Reviewing for *Pediatric Radiology*: How to Make Your Reviews Most Helpful to the Editors

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Editor for the Americas
*Pediatric Radiology*
1. Do not accept an article for review if you cannot do it (well)

- Outside of expertise
- Inadequate time to do well and/or on time
- Conflict of interest

- Do: promptly respond
- Do: suggest alternative reviewers
2. Do not review in a vacuum

• Literature search
• Are there similar articles
  – In our journal?
  – In other journals?
• Are references pertinent, complete, up-to-date?
• Is the paper novel?
3. Be familiar with the Author Instructions for *Pediatric Radiology*

- Note revisions required to conform
- Do not suggest revisions that do not conform
4. Use the ‘Comments to the Editor’ section appropriately

- Confidential
- Summary and key points of review
- Frank comments not meant for authors
- Do **NOT** copy and paste from ‘Comments to the Author’.
- Do **NOT** copy and paste from ‘Comments to the Author’!
- Suggestions for other reviews which are needed – physicist, statistician, other specialist; specific reviewer w/ subject matter expertise
- For ‘Reject’ – Why?; Note uncorrectable “fatal” shortcomings
- For Accept/Revise – Why should this be published?
- Whether revision needs further review
- Concerns for misconduct, plagiarism, etc.
5. Avoid the “empty review”

- Short review w/global statements
- No constructive comments
- i.e. “This is the best manuscript ever”
- i.e. “This is not good science”

- Do: give specifics
- Do: make constructive comments/suggestions
6. Number the ‘Comments to the Author’

• Sequential
• Do not start over with each section
• Separate bullet point for each comment
7. Do not submit an annotated/edited copy of the manuscript

- Not very helpful
- Requires labor to transcribe into comments
- Rarely, may be useful from communication with Editorial Office or to pass through to author (must be sure “author” field for comments on PDF is blinded)
8. Make your comments to the authors constructive and useful

- Avoid direct statements about ‘reject’/’accept’
- Avoid copy editing unless meaning unclear
- In addition to noting fault, try to make suggestion for correction
- Avoid inflammatory/judgmental comments
- Treat the author as you would want to be treated yourself
9. Even if paper is rejected, review should be constructive & helpful

- Learning opportunity for author
- Improves quality of subsequent submissions from the same author
- Positively reflects on journal
- Improves quality of paper if published in another journal
Goals of the Review Process

1. Decide what goes in the journal
2. Improve the quality of what goes in the journal
3. Improve the quality of future submissions
   From the authors
   From the reviewers
4. Fair and impartial
Recommended Reading

2. Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE): COPE Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers: [http://publicationethics.org/files/Ethical_guidelines_for_peer_reviewers_0.pdf](http://publicationethics.org/files/Ethical_guidelines_for_peer_reviewers_0.pdf)
5. Polak JF (2005) The role of the manuscript reviewer in the peer review process. AJR 165:685-688
Thank you !!