Wager, E., Godlee, F., Jefferson, T.: **How to Survive Peer Review**. – BMJ Books, London 2002. ISBN 0 7279 1686 6. 62 pp., GBP 12.95.

Three specialists in medicine editing, working in the U.K. or Italy, wrote a tiny booklet for those who are reviewers or whose typescripts or proposals are reviewed. Even if the booklet is written for scientists or practitioners working in medicine, every scientist may use the information contained.

Those with mother tongue other than English usually do not realise the true meanings of the word "peer". They usually suppose that "peer" is only (according to my beloved "Cambridge International Dictionary of English") "a person who has a high social position and any range of titles, including baron, earl, and duke". This is why they often prepare a peer review like one being in such high social position. Nevertheless, according to the "Collins Dictionary of the English Language" cited in the reviewed booklet, "peer" as a verb means "to look intently with or as if with difficulty" or "to appear partially or dimly", as a noun it is also "a person who is equal in social standing, rank, age, *etc.*". Take this in account, please, when you prepare peer reviews.

Five chapters follow a very brief Introduction (chapter 1). Chapter 2 explains what is peer review, dealing with various types of journal peer review (in-house, external, masked or open, function of copy editing), peer review of conference abstracts or grant proposals, and other types of peer review (book proposals; the mentioned Cochrane Collaboration systematic reviews are specific for medicine).

Chapter 3 recommends how to be a reviewer (invitation and its acceptance, basic questions that should be answered when assessing the manuscript, how to write a report), and special features of reviewing abstracts and grant proposals. Chapter 4 shows how to survive peer review and benefit from it. Authors are taught how to prevent bad review of their work step-by-step, from choosing the right journal to submitting the paper properly. I would like to mention here the needed, but often forgotten keeping in mind of the chosen journal and intended audience, by asking one "Why would these people want to read my paper?" Another important remarks to potential authors are "References in the wrong style or a dog-eared copy might suggest that work has been rejected by another journal" and "Write a good covering letter" (*i.e.* use headed paper containing all possible means of connection, get the editor's and journal's names right, briefly explain the key message and implications of your findings, tell the editor why you are submitting to that particular journal, *etc.*). Very useful in this and other chapters is that the points to check are summarised in colour-distinguished boxes. Further on, recommendations are given what to do if your submission is rejected, gets a conditional acceptance, or when you think that the peer reviewing has been unfair. Then tips for proof reading are mentioned (the U.K. proof reading marks are shown also on the web, www.m-w-com/mw/table/proofre.htm or www.ideography.co.uk/proof/marks.html). In this chapter I like especially the boxes with negative information ("How to ensure that your paper is rejected"; "How to ensure that you never present your work at a conference") and the information "You chose to submit your work to that journal so do not undo these stylistic changes even though they may not be your usual style".

Chapter 5 deals with professional peer review, a system of appraisal of nurses and other hospital employees by colleagues, bosses, and supervisors done in quarterly or annual intervals. Because similar appraisal is often done also in research institutes, the reading of this chapter is also interesting. The last chapter deals with informal peer review done usually in the course of preparing manuscript (with a useful box "How not to do informal review").

Supplements bring list of books and articles for further reading, methodological review checklists (dealing mainly with problems in medicine), a glossary of terms, and a detailed subject index.

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