**Title**

1. The title should be clear and accurately represent the purpose of the study.
2. Should have key words that capture the reader’s attention and potentially are searchable.

**Authors**

1. Need to determine author order up front.
2. Identify the style used by your target journal and stick with that!
3. Ensure corresponding author’s information is current.

**Key Words**:

Check instructions for authors & <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/MBrowser.html>

WORD COUNT:

**Abstract (Check Instructions for authors word count =usually ≤250)**

**Background/problem statement:**

**Methods:**

**Results**: use actual numbers

**Conclusion:** don’t overstate your conclusions

**Introduction**

Usually about 1 page double spaced or 3 paragraphs.

1. **Background**: provides the scaffolding for your study
   1. Discuss how what you are doing is different or how it builds upon the literature.
   2. Place for the conceptual framework you are using.
   3. Use only the most key references but make sure you cite those works properly!
   4. Literature cited should be mainly primary studies and as up to date as possible
2. **Significance.** Study purpose or question is clearly stated.
3. **Innovation.** How is this study different from others on the topic? Remember, just because we haven’t done it at BU doesn’t make it innovative.

**Methods**

1. Study population
   1. Defined/clearly described, detailed enough to be replicated
   2. Location, date, and duration of the study are identified, as are the investigators Inclusions/exclusion
   3. Human subjects (IRB) even if exempt must be stated, consent obtained when needed
2. Development and content of any instruments you’re using are sufficiently described/referenced as are the psychometric properties.
3. Measurement instrument is appropriate given the study's variables; scoring method is clearly defined.
4. Observers/raters were sufficiently trained and brief description of process.
5. Address selection bias.
6. Data analysis procedures appropriate for the research design, and sufficiently described to permit replication.
7. Statistical methods
   1. Number/type of statistical tests and analyses are appropriate (use statistical test names where appropriate)
   2. Power issues are considered in statistical studies with small sample sizes.
8. Qualitative research still needs to meet basic requirements of data reliability, validity, trustworthiness, and absence of bias.

**Results**

1. Characteristics of the study sample (mean age±SD, years, % women, % ethnic/racial minorities). Table 1(where appropriate)
2. Use Tables/figures efficiently and effectively: easy to read/understand, summarize the main findings. Don’t duplicate too much in the body of the paper.
3. This section is for data only: no interpretation here (see discussion and conclusion)

**Discussion (per Bordage\* “The content of [this section] should answer the implied “So what?”)**

1. **Principal findings:** Make sure you answer your research question.
2. **Why are your results plausible?** How do your results relate to previous findings/work?
3. **Strengths & Limitations**
4. **Implications and next steps**
5. **Conclusion:** Remember do not overstate/over-generalize your conclusions.
6. **Acknowledgments**: Thank helpers and recognize funding sources where appropriate.**References**

**(**Format per journal specifications**)**

**Tables – mock tables**

* + Have the data reflect the precision with which it was measured and analyzed.
    - Extra decimal points clutter, while conveying no useful information.
    - nonsignificant *P values* can be 2 decimal points, etc.
  + Generally we do not place p values on table 1
  + Avoid TMI – too much information.
  + Decimal align p-values and most data.

**Figures**

* + Make sure legible and axes are not so tiny that they are unreadable.

\* Bordage G. “[Considerations on preparing a paper for publication](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10401338909539378).” [Teaching And Learning In Medicine](http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/htlm20/1/1)1989:1;47-52.