



My career in MedComms

Rick Flemming



Before MedComms



- BSc in Physiological Sciences, Newcastle University ('93-96)
- MSc in Human and Applied Physiology, King's College, London ('96-97)
- Editorial Assistant, Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London ('97-98)

Before MedComms

- PhD Physiology & Pharmacology, Leeds ('98-2002)

Journal of Physiology (2002), 543.2, pp. 455–464
© The Physiological Society 2002

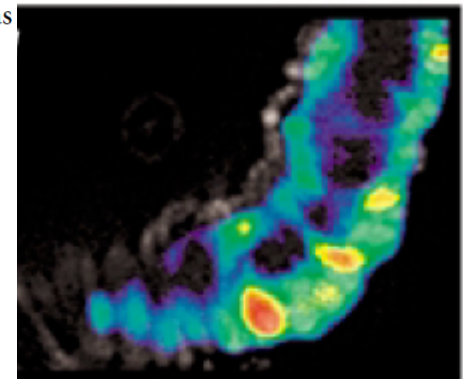
DOI: 10.1113/jphysiol.2002.023366
www.jphysiol.org

Discrete store-operated calcium influx into an intracellular compartment in rabbit arteriolar smooth muscle

R. Flemming, A. Cheong, A. M. Dedman and D. J. Beech

School of Biomedical Sciences, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT, UK

This study tested the hypothesis that store-operated channels (SOCs) exist as a discrete population of Ca^{2+} channels activated by depletion of intracellular Ca^{2+} stores in cerebral arteriolar smooth muscle cells and explored their direct contractile function. Using the Ca^{2+} indicator fura-PE3 it was



Leaving academia

- Narrow career path
- Short-term contracts
- Time for a change
- Knew my limitations



Why did I become a medical writer?

Wanted to stay
in science

Clear career
pathway

Good
mentorship and
training

Good financial
benefits

Variety of
projects and
therapy areas

Work in different
parts of the UK /
world

**... and fundamentally, I enjoy and am
good at writing...**

What did I learn in academia that is relevant to medical writing?

Research skills and not get side tracked by needless detail

Attention to detail and scientific accuracy

Confidence in learning new skills and facts

Ability to contribute to a team

Moving into MedComms: culture shock

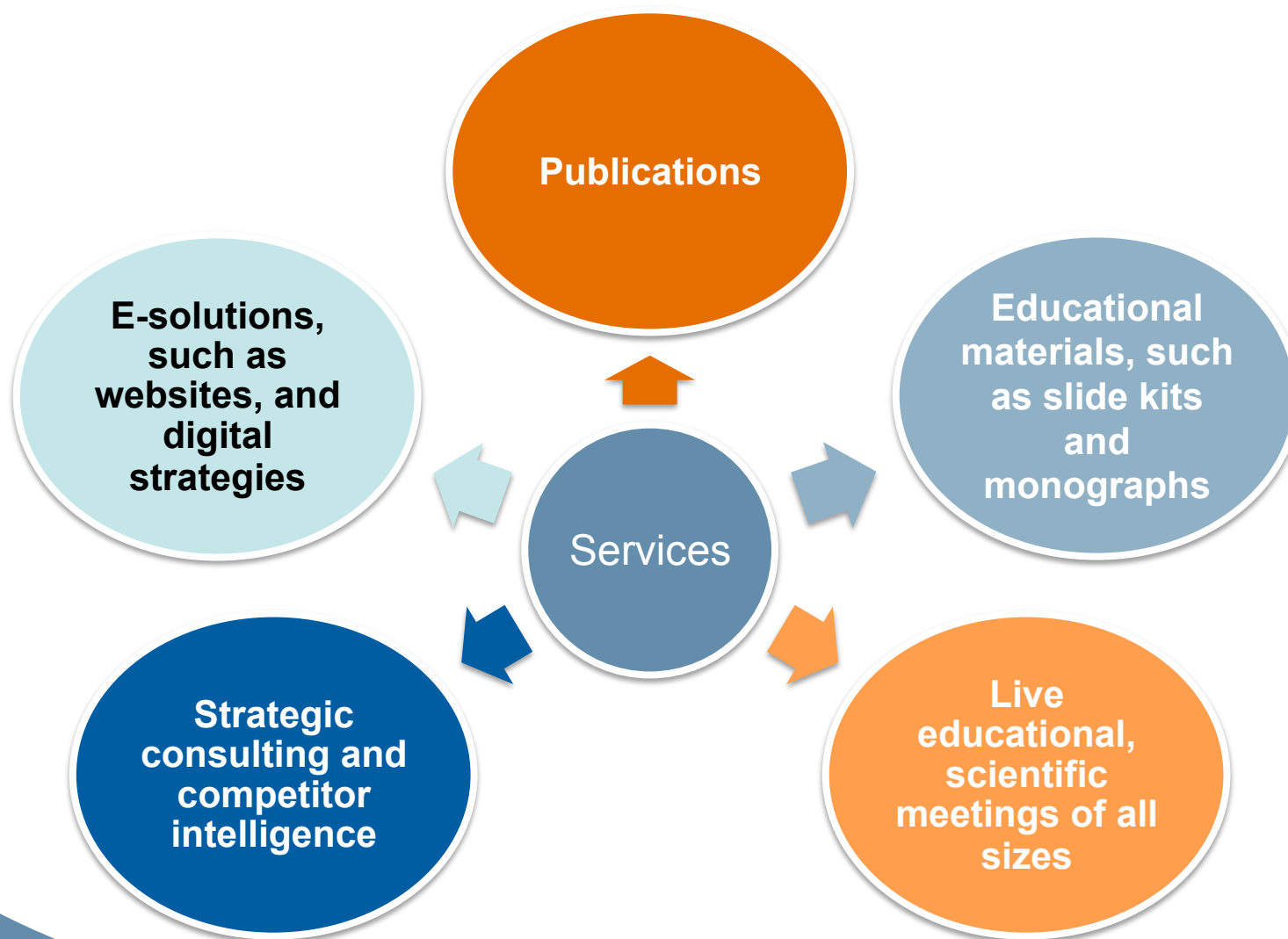
- Friday.....



