



TIPS FOR AUTHORS

The Techniques and Technologies Report: A
Little History and Some Hints for Writing One
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The technique report, describing a solution to a particular technical problem in clinical dentistry, has a long and honorable tradition in the history of the profession, dating, in the United States, from at least the mid-1880's. In contrast, health science studies organized around hypothesis testing and statistical analysis only began appearing in the literature in the early 1950's.

As dentistry in the United States emerged as a profession and the first journals appeared—produced by and for dentists—the “techniques and technology” article was clearly the backbone of dental literature—one dentist telling his or her colleagues about a unique approach to a familiar problem. (And yes, there were women dentists even in the mid-1800's, though far fewer than there are today.) Journal articles—mainly about techniques and technologies—and professional meetings where practitioners demonstrated their special techniques and technologies to each other, were the glue that held the profession together.

We include this little history lesson to suggest to readers and writers that the venerable techniques article has a notable history and still merits a careful and clear presentation today. The following are a few suggestions for submissions to the Techniques and Technologies section of the *Journal of Prosthodontics*.

- **Do a literature search** to make sure someone else has not already described your approach.
- **Ask yourself whether you actually plan to write a techniques report or a clinical report** If your manuscript will focus on the presentation and treatment of one particular patient, it is a clinical report. You may use a set of photographs from one particular case to illustrate your techniques report but your words should describe and discuss the technique rather than a specific case.
- In the introductory paragraphs, **briefly discuss any relevant work already published** and identify the ways in which your technique addresses a clinical problem. Tell the reader why your technique is faster or easier or more cost effective or more accurate or more comfortable for the patient; in short, why it is better.
- **Identify materials used**, first generically and then in parentheses, giving the trade name, manufacturer, city, state, and country.
- Present instructions for the technique in a **numbered, step-by-step format**
- **Include high quality, sharp, and detailed illustrations**, crucial in helping the reader to understand the process. When taking photos, make sure that lips and cheeks are fully retracted and that laboratory work is clean and neat. Refer to the illustrations in your listing of the technique's steps.
- Briefly, **compare and contrast** your technique with others and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of your technique.
- Write an **unstructured abstract**
- Reread to make sure your **language is clear and succinct** If you have uncertainties about your use of the English language, find someone with strong English language skills to help with a rewrite.

Following these suggestions should guarantee that your Techniques and Technologies manuscript will receive the careful consideration it deserves.

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