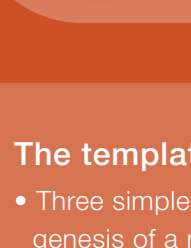


## Insights From the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of ISMP 2020: The Evolving Role of the Scientific Communications Professional in an Open World

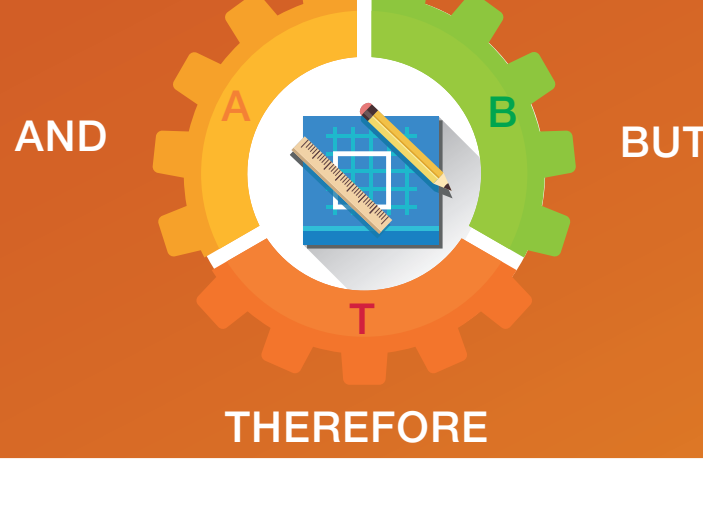
### Applying the ABT Framework to the Communication of Medicine



**Key takeaway:** Narrative structure is the core of communication. All of us experience narrative deficiencies, which prompt change in our communication environment. And, But, Therefore formats can be used across audiences, formats, and informational channels.

#### The template of And, But, Therefore

- Three simple, but critical, conjunctions weave together the elements of a captivating story, and which represent the genesis of a narrative template that applies to scripts, screenplays, and professional publications
  - “And” embodies an inherent agreement between storytellers and audiences. This is how effective communication commences
  - “But” introduces the core problem, contradiction, or issue to be tackled or resolved. This is known as the “turn,” in movie-speak, the moment that the story holds the audience captive, and quite possibly mesmerized, until the end of the film
  - “Therefore” propels the narrative forward with how to achieve the solution or desired outcome
  - The And, But, Therefore framework does not equate with a finished product, but rather constitutes its blueprint
- This same technique can be applied successfully to drafting a manuscript destined for peer-reviewed publication, introduced with simplicity and agreement, followed by an integration of sufficient informational detail, to achieve concision on a resolution and conclusion
- Clinicians are overwhelmed by the sheer volume of medical and scientific information. Therefore, they rely on different strategies and resources to curate content, where traditional peer-reviewed publications may not be tailored to their preferences and learning style
- Healthcare communications and publications specialists must optimize content for sharing through specific or specialty channels where professionals seek information and education
- Do not launch a manuscript by discussing the problem. Rather, employ a calm introduction with which the reader can agree. Then, overturn that universal statement with a contradiction to provoke thought



### Patient Involvement in Medical Communications: A Live How-to Guide



**Key takeaway:** There is an increasing emphasis on the patient voice in medical communications. Including patients in the earliest stages of publications or meetings is important to maximize engagement.

#### Why involve patients and carers in medical communications?

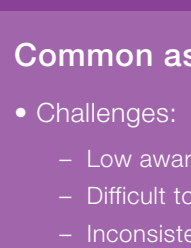
- Involving patients in materials will help with treatment adherence
- Patients can build their own support networks
- Patients can understand the pharmaceutical industry and how drugs are developed

#### How can we include them?

- Get patients involved from the very start
- Use virtual meetings and online collaboration tools to open up access to a larger group of people
- Make sure patients understand what's being asked of them; make a plain language summary of any legal agreements
- Share feedback afterwards. How did you use their insights? How did they influence the project?



### Thinking Beyond the Ordinary: Optimizing Medical Communications for Rare Diseases



**Key takeaway:** We need to tailor medical education to rare disease audiences, but reaching those audiences may require innovative and nuanced approaches.

