

# From academia to medical communications

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*Medical communications consultant & writer*

# Medical communications

- o Medical writer
- o Medical editor
- o Editorial project manager
- o Account manager
- o Project manager

## **Editorial Project Manager** **Medical Education Agency**

Are you an energetic, ambitious and passionate individual with the desire and potential to join one of the largest healthcare communications agencies in the

## **Account Manager**

New Media Agency

You will manage a projects including awareness and pati websites, interact education programs conferences,

## **Medical Editor** **Healthcare Communications Agency**

Proofing copy to the highest standard for a full range of medical education and communications materials including scientific abstracts papers, resentations, print items, and ofessional liaison with il industry key contacts; managing ing materials through design.

## **Medical Writer** **International Med Comms**

Suitable candidates will ideally have at least 18 months relevant writing experience with a background in either. Medical Communications, Clinical Research, Academic Research or Publishing. A life science degree is preferable. You will display excellent organisational skills and acute attention to detail.

# Transferable skills

## Skill

- o Writing
- o Presenting
- o Project management
- o Project leading and mentoring
- o Opinion leader experience

## Example

- o Thesis, papers, posters, slides, grant applications
- o Conference presentations, transfer talk
- o Designing experiments and scheduling resources
- o Project students, teaching/demonstrating
- o Confidently discuss complex issues with leading experts (e.g. Friday night in the King's Arms)

# Research the industry

- o **Professional bodies**
  - o European Medical Writers Association – [www.emwa.org](http://www.emwa.org)
  - o American Medical Writers Association – [www.ama.org](http://www.ama.org)
  - o Healthcare Communications Association – [www.hca-uk.org](http://www.hca-uk.org)
- o **Pharmaceutical industry news, views and information**
  - o First Word – [www.firstwordplus.com](http://www.firstwordplus.com)
  - o PharmaFocus – [www.pharmafocus.com](http://www.pharmafocus.com)
  - o PharmaTimes – [www.pharmatimes.com](http://www.pharmatimes.com)
  - o Pharmaceutical Executive – [www.pharmexeceurope.com](http://www.pharmexeceurope.com)
  - o Pharmaceutical Marketing – [www.pmlive.com](http://www.pmlive.com)
- o **Specialist jobs boards**
  - o eMedCareers – [www.emedcareers.com](http://www.emedcareers.com)
  - o InPharm – [www.inpharm.com](http://www.inpharm.com)
  - o Pharmiweb – [www.pharmiweb.com](http://www.pharmiweb.com)

# Things to Google before your interview

- o Clinical trials
- o Clinical development
- o Satellite symposium
- o Pharmaceutical marketing
- o 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  
Puscurool®



Communications agency

## Agree key messages:

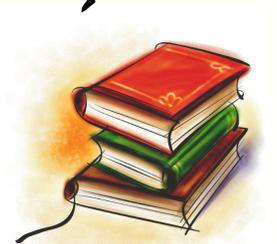
- o Puscurool® treats pusorrhoea
- o Puscurool® works quickly
- o Puscurool® is easy to administer

## Agree strategy:

- o Raise awareness of pusorrhoea
- o Educate about Puscurool® mode of action
- o Ascertain views of pusorrhoea experts

## Agree tactics:

- o Publish review about pus-related diseases
- o Present Puscurool® data at conferences
- o Speak to pus disease opinion leaders



# Communications consultancy: an overview

Communications agency

Target audience



Manage  
publication  
process

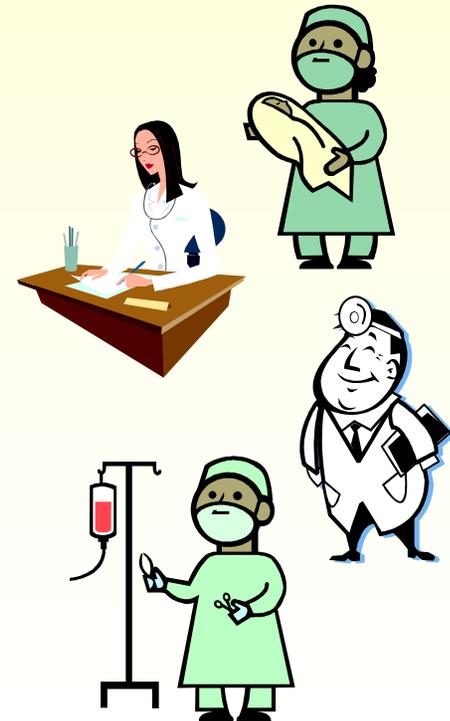
Disseminate messages

- o Clinical manuscripts
- o Conference activities
- o Promotional material

Content and  
copy edit



writer



# Communications consultancy: which agency does what



Promotional

Legal

Full service communications agency

Advertising agency

Clinical research  
organisation/regulatory  
consultancy

**Adverts:**  
Trade  
press;  
Consumer  
ads

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

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

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

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

# How to be a medical writer

## 1. Research the therapy area, covering:

- o The disease
- o The available therapies
- o Key trials and clinical data (own compound)
- o Key trials and clinical data (other compounds)
- o Who's saying what about which therapies

## 2. Consider all of the information available, including:

- o The client's brief
- o The views of the opinion leaders
- o The target audience
- o Effective and appropriate communication vehicles
- o The scientific evidence

## 3. Write scientifically accurate, beautifully crafted editorial, such as:

- o Educational documents that stand up to peer review
- o Promotional materials that present complex data in fresh and engaging ways
- o Persuasive, attention-grabbing copy

# Why is clear communication important?

- o The doctor examined the patient after removing his trousers

# Why is clear communication important?

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

Estimate based on US survey including 4,110 people conducted by Yankelovich market research company. Reported in the New York Times, 15 Jan, 2007.