- Monday....




Overview of some medical communication services



Publications



- Abstracts for congresses
 - Posters/slide presentations for congresses
 - Clinical study manuscripts
 - Review articles
 - Meta-analyses
- 

Clinical study manuscript

Tolerability and safety of perampanel: two randomized dose-escalation studies

Krauss GL, Bar M, Biton V, Klapper JA, Rektor I, Vaiciene-Magistris N, Squillacote D, Kumar D. Tolerability and safety of perampanel: two randomized dose-escalation studies. *Acta Neurol Scand*: DOI: 10.1111/j.1600-0404.2011.01588.x.
© 2011 John Wiley & Sons A/S.

Objectives – To evaluate, for the first time in patients with epilepsy, the tolerability and safety of escalating doses of oral perampanel, a novel, selective, non-competitive AMPA antagonist, as adjunctive therapy for refractory partial-onset seizures. *Materials and methods* – Two consecutive, randomized, double-blind, dose-escalation studies recruited adults (18–70 years) with uncontrolled partial-onset seizures receiving one to three concomitant antiepileptic drugs. In study 206,

**G. L. Krauss¹, M. Bar², V. Biton³,
J. A. Klapper⁴, I. Rektor⁵,
N. Vaiciene-Magistris⁶,
D. Squillacote⁷, D. Kumar⁷**

¹Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, MD, USA; ²Faculty of Medicine, University of Ostrava, Ostrava, Czech Republic; ³Arkansas Epilepsy Program, Little Rock, AR, USA; ⁴Mile High Research Center, Denver, CO, USA; ⁵Neurologica Klinika, Fakultni Nemocnice U sv. Anny, Brno, Czech Republic; ⁶Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, Kaunas, Lithuania; ⁷Eisai Neuroscience Product Creation Unit, Woodcliff Lake, NJ, USA

Acknowledgements

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Clinical study manuscript: how it works in practice



Review article

Factor Xa Inhibitors: Next-Generation Antithrombotic Agents

Donald J. P. Pinto, Joanne M. Smallheer, Daniel L. Cheney, Robert M. Knabb, and Ruth R. Wexler*

Research and Development, Bristol-Myers Squibb Company, P.O. Box 5400, Princeton, New Jersey, 08543

