

Tips on Manuscript Writing for Resident Projects

Begin with the end in mind. Use a tool like [Journal/Author Name Estimator](#) and format your manuscript based on the requirements of the Journal you are submitting to.

Introduction section: Think funnel. Begin broadly with what is known previously. Narrow down to the current gap in care your project is targeting, and how does your project address the existing gap? End this section with a purpose statement. To get started leverage your initial project proposal and literature review performed.

Methods section: Explain your work thoroughly enough so that anyone outside your organization can replicate your work. At a minimum, include project design, setting, participants, intervention, variables collected, outcomes measured, and analysis performed. Consider leveraging figures to explain your intervention such as a timeline. Use subheadings to help with clarity and cross check results with methods to be sure nothing is missed.

Results section: While the most straightforward section to write, a strong results section should have complimentary figures and tables that allow readers to visualize the data. Demographics should be captured in a table and a [CONSORT diagram](#) can assist with showing the flow of participants in the project. Both figures and tables should be able to stand on their own with footnotes and labeling without reading the text. Keep this section free from authorship interpretations and lastly connect the figures and tables within the text to guide readers.

Discussion section: The most difficult section to write and be sure to know what the journal you're submitting to requires. Typically start with your interpretation of your key findings from your primary and secondary outcomes. Go beyond restating your results. Next, a deep dive into the pre-existing literature should be done for the reader to be able to interpret your results. The meat of the discussion should help the reader understand the significance of the results and if they can be extrapolated externally. Afterwards, your critical appraisal of the strengths and limitations should occur. Go beyond surface-level appraisal either by explaining why a strength matters and how a limitation impacts the findings. Finally, this section ends with future directions of the project.

Conclusion section: Keep this simple, generally do not need to summarize the paper as that is the role of an abstract. For the reader what was the main pragmatic takeaway(s) from the project.

General tips: Consider having a person not involved in your project read your manuscript draft before submitting it to a journal. Does it make sense to them, if not, what can be clarified. If you need help, consider finding a writing resource at a local university or pharmacy organization. For example, the Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin provides an [Emerging Writers Course](#) with on-demand modules.