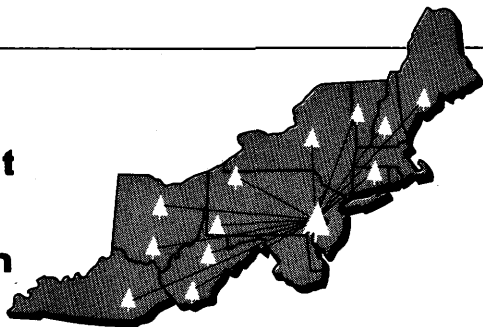


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Northeastern Forest Experiment Station



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A GUIDE FOR AUTHORS OF SYMPOSIUM PAPERS

Abstract.—Suggestions for preparing a symposium paper for publication, including length, general style, manuscript format, and details of handling tables, illustrations, footnotes, literature references, etc. Also suggestions for typing.

GENERAL

Presenting a paper at a symposium is really two jobs for the author: a talk to be given and a paper to be published. Often they are not the same.

First prepare the paper to be published, using as much detail as space allows and the reader needs. Use this as the basis for your talk.

But make your talk a *talk*. Don't hide behind a lectern and put your head down and *read* your paper. Reading makes dull listening. Stand up downstage, like an actor, and make your talk as much of a show as you can.

In your talk you will not need all the details you have in the paper. Hit the highlights. Brighten up your talk with color photo slides or other visuals. You can use many more visual aids in a talk than you can in a printed publication. In a talk you can use a breezier style. You can repeat to put a point across.

This guide has been prepared to help you in preparing the paper for publication. It will also make the job easier for the fellow who has to edit all the papers and put them together for publication.

Timing

Allow plenty of time for writing your paper and getting it reviewed and approved. Be wary about accepting a symposium assignment if the time allowed is too short. Submit your paper before the deadline begins to snap at your heels. Allow as much time as you can for review and editing.

(Note to the symposium committee: Be tough about deadlines. Enforce them. Don't make exceptions. If an author does not submit his paper in time, do not hesitate to cut him out of the proceedings. It isn't fair to the conscientious on-time authors to hold up the proceedings for a few laggards.)

Length

Keep your paper brief and to the point. About 3,000 words is a comfortable length for the reader. A longer paper may tax his attention span.

Also consider the cost. Publication costs about 6¢ a word; so don't be windy: make every word meaningful.

Count the number of words in the text part of your paper, and mark the word count on the title page. In counting words, count articles ("a", "an", "the"), numbers ("2", "10", "12,000"), and abbreviations ("d.b.h.", "p.p.m.") as one word each. Count each element of a compound expression as one word; for example, count "rate-of-value-increase concept" as five words.

Style

Get to the point as quickly as possible. In the first paragraph or two (about 100 words), tell the reader in a general way—no details at all—what the paper is all about, so he can decide at once whether he wants to read the rest.

The reader wants to know what's new about YOUR work. He wants to know what you did, why you did it, what you found out, and what it means. Don't drag in a lot of irrelevant detail about what others have done.

Don't drown the reader with details. Don't try to tell him everything you know: tell him only what he needs to know.

Write in simple, easy, natural English that can be understood by people not trained in your specialty. Avoid jargon. Avoid strings of long words. If you must use technical terms that your readers are not apt to know, define them.

Use active direct sentences. Use first person rather than third ("I" for a single author, "we" for multiple authors).

Where possible, use metric equivalents (meters, etc.) for items expressed in the English system of weights and measures.

Use fairly short paragraphs. Two or three sentences make a comfortable bite-size for the reader. The NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC is a good model for paragraph length.

In details of style—capitalization, abbreviations, spelling, compounding, use of numbers and symbols, headings—be consistent throughout the manuscript. Consult a good general style manual. I recommend the STYLE MANUAL FOR BIOLOGICAL JOURNALS, published by the American Institute of Biological Sciences, 3900 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, Washington, D. C. 20016.

Design

Keep your paper fairly simple. A paper that is loaded with footnotes and literature references and complex tables and illustrations costs more to print, takes longer to edit and publish, and is harder to read. The finished paper should follow this general sequence:

1. Title page. This should contain the author's or agency's mailing address at top left, the date and word count at top right. Put the title of the paper in the upper center of the page; and below it put the author's name, title, affiliation, and location.
2. Text pages. Text only: do NOT insert footnotes or figure legends or other accessory parts in the text.
3. List of literature references (separate page).
4. List of figure captions (separate page).
5. List of footnotes, if any (separate page).
6. Tables, each on a separate page.
7. Any other accessory parts such as acknowledgments or credits.
8. Envelope containing illustrations, if any.