Received February 3, 2010

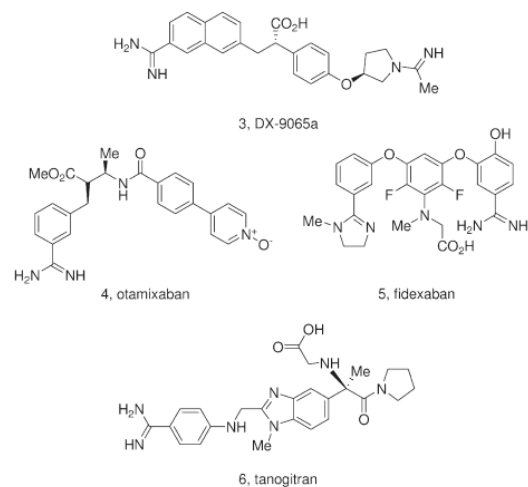


Figure 4. Parenteral direct FXa inhibitors 3, 4, and 5 and the dual FXa/thrombin inhibitor 6.

Acknowledgment. Professional writing and editorial assistance were provided by Rick Flemming, Ph.D., at PPSI, and were funded by Bristol-Myers Squibb and Pfizer. The authors also thank Joseph Luetzgen, Meriah Valente, and Swanee Jacutin-Porte for technical assistance.


Review article



EGFR mutation testing in lung cancer: a review of available methods and their use for analysis of tumour tissue and cytology samples


Gillian Ellison,¹ Guanshan Zhu,² Alexandros Moulis,³ Simon Dearden,¹
Georgina Speake,¹ Rose McCormack¹

Acknowledgements Medical writing support was provided by Rick Flemming, PhD, CMPP and Annette Smith, PhD of Complete Medical Communications, and was funded by AstraZeneca.



Meetings



- Satellite symposia
 - ‘Standalone’ meetings
 - Advisory board meetings
 - Pitches
 - Medical/scientific association congresses
- 

Medical congresses

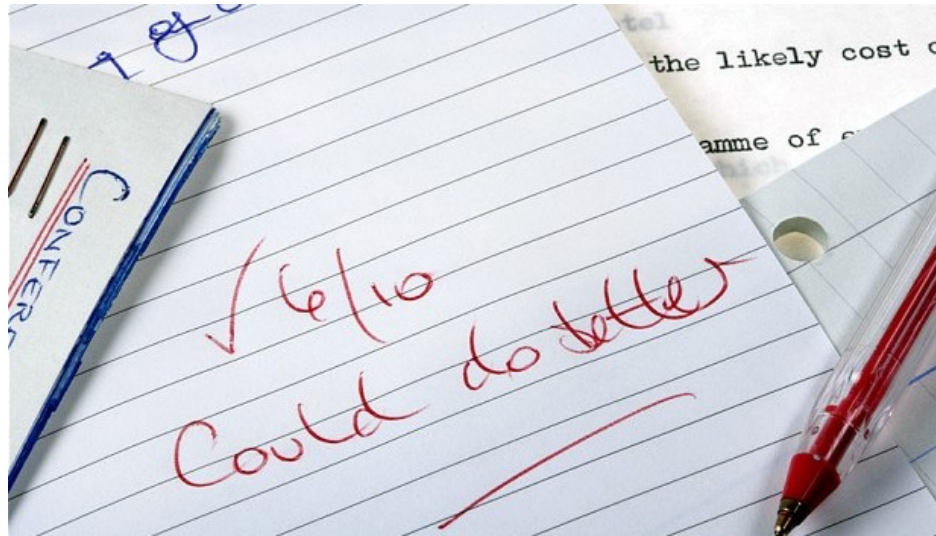
- ASCO, Chicago
 - American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Annual Meeting
 - >25,000 registered delegates + ca. 10,000 affiliated professionals
 - Cutting-edge science
 - Comprehensive report for a biosimilar manufacturer



Challenges: deadlines



Challenges: criticism




Challenges: writing treadmill



Upsides: variety



- Epilepsy
 - Oncology
 - Spinal devices
 - Thrombosis
 - Men's health
 - Plus lots more...
- 

Upsides: flexibility (sometimes...)



