

Tips for Revising your Paper (from Pechenik, 2004)

1. Allow adequate time for revision.
2. Read your paper aloud, slowly, and listen for problems as you read.
3. Don't worry about problems with individual sentences until your paper has a beginning, middle and ending with each idea logically leading to the next. Use idea maps to organize your thoughts.
4. Revise for content, clarity and completeness:
 - Make sure each sentence says something of substance.
 - Be cautious in drawing conclusions.
 - Keep an audience of interested readers in mind as you revise.
 - Use it, they, their and other pronouns sparingly and be sure they don't create ambiguity.
5. Revise for conciseness:
 - Delete "It is interesting to note that...." and other running jumps. Just dive right into the issue.
 - Eliminate unnecessary prepositions.
 - Replace weak verbs with stronger ones.
 - Try to have animals, enzymes and molecules DOING something.
6. Revise for flow (coherence):
 - Improve logical connections between sentences and paragraphs using appropriate transition words, summary and repetition and occasional semicolons.
7. Proofread for spelling and grammatical errors.
8. Turn in work you are proud to have completed!
9. Practice finding problems with other people's writing.
10. Give substantive and honest criticism to other's work, but do this in a manner that is constructive and not insulting.