

HOW TO ASSESS THE PROBABILITY OF ACCEPTANCE OF YOUR NEW NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL MANUSCRIPT

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Please do not change the peer-review process. Based on many years of experience with the submission process, I have constructed a scale for authors to assess for themselves the probability of acceptance of a neuropsychological manuscript. Positive scores increase the probability of acceptance and negative scores decrease it. Here I present the six most characteristic items of this scale:

(1) Author's opinion about the scientific value of the manuscript:

of outstanding interest: put -100

of extremely limited interest: +100

A very enthusiastic opinion is sign of author's serious neuropsychological immaturity. On the other hand, when the manuscript is actually ready to be published, the author is always fed up with it. Add a bonus of +10 points if the author finds his/her manuscript deadly boring.

(2) Number of findings:

a lot: -100

one or zero: +100

The referee is generally a very busy person. It is totally inappropriate to ask the referee to comment on a lot of findings. In that case, the response will be: 'paper rather unfocused', 'inflation of type I error', and the like.

(3) Anticipation of the findings:

no: -100

yes: +100

The answer is 'no' in case the findings of the study are awkwardly presented as a surprise. The answer is 'yes' when it is said that the study was specifically planned to test the hypothesis which corresponds to the findings. It is generally possible to say so, even when the author thinks that he/she knows that this is completely false.

(4) The paper is about laterality:

no: -100

yes: +100

In any case, whether or not the paper is on laterality, add a bonus of +10 points if there is a citation of the Edinburgh Handedness Inventory (Oldfield, 1971).

(5) The author personally knows at least one member of the editorial board:

no: -100

yes, after some scientific meeting: 0

yes, after some social event: +100

(6) English checked by a competent person:

no: -100

yes: +100

However, there is a major concern with this last item. Sometimes, the probability of acceptance of the paper greatly increases when, due to awkward English, the referee understands exactly the opposite of what the author intended to say.

REFERENCES

OLDFIELD RC. The assessment and analysis of handedness: The Edinburgh Inventory. *Neuropsychologia*, 9: 97-114, 1971.

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