Upsides: teamwork

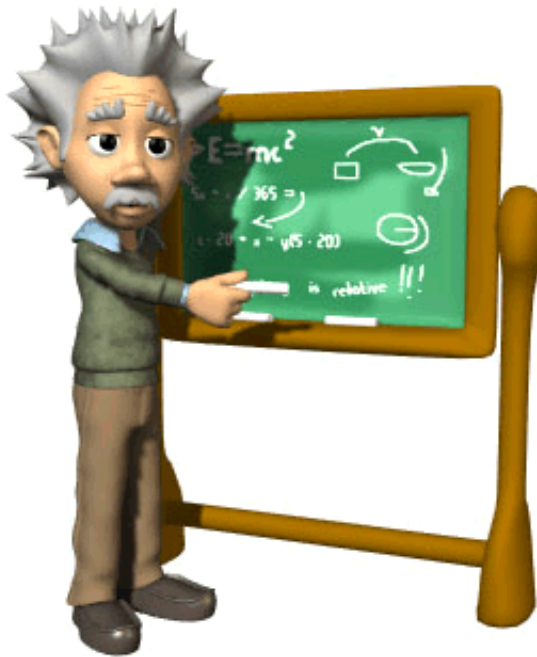


Upsides: travel

- New York
- Chicago
- San Francisco
- Stockholm
- Prague
- Paris
- Florence
- Hawaii?!









Upsides: working with the experts



Upsides: demand for your services




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[Medical Writer, Medical Communications Agency, London, Highly Competitive Salary](#)

UK - London

None

Would you like to be part of a dedicated, highly professional team within a supportive, successful environment? The opportunity[...] [Recruiter: Exemplar People | Posted: 18/05/2014 | Jobcode 112566 | [More...](#)]

[Senior Medical Writer, Central London, Very Competitive Salary](#)

UK - London

None

The opportunities Excellent opportunities for Senior Medical Writers seeking career progression. We are working with a large, global who are seeking a talented individual to produce high quality content. [Recruiter: Exemplar People | Posted: 18/05/2014 | Jobcode 112572 | [More...](#)]

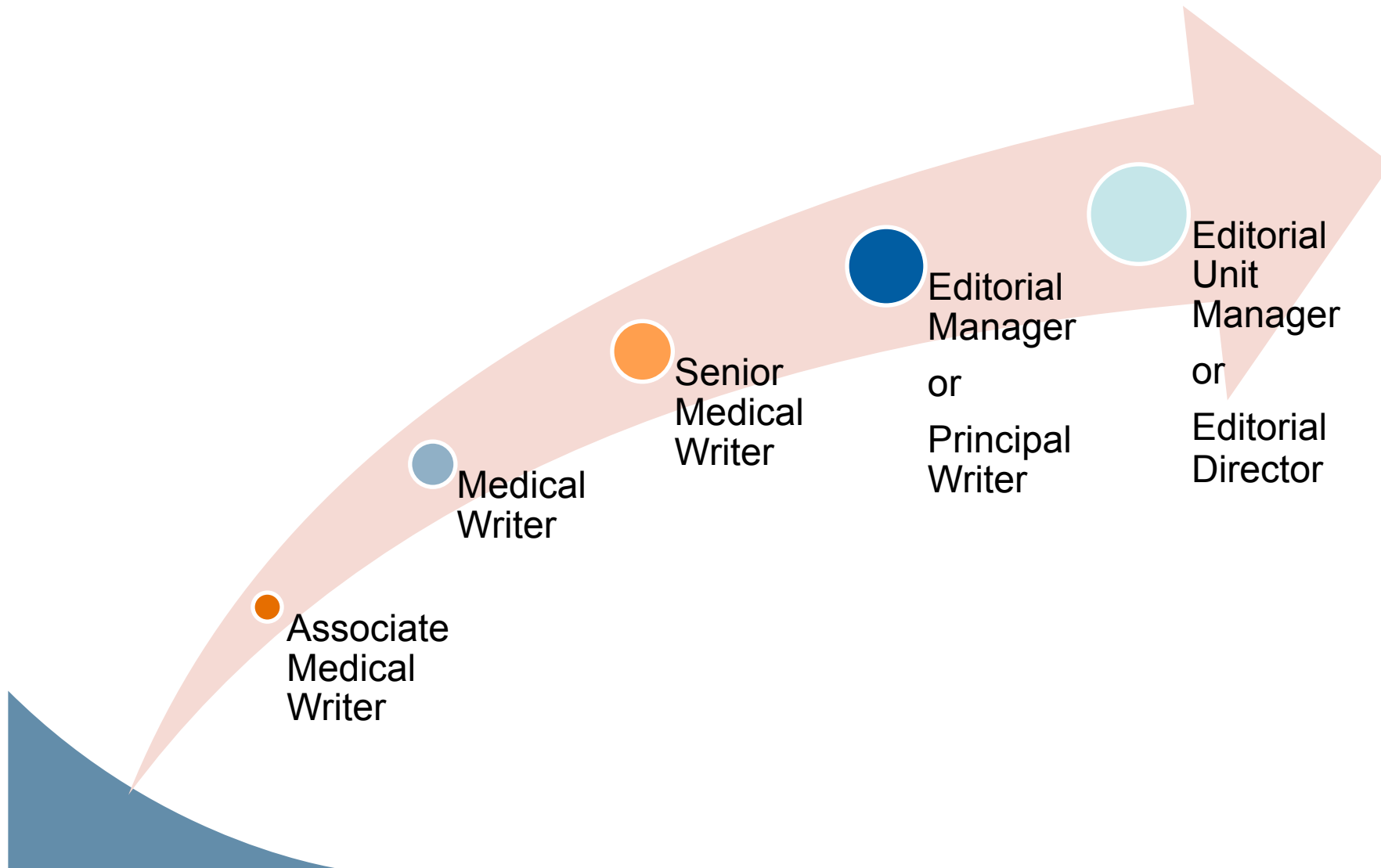
[Senior Medical Writer, Medical Education, London, Competitive Salary + Benefits](#)

