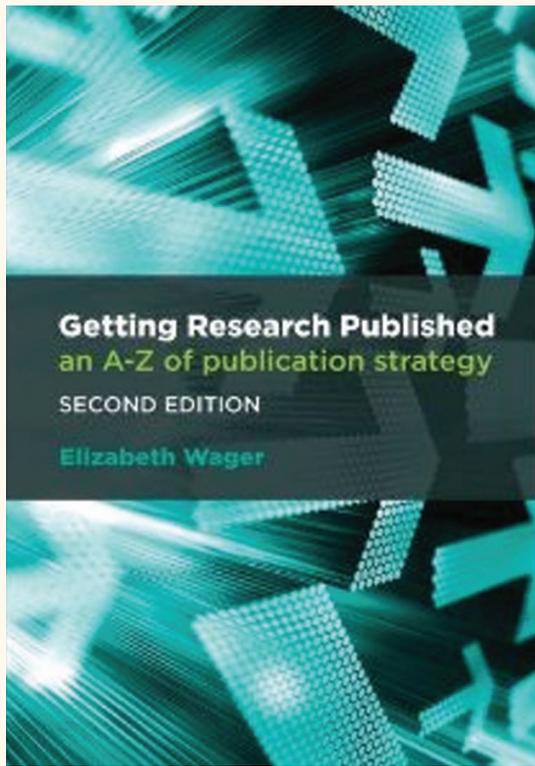


## Getting Research Published an A-Z of publication strategy

Author: Elizabeth Wager  
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عندما يكون بحثك منشورا  
من الألف للياء في استراتيجية النشر

المؤلف : اليزابيث واجر



**B**OOK VENDORS, WHETHER IT IS AMAZON.com or outlets in the shopping mall, are stocked with books entertaining us with promises to lose weight or increase our virility and, more relevant to some of us, a quick fix for androgenic alopecia. The preoccupation with self-help books pervades all spheres of our lives, and

now the fad appears to be encroaching even upon the ivory tower of the academic world.

Judging from the title of the book, *Getting Research Published - an A-Z of publication strategy* by Elizabeth Wager, a freelance medical writer, editor and trainer, this indeed appears to be just another self-help book hitting the shelves of bookstores, or does it have more to offer?

Skimming through the pages, one would think that this book should belong to the same series as the popular "For Dummies" reference books. However, whoever bothers to read this book, will realize that it is a gold mine of information on the mystery of the publication process. This book, the second edition, is meant to alleviate the common sources of anxiety we may have regarding the publication process and provide a guide to manoeuvring round the numerous pitfalls that occur on the road to publication.

Yes, there are many books written for that purpose, but what distinguishes this book from other the books, at least among those that I have so far come across, is that it manages to cover all the essential topics while keeping the language both simple and witty. If you are well versed in the process of medical publication, you will find that this book expresses in print your inner thoughts and experiences in a way that you would yourself find hard to explain. Inevitably, the book contains much jargon relevant to the publication process,

but each term is clearly defined and the large majority of them are worthwhile for any aspiring authors to know, for example, 'lead time,' 'nitpickers' and 'ombudsman.' The book is also up-to-date with all the new terms and concepts emerging due to the increased complexity of the world of publications with its electronic publications and open access journals, leading to terms such as "Digital Object Identifier systems", "young reviewers" and "zealot reviewers".

Another feature of this book, which makes it clear, concise and easy to understand, is its structure. Wager has divided her book into two parts. Part one is entitled "Publication Strategy – An Overview" and Part Two the "A-Z of Publication Strategy". The first part is divided into five chapters and contains a guide to publication strategy, tips on how to grasp the complexity of multi-centre studies and, finally, a cautionary tale exemplified by a mythical figure known as Dr. Seymour. Being a well-known expert in medical publishing with a track record extending for many decades, Wager also gives the reader ample opportunities to learn about the pros and cons of working with a medical writer. The second part of her book is encyclopedia-like with relevant topics arranged alphabetically from A to Z, as the title of the book would suggest. Its coverage ranges from a guide on how to write an abstract, to a word of caution on the processes of publication.

This book also touches upon some interesting topics that might raise eyebrows, such as the topic of 'xenophobia.' This is not a reference to the rise of the right-wing, ideological thugs who are sweeping across the world as recession gets hold of many economies. In medical publication terms,

'xenophobia' or 'geographical bias' is a furtive activity that insidiously exists in some journals. For example, you send a manuscript from Oman and you are rejected simply because you come from a far away land. Indeed, there are anecdotal reports of journals that are known to make negative editorial decisions on articles from this region.

Today, research is becoming more prominent in Oman, and Sultan Qaboos University is getting its own 'perestroika' attitude to research culture. The clique of older academics who function as administrative professors are loosening their hold on the system. In the world which we now inhabit, I strongly believe that this book should be considered essential reading for the new members of the ever-growing and ever-changing research body, where the slogan that you either "publish or perish" is being trumpeted loudly. This book would also be an asset to those who are teaching research methodology or running newly established publications. And for those of us who are reaching the end of our career, this book will only rekindle the lament, "I wish I'd known all of this before". But on a more positive note, I cannot wait to see what more Elizabeth Wager will have to offer in the third edition!

#### REVIEWER

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