# Common characteristics of a medical writer in no particular order

- o Scientist (often has a PhD and post-docs)
- o Enjoys writing
- o Pedantic
- o Usually has a favourite punctuation mark, a preferred font and a customised bullet point
- o Good listener – able to communicate someone else's opinion
- o Excellent research and analysis skills
- o Likes statistics

# A day in the life of a lead writer



## Opinion leaders

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



## Medical writer



## Pharmaceutical client

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

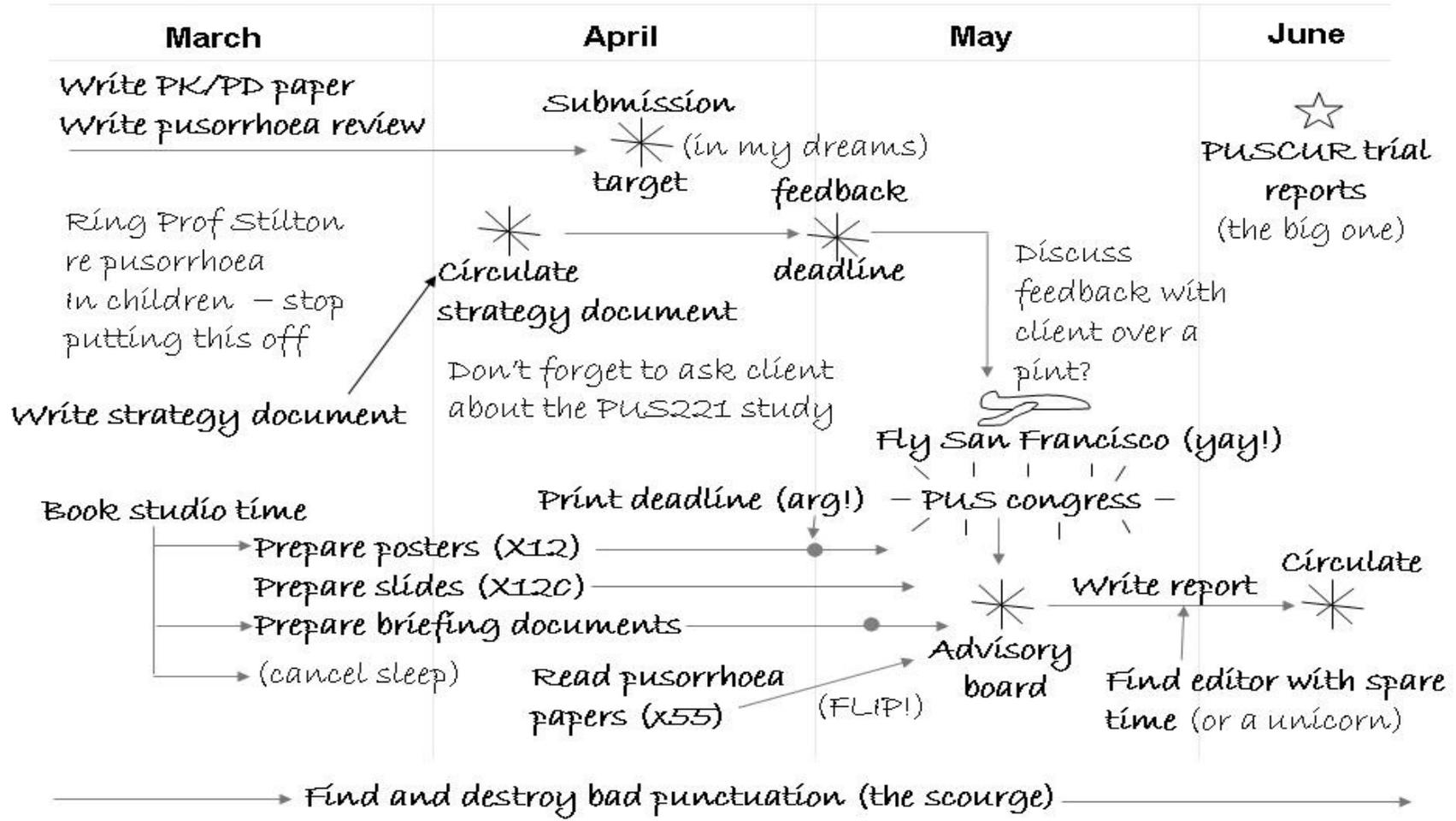
Phew: the writer has  
read the literature  
(done my homework!)



- o Write high quality documents quickly
  - o Primary papers
  - o Reviews
  - o Case studies
  - o Conference materials
  - o Newsletters
  - o Monographs
  - o Websites
  - o Videos
  - o Slide kits
  - o Training materials
  - o Sales aids
- o Build relationships with clients and opinion leaders
- o Liaise with designers, writers, editors, account managers, project managers

# A day in the life of a lead writer

## Work planner: lead writer



# And finally

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

*Unknown*