UK - London

None

Senior Medical Writer, Medical Education, London, Competitive Salary + Benefits One of the world's largest marketing groups is looking for a talented Senior Medical Writer to join their highly respected team. [Recruiter: Exemplar People | Posted: 18/05/2014 | Jobcode 112573 | [More...](#)]

Opportunities: clearly defined progression



Increasing opportunities with greater experience

Associate
Medical Writer

- Learn the job
- High proportion of job spent writing at desk

Medical Writer

- Build up experience
- Increase client contact & live meeting experience

Senior
Medical Writer

- Pass on experience and review the work of others
- Lead client teams and meetings without support

Editorial
Manager

- Line management and business development
- Provide clients with strategic advice

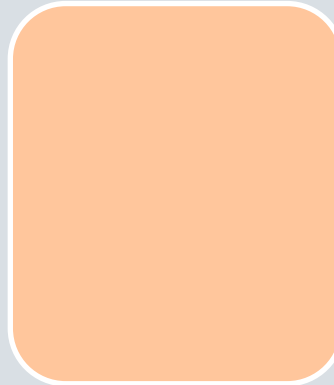
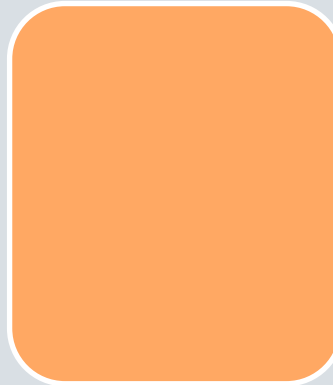
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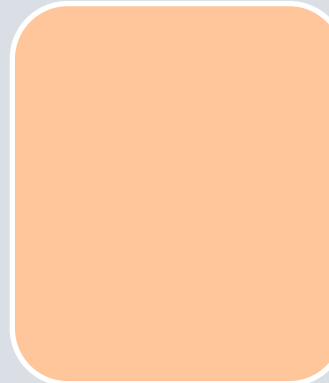
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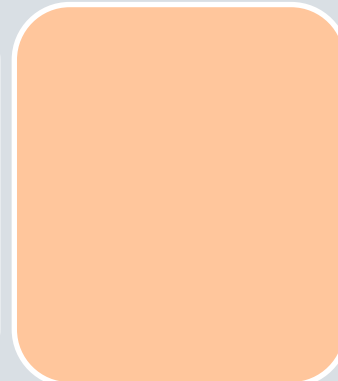
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Benefits of being a freelance medical writer



