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Book review

Research. How to Plan, Speak and Write About It. Eds. Clifford Hawkins and Marco Sorgi. Pp. 184. £8.75. Springer: Berlin. 1985.

This book encapsulates in one volume the various aspects of research involvement and is particularly concerned with presenting its results. Of the eight chapters, the editors have contributed to three. The contents include chapters on: Research: why do it?; Planning and protocol; Searching the literature; Speaking at meetings; What the critical reader looks for in an original article; A guide for writers; Illustrating talks or articles; A guide to statistical methods; Publication. In addition, the work is most usefully supplemented by a series of appendices, including notes on the MD thesis, advice on using a dictating machine, and lists of needless and verbose words. There are also appendices on American and British usage in spelling, abbreviations of journal titles, and guidelines for putting up poster displays.

The book is intended to be an aid for anyone starting out

in research or someone who is already undertaking it. The intention of the editors is fully met by this work, which will provide embryo or established researchers with a wealth of useful information.

The coverage offers a good balance between verbal and visual aspects of communication, and throughout the reader is given the benefit of much practical experience from the editors and contributors. This is, therefore, a theory-and-practice approach, making the volume all the more valuable.

Anyone writing in this field to some extent exposes their style of presentation to scrutiny more than usual. However, these authors have strongly upheld the 'practice what is preached' philosophy, and the book throughout is clearly and pleasingly written. It is strongly recommended.

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