9. Abstract (separate page). An abstract, 50 to 100 words long, should accompany each paper. This abstract should tell in a general way what the paper is all about and the significance of it. Use only essential details.

Designing and packaging your paper this way will make the jobs of editing and printing easier and will speed publication.

DETAILS

Headings

A reasonably short paper (say 12 pages) should need only three or four simple subheads. If all subheads are of the same rank, use center heads, this way:

CENTER HEAD

If you need more than one rank of subheads, use side heads for the second rank, this way:

Side Head

Paragraph heads.--Paragraph heads can also be used. This is an example of the form for a paragraph head.

References

In general, do not overload your paper with references to what other people have done: this detracts from YOUR story. Use only essential references when you must discuss the work of others. *Do not cite unpublished works.*

You do not need to mention everything you have read on the subject. Your list of references shows that you know the literature. In fact, if you have five or more references on one point, you may assume that it is common knowledge and that no literature reference is needed.

Use the author-date method of citing literature references in the text. For example:

...and in Vermont, Blue (1963) found...

or

...some successes have been reported
(Blum 1963).

List all references—even if you have only one or two—at the end of the text, in alphabetical order by authors, in this style:

Chapman, H. H.

1922. A NEW HYBRID PINE.

J. Forest. 20: 729-734, illus.

Dorman, Keith W., and John C. Barber.

1956. TIME OF FLOWERING AND SEED
RIPENING IN SOUTHERN PINES.

U. S. Forest Serv. SE. Forest Exp.
Sta. Pap. 72, 15 pp.

Note that the author's name is used exactly as it appeared on the publication, either spelled out or abbreviated.

Footnotes

Avoid footnotes altogether if you can. They increase the cost of publishing; they slow the reading. Whenever possible, if you have an afterthought that must be added, work it into the text rather than in a footnote. Don't use footnotes just to make a scholarly display of footnotes.

Tables

Tables should be used to supplement or support text material, or to show relationships that cannot be told easily in prose.

Use tables sparingly; they are expensive to print. Avoid large tables of raw data: use small summary tables instead.

Don't let tables get inextricably tangled up with the text, so that they dominate the text. The text by itself should tell the story. In the text, refer to tables only parenthetically, this way:

...mortality was greatest among the pines
(table 3).

Number all tables consecutively, using arabic numbers. Keep your tables simple.

Illustrations

Photographs and drawings should help the reader visualize and understand the subject matter. Make sure each one is really needed.

If possible, provide 8 x 10 glossy prints of photographs. Identify each one by writing the author's name and the figure number lightly on the back with soft pencil (hard pencil or ballpoint might show through). Don't put paper clips, staples, or sticky tape on photos.

Sketches, graphs, and charts should be prepared with black India ink on heavy white paper. Glossy photo prints are satisfactory, but blueprints or photomachine copies are not because they will not reproduce well. Lettering and lines on drawings should be large enough so they will be legible after reduction. Clear capital letters, evenly spaced, are preferred for the lettering.

In the text, refer to each illustration only parenthetically, like this: (fig. 1). Like tables, illustrations should not be allowed to dominate the text.

Prepare an appropriate figure caption for each illustration. List these figure captions on a separate page. Do not put them on the photo or drawing.

TYPING THE MANUSCRIPT

Type the manuscript on fairly heavy white bond paper 8 x 10½ inches or 8½ x 11 inches, on one side only. Type everything double-spaced. Leave margins of at least 1 inch on all sides. Leave extra space around formulas, equations, and headings for editor's and printer's marks.

Don't break words or end a line with a hyphen. Don't spill paragraphs over from one page to the next.

Number each page consecutively at the upper right-hand corner, beginning with the title page. Precede the page number with the author's name. This is necessary to prevent manuscript mixups. Example:

Schaeffer : 12

On the title page, put the number of words directly below the page number, this way:

Watson & Leonard : 1
3,641 words

Submit the ribbon copy—never a carbon copy or photocopy—for the use of the editor and printer, and a carbon or photo copy to expedite review. Keep a carbon or photo copy for your files.

Make sure that the finished manuscript is carefully proofread for typographical errors, paying special attention to names of persons and places, technical terms, quotations, citations, formulas, and equations. Check all numerical data in text and tables and figures.

A few minor corrections can be written in by hand. But retype any page that needs lengthy corrections or insertions.

Never staple or bind the manuscript. Fasten it with paper clips or rubber bands.

Checking Copy

After the manuscript has been typed, check it carefully to make sure all facts, figures, dates, names, etc. are correct and consistent. This is the author's responsibility. This is the time to make changes or corrections. After the paper has been set into type, and you inspect galley proofs, changes are expensive and time-consuming.

— EDWIN vH. LARSON

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