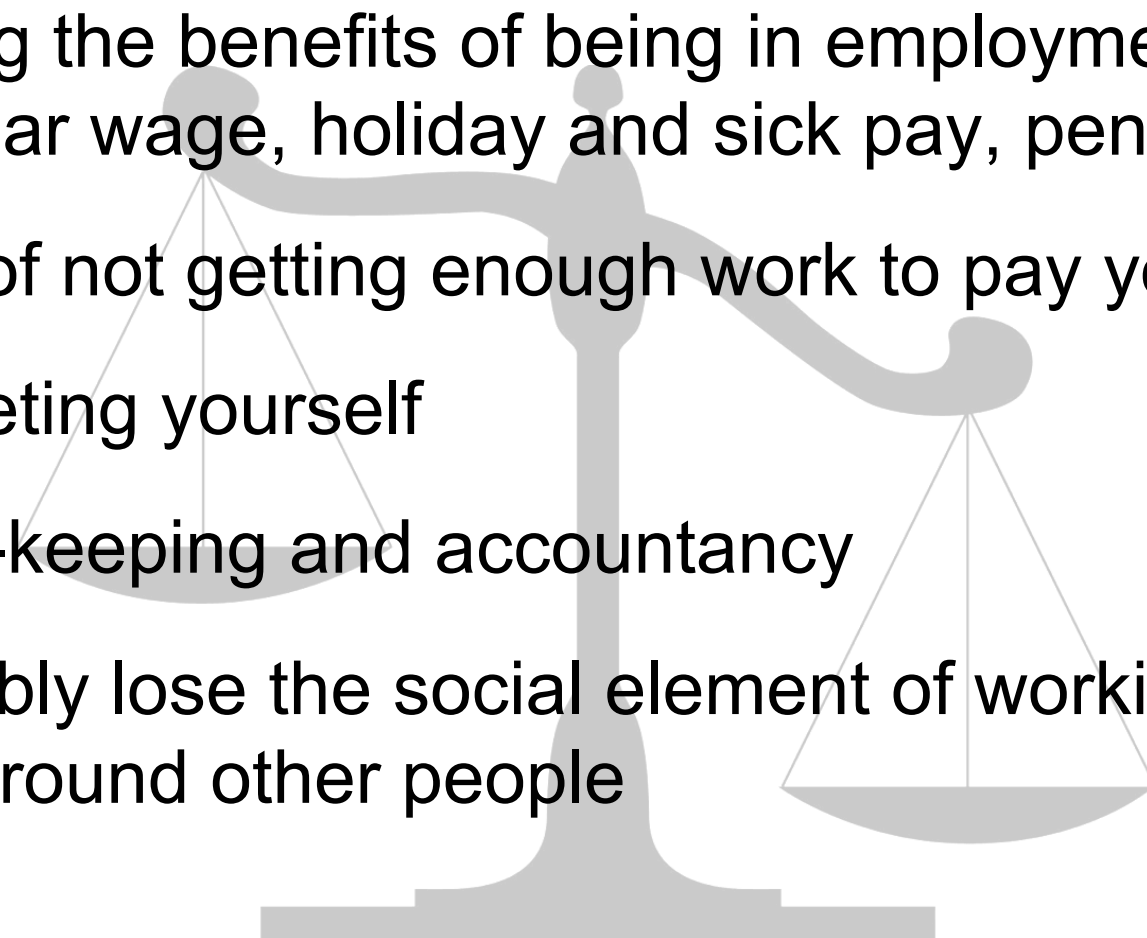
You are your own boss

Flexibility in when you work
and what work you do

Potential to earn more

Drawbacks of being a freelance medical writer

- Losing the benefits of being in employment (regular wage, holiday and sick pay, pension etc.)
- Risk of not getting enough work to pay your bills
- Marketing yourself
- Book-keeping and accountancy
- Possibly lose the social element of working with and around other people



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- Freelance Medical Writing Agency



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“Life is like riding a bicycle, in order to keep your balance, you must keep moving.” Albert Einstein (1879–1955)



Is medical writing for you?

Enjoy and excel at writing

Scientific background and love of science

Pedantic and accurate

Good communication skills

Excellent research skills

Don't mind or love travel


Ability to think on feet

Thick skinned!!



Tips for getting into MedComms



- Write at every opportunity
 - Learn about medical writing, MedComms and pharma
 - Perfect your CV, covering letter and emails!!!
 - Try and get relevant work experience
 - Contact freelance medical writers, med comms companies
 - Although not advertised, some may offer paid or unpaid experience
- 

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