

How to Write your Script for an Animated Video for the *Video Journal of Biomedicine*

Before you start, it is helpful to consider the answer to some very basic questions:
Who? What? How? Why?

WHO?

Who do you want to watch your video? Your target audience will dictate how you write your script so get this clear before starting. If the purpose of your video is to explain a complicated concept to a general audience, it's important to use accessible language to avoid alienating viewers. However, if your target audience is made up of fellow researchers, scientists, or academics, you can use technical terminology to keep things concise.

WHAT?

For a 90-second video, your word count will be 120-150 words with 150 as the absolute maximum. So, you can't afford to waste words – you need to get stuck straight into the important information.

When structuring your script, it can help to mirror the structure of your research paper:

- Start with an introduction to your research – what problem does it solve?
- Discuss the research – how was your research conducted and why?
- Findings – what did you achieve/discover with your research?
- Conclusion – what implications do your findings have and how will your research continue?

HOW?

To ensure that the narration sounds natural and interesting, keep points concise, vary sentence structures, and avoid repetition. Regarding tone, conversational is key. Remember, you are aiming to draw your audience in. Think of your research as a story and each scene is a chapter; a successful script will immerse a viewer so that they are compelled to reach the final chapter of the video. For every sentence, ask yourself – Is there a more efficient way to say this? And Is there a more effective way to say this? If in doubt, read the script aloud. And consider how numbers, initials, brackets etc., will sound when spoken aloud – will they make sense?

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WHY?

Now that you've drafted your script, read it back over. Does it do what you originally set out to do? As a viewer, do you understand why this information has been shared? One question that can be helpful to at this point is, So what? This might help you decide whether you've narrowed things down to your essential key point.



Editorial Review

Once you are happy with your script, the Publisher will review the script internally and also send it for peer-review. Reviewers will be asked to review the script for accuracy and relevance to the original publication.

Once review is complete and any changes incorporated where relevant, the animation team will work on the scene designs for the animation.



Imagery

Remember that for each sentence in the script, a visual scene will be created. It helps to think about this from the start as there might be a visual metaphor or analogy that could bring your script to life but that will need to be mentioned in the voiceover. We will create image descriptions for each scene of your animation, but if you have any specific ideas or requirements it would be great to see them. Please feel free to send screenshots and links for any imagery you would like to include in your video.



Voiceover

If you are recording your narration yourself, then there are a few things to consider. A well-paced delivery keeps audiences engaged and increases comprehension. So, you need time to breathe to keep the flow natural, and your audience needs time to absorb what they're saying.

Read your script aloud several times, perhaps marking the natural pauses or points of emphasis. Even if you aren't going to do the recording yourself, this is a good way of knowing whether you've paced your script appropriately. If you find it hard to read, the voiceover artist will too. Adjust the sentence structure and punctuation until you can read the script comfortably.

