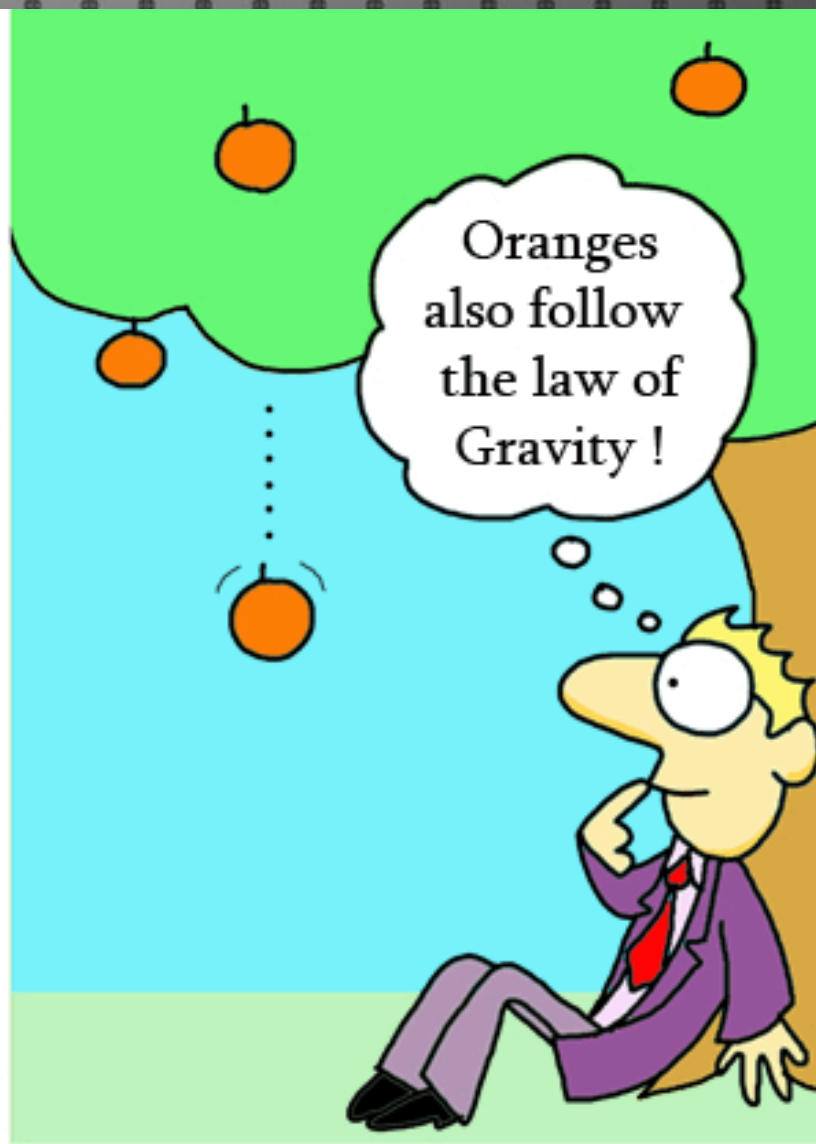
- Your Work!! (Novelty, Innovation, technical quality)
- Impact factor is not everything!!
- Speed of publication.
- Restricted or open access.
- Check the aims and scope of a range of journals, to see where your article would fit best.
- If your research is very specialized, aim for a specialist journal rather than one intended for a general research audience.

How to choose a journal?

- Check the affiliations of authors in recent issues and also the affiliations of members of the editorial board. An international journal edited from Asia is likely to be more sympathetic to papers being submitted from the continent.
- If the topic of your paper can only be properly explained by the use of high quality color prints, make sure by inspection that the journal you choose routinely produces color of high quality.



High Impact Paper



Low Impact Paper

Thank you