From academia to medical communications

Dr Annick Moon

Medical communications consultant & writer
Medical communications

- Medical writer
- Medical editor
- Editorial project manager
- Account manager
- Project manager
## Transferable skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Thesis, papers, posters, slides, grant applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presenting</td>
<td>Conference presentations, transfer talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project management</td>
<td>Designing experiments and scheduling resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project leading and mentoring</td>
<td>Project students, teaching/demonstrating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion leader experience</td>
<td>Confidently discuss complex issues with leading experts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research the industry

- **Pharma industry news:**
  - Pharmaceutical Times – pharmatimes.com
  - First Word – firstwordplus.com
  - Pharmaceutical Executive – pharmexeceurope.com

- **Pharma marketing and communications news:**
  - Pharmaceutical Marketing – pmlive.com
  - European Medical Writers Association – EMWA.org
  - NetworkPharma – networkpharma.com

- **Communicating science:**
  - Jane Fraser Associates – janefraser.com
Things to Google before your interview

- Clinical trials
- Clinical development
- Satellite symposium
- Pharmaceutical marketing
- Product positioning
What is medical communications?

No...
  o Journalism
  o Academic publishing

Yes...
  o Provide support to the pharmaceutical industry:
    ➢ communicate clinical and commercial messages
Communications consultancy: an overview

Pharmaceutical client

I want patients to benefit from Puscurol®

Communications agency

Agree key messages:
- Puscurol® treats pusorrhoea
- Puscurol® works quickly
- Puscurol® is easy to administer

Agree strategy:
- Raise awareness of pusorrhoea
- Educate about Puscurol® mode of action
- Ascertain views of pusorrhoea experts

Agree tactics:
- Publish review about pus-related diseases
- Present Puscurol® data at conferences
- Speak to pus disease opinion leaders

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Communications consultancy: an overview

Communications agency

Target audience

Disseminate messages

- Clinical manuscripts
- Conference activities
- Promotional material

Manage publication process

Content and copy edit

writer

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Where the job can take you
Communications consultancy: which agency does what

Full service communications agency

Advertising agency

Promotional materials:
- Sales aids; Sales rep training materials;
- Direct mail; Exhibition stand materials

Medical education:
- Journal manuscripts;
- Conference presentations;
- Advisory boards

Clinical research organisation/regulatory consultancy

Market access:
- FDA, EMEA;
- Health economics, e.g. NICE;
- Formulary packs

Regulatory documents:
- Clinical trial documentation;
- Clinical trial authorisations;
- Investigational new drug applications

Promotional

Legal
How to be a medical writer

1. Research the therapy area, covering:
   - The disease
   - The available therapies
   - Key trials and clinical data (own compound)
   - Key trials and clinical data (other compounds)
   - Who’s saying what about which therapies

2. Consider all of the information available, including:
   - The client’s brief
   - The views of the opinion leaders
   - The target audience
   - Effective and appropriate communication vehicles
   - The scientific evidence

3. Write scientifically accurate, beautifully crafted editorial, such as:
   - Educational documents that stand up to peer review
   - Promotional materials that present complex data in fresh and engaging ways
   - Persuasive, attention-grabbing copy

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Why is clear communication important?

- The doctor examined the patient after removing his trousers
Why is clear communication important?

- People who live in cities see up to 5,000 marketing messages every day

Common characteristics of a medical writer in no particular order

- Scientist (often has a PhD and post-docs)
- Enjoys writing
- Pedantic
- Usually has a favourite punctuation mark, a preferred font and a customised bullet point
- Good listener – able to communicate someone else’s opinion
- Excellent research and analysis skills
- Likes statistics
A day in the life of a lead writer

Opinion leaders

Puscurol® works fast in vitro
The early data are impressive
But mention the nausea

Pharmaceutical client

Puscurol® is better than Scabitel®
Can you get published by August?

Medical writer

1. Write high quality documents quickly
   - Primary papers
   - Reviews
   - Case studies
   - Conference materials
   - Newsletters
   - Monographs
   - Websites
   - Videos
   - Slide kits
   - Training materials
   - Sales aids
2. Build relationships with clients and opinion leaders
3. Liaise with designers, writers, editors, account managers, project managers
# A day in the life of a lead writer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>March</th>
<th>April</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write PK/PD paper&lt;br&gt;Write pusorhoea review</td>
<td>Submission&lt;br&gt;(in my dreams)&lt;br&gt;target&lt;br&gt;feedback</td>
<td>Discuss feedback&lt;br&gt;with client&lt;br&gt;over a pint?&lt;br&gt;Fly San Francisco (yay!)</td>
<td>PUSCUR trial reports&lt;br&gt;(the big one)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ring Prof Stilton&lt;br&gt;re pusorhoea&lt;br&gt;in children – stop putting this off</td>
<td>Circulate strategy document&lt;br&gt;Don’t forget to ask client about the PUS221 study</td>
<td>- PUS congress -&lt;br&gt;Write report&lt;br&gt;Circulate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write strategy document</td>
<td>Print deadline (arg!)</td>
<td>Advisory board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book studio time</td>
<td></td>
<td>Find editor with spare time (or a unicorn)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare posters (X12)&lt;br&gt;Prepare slides (X120)&lt;br&gt;Prepare briefing documents&lt;br&gt;(cancel sleep)</td>
<td>Read pusorhoea papers (x55)&lt;br&gt;(FLIP!)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Find and destroy bad punctuation (the scourge)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
And finally

The human race is faced with a cruel choice: work or daytime television

Unknown