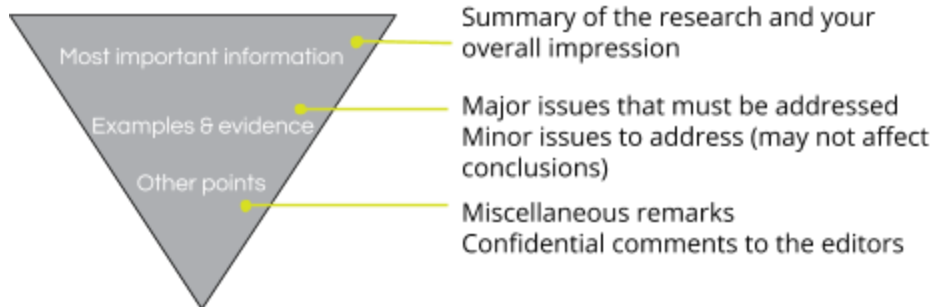![PLOS]

Peer Review Template

A quick guide for new reviewers

Organizational structure

Think about structuring your report like an upside-down pyramid. The most important information goes at the top, followed by supporting details.

Most important information — Summary of the research and your overall impression

Examples & evidence — Major issues that must be addressed
Minor issues to address (may not affect conclusions)

Other points — Miscellaneous remarks
Confidential comments to the editors

Sample outline

1. Summary of the research

In your own words, summarize the main research question, claims, and conclusions of the study. Provide context for how this research fits within the existing literature.

Discuss the manuscript's strengths and weaknesses and your overall recommendation.

2. Examples and evidence

Major issues
Major issues must be addressed in order for the manuscript to proceed. Focus on what is essential for the current study, not the next step in the research. Put these items in a list and be as specific as possible.

Minor issues
Mention additional things the authors should do to improve the manuscript. Typically these will be changes that would not affect the overall conclusions.

3. Other points (optional)

If applicable, add confidential comments for the editors. Raise any concerns about the manuscript that the editors may need to consider further, such as concerns about ethics. Do not use this section for your overall critique. Also mention whether you might be available to look at a revised version.

Want more reviewing tips? Visit reviewers.plos.org