#### Common aspects of communication

- Challenges:
  - Low awareness among general practitioners (and even specialists)
  - Difficult to diagnose
  - Inconsistencies in who treats patients and how they are treated
- Opportunities:
  - High engagement with Key Opinion Leaders
  - Knowledgeable, active patient groups and advocacy groups



#### Publication plans need to focus on patient issues and disease state education

- Key difference in rare diseases is that its pivotal trial will be smaller than other diseases
- Important to include cases studies and review articles

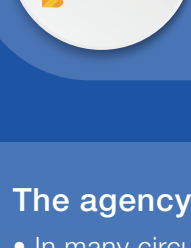


#### How to reach the correct audience

- Who needs to know the information?
  - Generalists, specialists, and rare disease specialists
  - Many diseases will require a multisystemic approach using different specialists
- What do they need to know?
- How should the information be delivered?
  - Bite-sized content
  - Online portals
  - Post-conference emails
  - Third-party partners to disseminate, e.g. closed physician networks, article portals



### Transparency in Publication Development: Scientific Contributions of Medical Writers



**Key takeaway:** Science that is not well written is not conveyed to the community, and, therefore, science is not done.

#### The agency/vendor perspective on acknowledgment of medical writers as authors

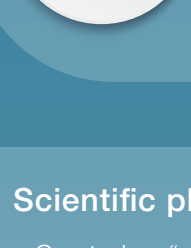
- In many circumstances, medical writers employed by healthcare communications and publications agencies may fulfill most, if not all, of the criteria required to serve as an author of peer-reviewed publications. However, agency medical writers differ from principal and co-authors in several ways:
  - Agency medical writers cannot take the “public responsibility” for the accuracy of the manuscript contents, since they are directed in content development by the authors and/or the industry sponsor
  - Agency medical writers do not provide the final approval on a manuscript, which is not within the scope of services provided by healthcare communications and publications agencies
  - Authorship granted to a medical writer may diminish the actual contribution of the principal author and co-authors
- ICJME recommendations do address the practice of acknowledging individuals or groups under a single heading in the publication and specifying their contributions, such as, “Participating in the writing or technical editing of the manuscript”
- With respect to review articles, for which all of the information contained in the manuscript resides in the public domain, as opposed to clinical data owned by a pharmaceutical company, does simple acknowledgment of the medical writer suffice?
- Fact-checking, verification, and validation are a matter of standard process and course in the development of any manuscript worthy of publication, with regard to the issue of accountability for accuracy
- However, the counterargument posed by industry and healthcare communications and publications agencies alike is that even content in review articles is compiled, summarized, and interpreted at the direction of the author(s) and manuscript sponsor(s)

#### Some suggestions to resolve the current status quo is to:

1. Become more granular in how we convey the medical writer acknowledgment in publications, perhaps by distinguishing an acknowledgment list from a contributor list
2. Expand the ICJME criteria for accountability of work related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work to the verification by the contributor to the sections of the manuscript that he or she researched and composed
3. Affix a mark to the manuscript that clearly affirms the substantial engagement by the medical writer in the development of the paper, which may further enhance the overall quality of the published piece



### So You Have a Scientific Platform – What Next?



**Key takeaway:** Not only should we focus on developing the content of a scientific platform, but we should also carefully consider engagement with and use of the scientific platform, i.e., up-to-date, user-friendly formats which employ and share best practices.

#### Scientific platform development

- Created as “pillars” that contain critical elements of the scientific statements about the product, such as:
  - Disease state
  - Unmet needs
  - Mechanisms of action
  - Value (HEOR)
  - Clinical efficacy
  - Drug safety
- When developing a scientific platform, consider what is most relevant to your product
- Within each pillar, develop the primary scientific statements, followed by secondary statements, i.e. supporting statements validated by published references

#### How is a scientific platform used?

- For the development of scientific content, e.g. symposia
- Internal training
- FAQs
- To supplement national data
- To identify gaps in the publication or clinical development plan
- To generate claims and commercial messages

#### Challenges with scientific platforms

- Not everyone receives the same information in a large corporation
- Company members may not know where to find it or how to use it
- Considered by some to be a “data dump”
- Some employees do not recognize how the platform aligns with their individual role in the company

#### How do we keep a scientific platform relevant?

- Engage the right stakeholders, including regional stakeholders and users over time
- Curate content to ensure it is current and targeted to the audience
- Provide training on how to use it
- Consider the treatment environment
- Track its success – metrics are key
  - Questionnaires and surveys
  - Focus groups
  - Platform usage statistics

