

# A brief history of the journal *Acta Cirúrgica Brasileira*

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What is the truth about being an Editor of a Scientific Journal in Brazil?

I am going to tell you about my 22 years of experience as an Editor. I have learnt a lot, and I wish to transmit the experience acquired in this position.

When have I decided that I wanted to be an Editor of a scientific journal?

My intention was clear and I had a specific target – the Experimental Surgery. The choice of a specific field was critical – the Experimental surgery. I was the Coordinator of the UNIFESP Post-Graduation, Master and Doctorate Programs in Operative Technique and Experimental Surgery from 1982 to 1997. In so far as the theses were being concluded, they were published in clinical journals. Then, a mixture between clinical and experimental articles took place. I decided to create a journal that could gather the investigative articles in surgery, mainly in experimental surgery. A journal with such features did not exist at the time. It was a totally new experience. I have been thinking to name it *Acta Cirúrgica Paulista* (after the Paulista Medical School and São Paulo). Soon, I figured out that the journal should be nation-wide rather than local.

The *Acta Cirúrgica Brasileira* was born just like that. It became the official publication of the Brazilian Society for Development of Research in Surgery (SOBRADPEC) with 23 regional offices throughout the country. I tried harder to learn the Editor's profession. I got the hang of it. The beginning was hard. I have made many mistakes until I have become renowned. I have attended many courses at ABEC, I have literally fulfilled all the recommendations proposed by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors ([www.icmje.org](http://www.icmje.org)). Likewise, I have fulfilled the determinations issued by SciELO, CNPq, and FAPESP, and eventually, the journal was accepted and approved by these very same institutions.

Furthermore, the journal was also evaluated by Medline/PubMed, EMBASE, SCOPUS, and ISI (Thomson Reuters), achieving a high grade at CAPES. The selection of the names to compose the Editorial Board and the Peer Reviewers was critical. I have tirelessly exerted myself to keep both graphic art and impression quality. From the beginning I sought to adopt and keep conventional standards regarding scientific publication. The time elapsed between submitting the manuscript and its publication was as lower as possible. The admission to SciELO increased the journal visibility and accessibility, as well as the journal selection for Medline indexing at NLM. Currently, the journal is consolidated, and it is internationally recognized by its peers. I consider that dedication and constant action were important in order to achieve the goals proposed. I am much obliged to you all by the supportive appreciations since the beginning of this journey. I am grateful to the authors by submitting their articles and to the CNPq due to its continuous financial

support. I would like to express my gratefulness to the Editorial Board and the Peer Reviewers.

From 1986 to 2001 the journal print frequency was quarterly. From 2002 on its print frequency is every two months. The journal regularity and periodicity were maintained throughout all these years. The journal has an average of 14 original articles (85%) per issue. The greatest learning was, indeed, to have experienced this in life. This experience reminds me to warn the Brazilian authors, mainly, the negligent and undisciplined ones. The instructions for authors were always clear and accurate, easily accessible on the Internet and published by the journal. However, these instructions are hardly and precisely obeyed.

The Brazilian author insists in NOT following the journal norms, even regarding the articles with significant scientific content. It is routine to return unfitted articles; the authors do not perform publishing-related tasks, such as reference-checking, formatting of tables and illustrations, formatting of text in accordance with the journal's norms and template, and so forth. Handling references and bibliographic information is an essential part of all researches and scientific paper, but it is often neglected. Regarding DeCS search, we have noticed the same neglected behavior. We have drawn the attention to the fact that the keywords/health science descriptors that are not part of DeCS/Mesh hamper the access to the articles.

After the journal was indexed in Medline, I have decided to publish the articles in English. English is the language of the current scientific communication, no questions about it. We have had to formally hide an English Advisor due to authors' unpreparedness and careless in handling the English language. It is not unusual to receive art style without the necessary quality to be printed. The nomenclature/terminology is often neglected. It is infrequent to quote Brazilian authors, including the journal's own articles. There is carelessness in searching SciELO and Medline/Pubmed. In short, the authors submit the articles without a carefully and properly review. This was the final opening of my heart. Eventually, the bottom line to the younger Editors is: In order to run a scientific journal in Brazil with quality, you must have PASSION, COMMITMENT and, above all, RESPONSIBILITY to your target audience!

Thanks to ABEC for the opportunity!

Sincerely yours

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