

Responding to Reviewers

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Your feelings

Accepted:



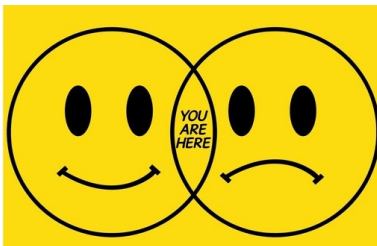
HAPPY

Rejected:



SAD

Revision:



Goal of revision



Reviewers/Experts



Revision



Make the reviewers “happy”

Be ready for responding to reviewers

Keep calm



Read all the comments
before answering



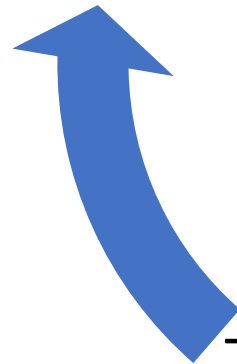
Answer every
comment



Answer what
are asked



Tack and mention
the changes
made



Take time to reflect and consider

- **Don't be in a rush** to respond to the feedback – sleep on it. Your responses will be more objective if you take time to mull over the reviewers' comments.
- Look at the comments as **an opportunity to improve** your research and writing--- peer review as a “gift”.
- **Analyse the feedback objectively**: pay attention to the positive as well as the negative.
- **Be open to the possibility** that the reviewer may not have understood your points because you did not write clearly!
- Check that you have **understood** the comment. If, despite trying, you still do not understand, seek clarification.
- Some reviewers appear to be posing a question, but are **actually** giving an **instruction**.

Respond to each point

You don't have to agree with all the suggestions – but you do need to consider and respond to them all.

When you agree with the suggestion ...

- Explain and/or show what you changed in response to the feedback.

Be specific: rather than simply saying 'fixed', explain the change and state where (line/page) the new text is in the revised manuscript.

When you disagree with the suggestion ...

- Explain, with evidence, why you disagree.

If you agree with the problem pointed out, but have a different solution, make it clear why you have decided on a different revision.

Respond to each point

For example,

I agree that the order/presentation of information in this paragraph was misleading. The paragraph has been reworded to make it clear that [...].

Commas have been removed from all dates in the text.

On the reviewer's recommendation, we have inserted [...].

For example,

You have raised an important point. Although the focus of the paper is not to closely monitor [...], given the concerns raised, we have decided to reduce the emphasis on [...].

This is a good point. I have now mentioned it in the materials and methods. However, I do not believe it needs to be [...].

We agree that this needs to be carefully worded.

Consequently, we have added [...] to explain [...]. We believe putting this in the Introduction provides the additional context the reader requires.

Respond respectfully

- Keep your tone professional and polite.
- Acknowledge reviewer's efforts by thanking them for their feedback.
- Thank the reviewer for pointing out errors.
- If you disagree with a suggestion,

For example,

We appreciate the feedback and valuable suggestions.

Thanks for pointing this out. I have corrected the spelling.

[...] has been added. Thanks for the suggestion.

We believe that removing this section, as suggested, would not [...], because [...].

Make life easier for the editor/reviewers

- Write a simple **cover letter** to the editor.
- Add your **response directly** beside or after each comment. You could use a **different colour or font** to make it easier to distinguish the suggestion and response.
- For relatively brief changes, **copy** the new version into your response letter and **note** the page number in the revised manuscript.
- If you have added or revised an extended section (e.g. included/revised a whole paragraph), explain in general the changes made and refer to pages of the revised manuscript.

Be Tactful While Responding

Are peer reviewers always right?

If the comment is genuine	Acknowledge it and make the changes
If the comment is improper	Disagree politely with a justification
If additional work/experiment is asked	Do if possible; else tactfully answer why the work cannot be done
Contradicting reviewers' comments	Stick with what you think is more correct/proper

Summary

1. Take a break
2. Give point-by-point responses
3. Provide well-reasoned arguments (**self-contained**, quote the **full set** of reviews)
4. Pay attention to details
5. Appreciate the reviewer' work

Any Discussions/Questions?