

Whimster, W.F.: **Biomedical Research**. - Springer, London - Berlin - Heidelberg - New York - Barcelona - Budapest - Hong Kong - Milan - Paris - Santa Clara - Singapore - Tokyo 1997. XXVII + 246 pp., DM 29.80, öS 217.60, FF 27.00 (softcover).

The reviewed book is a basic manual for those medicine doctors who intend to start research activities. Even if all text examples are in the field of medicine, recommendations in this book may also be used by novices of other fields of biology.

W.F. Whimster wrote most chapters of this manual, with the exception of Introduction and three parts of section A (these were written by G. Horrocks). In the Introduction, D.A. Heath gives a brief history of medical research. His paper is reprinted from an older manual, and Whimster added some notes to the text. Section A is on planning research. It includes literature searching and information retrieval, biomedical databases, Internet communication, ethical questions, and research grants. Section B (Results) deals with data handling and interpretation (including important basics of statistics), their visual display (with good examples of table and graph designs, and arrangement of text on slides). Section C is on writing original articles (planning, writing, rewriting, submitting the paper) and theses. Special recommendations for those whose first language is not English are added. Section D describes the journal office, how to deal with acceptance or rejection of a paper. In section E, presentation of research at meetings is shown (abstracts, lectures, posters). Section F (The final word) is a brief (one page!) summary and an additional list of books for further reading (each chapter ends with specific references).

Supplemented are also nine appendices. The first one contains the so-called Vancouver technical recommendations for biomedical journals: they strictly regulate style of some journals and their potential authors have to learn them. Appendix 2 is the British Medical Journal advice to authors. Appendix 3 contains the Declaration of Helsinki with further amendments (recommendations for the conduct of clinical research). Appendix 4 contains condensed application forms for ethical approval and for research grants. Appendix 5 (A selection of typefaces and sizes) is in the present computerised epoch somewhat superfluous. In contrary, appendices 6 (American and British spelling), 8 (the distraction removal test kit), and 9 (Proofreading marks) are very useful. The same holds for the detailed Index.

The book embraces all aspects of research and therefore only a brief basic information is given. I have only a few comments. On p. 50 Whimster states that "Data (Latin) is an awkward word". Why then does he use the term instead of better "values, findings, statements", *etc.*? I do not think it is correct to write figures and units without inserting space ( $26\text{mg} \pm 2.5$  - why not  $26.0 \pm 2.5$  mg - also the number of decimal places should be the same) ?

The book will certainly be popular among medicine students and young scientists.

Z. ŠESTÁK (*Praha*)