

The Best Referee Report

With our first volume completed and our second well underway, I would like to thank those referees who have contributed so much to the launch and continuing success of *ACS Nano*. I have been delighted to see the thoughtful, insightful, and thorough reviews that we have received. The vast majority of these have been completed in a timely fashion with little or no prompting. At a time when there is increasing pressure on all of us to do more and more, I am glad to see that this critical task has been taken on by our community so quickly for our new journal. Along with the submission of the superb articles that we have seen and those that are in process, this is a testament to the regard in which *ACS Nano* is already being held.

On the title of this piece—the best referee report is *not* a rubber-stamp “Publish as is” but is instead a thoughtful synopsis of the major points, strengths, and weaknesses of the manuscript reviewed. These include comments on the importance and broad interest of the subject, the novelty and importance of the work described, the extent to which data support the conclusions made, the quality of the data and the analysis presented, the completeness of the citations, the clarity of the writing, and the appropriateness of the work for the journal. Such a report could be about the best manuscript ever written, or about the worst! The best referee reports include *wisdom* as to the context of the work and its place in the field.

Beyond this, if there are minor comments and corrections, these should be indicated. A detailed list of helpful suggestions or pointers, separate from the major points of the review, benefits both the authors and ultimately the readers in improving the quality of the manuscript.

I view teaching how to review manuscripts (and proposals) to be a critical part of the mentoring process. After all, we are training our future referees and peers. I encourage our reviewers to share and to guide (*not* simply to hand off) the efforts of preparing, drafting, and editing reviews with their students, post-doctoral fellows, and junior colleagues. As mentors, I hope that you will go over the manuscript, the literature search, and the drafts of the reports together, so as to provide both thorough, thoughtful reviews and a well-trained cadre of peer reviewers for the next generations of scientists and engineers.

As an author, I have always found that the referee reports for American Chemical Society journals appear qualitatively different than those for most other journals. I attribute this to the fact that all of these journals are edited by practicing scientists, our colleagues. Indeed, from reading the reports that have come in, I have found my own referee reports becoming more substantive, so as to give authors and editors more useful information for both decisions and improvements. For this and for your continuing efforts on behalf of *ACS Nano* and our worldwide scientific community, I thank you.

Paul S. Weiss
Editor-in-Chief

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