

# Editorial

## Respecting the Instructions for Authors

Industrial Health has been receiving approximately 240 manuscripts a year, which means 20 manuscripts per month. Every manuscript submitted is subject to an internal review at the Editorial Office to determine if it is eligible for an external review by experts in the relevant field. The first judgment is made according to the guidelines specified by the Instructions for Authors (IFA) of the journal, which cover the format, style, ethical issues, and English of the manuscripts. The second evaluation is conducted in terms of the scientific merit and occupational health and safety value of the findings reported.

Most submissions are well prepared, yet unfortunately some portion of the manuscripts are found to deviate significantly from the journal's IFA. We sometimes wonder if the corresponding author did not look at the IFA before submission at all. Alternatively, we are often faced with manuscripts that were presumably rejected by another journal and then "transferred" immediately to our journal without any of the required changes. One of the clear indications of this is that the cover letter starts with "Dear Editor-in-Chief of Journal of Xxxx Yyyy" (Not *Industrial Health*). Although we cannot deny the possibility that it is just a careless error, the Editorial Office members are at a loss when receiving such manuscripts.

More seriously, some manuscripts are missing essential statements indicating that a local Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the study for human or animal research and that informed consent was obtained from participants for human studies. The lack of this essential information is bewildering, because the corresponding author is asked to confirm these ethical requirements when uploading the manuscript to the electronic submission system. The journal will not consider any manuscripts from studies performed without IRB approval or informed consent<sup>1)</sup>. Surprisingly, when we return a manuscript back to the corresponding author so that it can be revised to

indicate the IRB approval and/or informed consent, almost all of the corresponding authors re-submit the revised manuscripts soon thereafter.

Another issue in scientific publication that we have experienced in a couple of manuscripts relates to salami-slicing, i.e., publication of several parts of a single study in separate papers rather than reporting the full story in a single paper<sup>1-3)</sup>. We recognize the difficulty of preparing one manuscript with a number of independent and dependent variables obtained from a single study. We also agree that there is increased pressure to publish large numbers of articles for performance evaluations and promotions to higher levels at a given institution and/or transfer to other influential institutions. Without setting adequate goals for manuscripts, however, most multi-segmented papers are more likely to become a waste of time and effort for authors, editors, and readers<sup>4-6)</sup>.

Industrial Health would like both corresponding authors and co-authors to comply strictly with the IFA and submit/publish better quality papers with higher ethical standards.

### References

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- 6) Tolsgaard MG, Ellaway R, Woods N, Norman G (2019) Salami-slicing and plagiarism: how should we respond? *Adv Health Sci Educ Theory Pract* **24**, 3–14.

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