

# Efficient way of JOURNAL SELECTION, SUBMISSION AND PUBLICATION

**Md. Mahmudul Alam, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor

School of Economics, Finance & Banking (SEFB)

Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM)

Email: [mahmudul@uum.edu.my](mailto:mahmudul@uum.edu.my) , [rony000@gmail.com](mailto:rony000@gmail.com)

Office Room: SBM 361, Sintok, UUM

Aug 23, 2020

Online Webinar of RIMC, UUM, Sintok

# What is your style?

- Writing an article first and then find out an appropriate journal?
- Target a/few similar journals(s) and then prepare manuscript?
- Your motivations for publication is a very important factor for journal selection process! Why do you need publication or where will you use the article?

# How to Select an Appropriate Journal?

- Many factors are involved in the decision
  - Impact of the journal vs probability of acceptance
  - Number of Years in Publication (number of volume)
  - Publisher (size, familiarity, prestige, continuity)
  - Publication lag (forthcoming article queue)
  - Number of articles published per year/ volume/ issue
  - Frequency of publication (number of issues)
  - Desired audience (academic, practitioner, policy)
  - Circulation Count (subscribers, number of sales)
  - Availability of electronic or print formats
  - Open access & copyright
  - The Language(s) of the Journal
  - Publication or processing Fees or charge
  - Quality of reproduction of figures

# Journal Quality, Indexing & Ranking

- Journal's quality can be measured in many ways like publisher, editorial board, h-index, citation or impact factor, number of download, Eigen factor, indexing/ranking, etc.
- High impact factor journals are the ones which have high frequency of citations
- It is a superficial, but internationally accepted, measure of quality of journals
- A good high impact journal may publish a paper which have low to zero citations
- No impact factor or even not indexed journal does not mean low quality

# Journal Quality, Indexing & Ranking **cont...**

- Don't blindly judge according to the process of academic business syndicates
- **Understand the objective / purpose of knowledge**
  - **Challenge** is not index or not even Peer- reviewed journal
  - Current Editorial board includes Nobel Laureate economists -- Kenneth J. Arrow, Paul R. Krugman, Robert M. Solow, Joseph E. Stiglitz
- **What does your boss want or what do you want? --**  
Setup journal list based on specific target or diversify based on different index?
- My articles in indexed journal (not mutually exclusive):
  - **ERA/ABDC (70: A-5, B-10, C-55)**
  - **SCOPUS (68)**
  - **ISI WoS (45)**
  - **ABS (17: 3\*-1, 2\*-3, 1\*-13)**

# To Be Avoided: Predatory Journals

- “Journals” that obtain publication fees but are not valid peer-reviewed scholarly publications
- Some clues that a journal might be predatory (especially if several such items are present):
  - Unrealistically broad scopes
  - Unrealistically short stated turnaround times
  - Flashy but poorly crafted, ungrammatical websites
  - Fake metrics
  - Incomplete contact information, such as no specific editor
  - Inclusion in [Beall’s List](#) (questionable)!
  - Black listed by [Malaysia Ministry of Education \(MOE\)](#)

# Careful about Fake and Hijacked Journals

- Careful about fake journals
- Careful about [hijacked journals](#)
  - Cyber crime as developing a website for an original journal and uses every information same and publish article with fees but their article does not show in Web of Science & SCOPUS

Example: [Sylwan](#) , [The Veliger](#) , [Wulfenia](#) , [Journal of Natural Products](#)

# Search for the List of Journals

- First see the reference list of your manuscript
- Search journal title in [science direct](#) or [Elsevier Journal Finder](#), or [SCOPUS](#) by **using key words**
- Download the journal list (excel/ pdf file) which are indexed/enlisted in [ISI Journal Citation Reports](#), [SCOPUS](#), [ABDC](#), [ERA](#), [ABS](#), [IDEAS/RePEc](#), etc.
- Download the list from searching google, [university library \(e.g. UKM\)](#), or directly from the website
- Download the updated SCOPUS list/delist:
  - Open - <https://www.elsevier.com/solutions/scopus/how-scopus-works/content> >
  - Go bottom of the page - **Looking for something else?**
  - Click – [“Download the Source title list”](#)



# Article Revision before Submission

- By submitting a manuscript you are basically trying to sell your work to your target audiences/ community
- No one get it right at the first time! So, write, write & re-write.
- After writing a first version, take several days of rest. Refresh your brain with different things. Come back with critical eyes.
- Ask your colleagues and supervisor to review your manuscript first. Ask them to be highly critical, and be open to their suggestions.
- Take every attempt to make the manuscript as good as possible
- Preparation is important but do not spend too much time on your preparations
- Check similarity report and references
- Check the English carefully before submit

# Review Journal Info before Submission

- Know the audience and the journal by reading the ‘Scope’ of the journal
- Read carefully the “Instructions for authors”
- Pay attention to journal requirements (fees, number of author)
- Review back issues of journals to assess the scope of the journal and author affiliations
- Check submission style of publisher, Editor(s) & Editorial board members
- Tentative networking, collaboration, pre-submission consent before submission !
- Make a list of choice for tentative journals
- Do not submit to more than one journal at the same time
- Be honest with data, result, authorship, funding, & other declarations !

# Revision before submission – checklist

## Reasons for early rejection: content (aims and scope)

- Paper is of limited interest or covers local issues only (sample type, geography, specific product, etc.).
- Paper is a routine application of well-known methods
- Paper presents an incremental advance or is limited in scope
- Novelty and significance are not immediately evident or sufficiently well-justified

## What should you check?

- Is your work of interest to an international audience?
- Does the work add significant value to an existing method?
- Is the perspective consistent with the journal?
- Are the right conclusions drawn from the results?
- Does your work add to the existing body of knowledge? – Just because it has not been done before is no justification for doing it now. And just because you have done the study does not mean that is very important!

# Revision before submission – checklist

## Reasons for early rejection: Preparation

- Failure to meet submission requirements
- Incomplete coverage of literature
- Unacceptably poor English

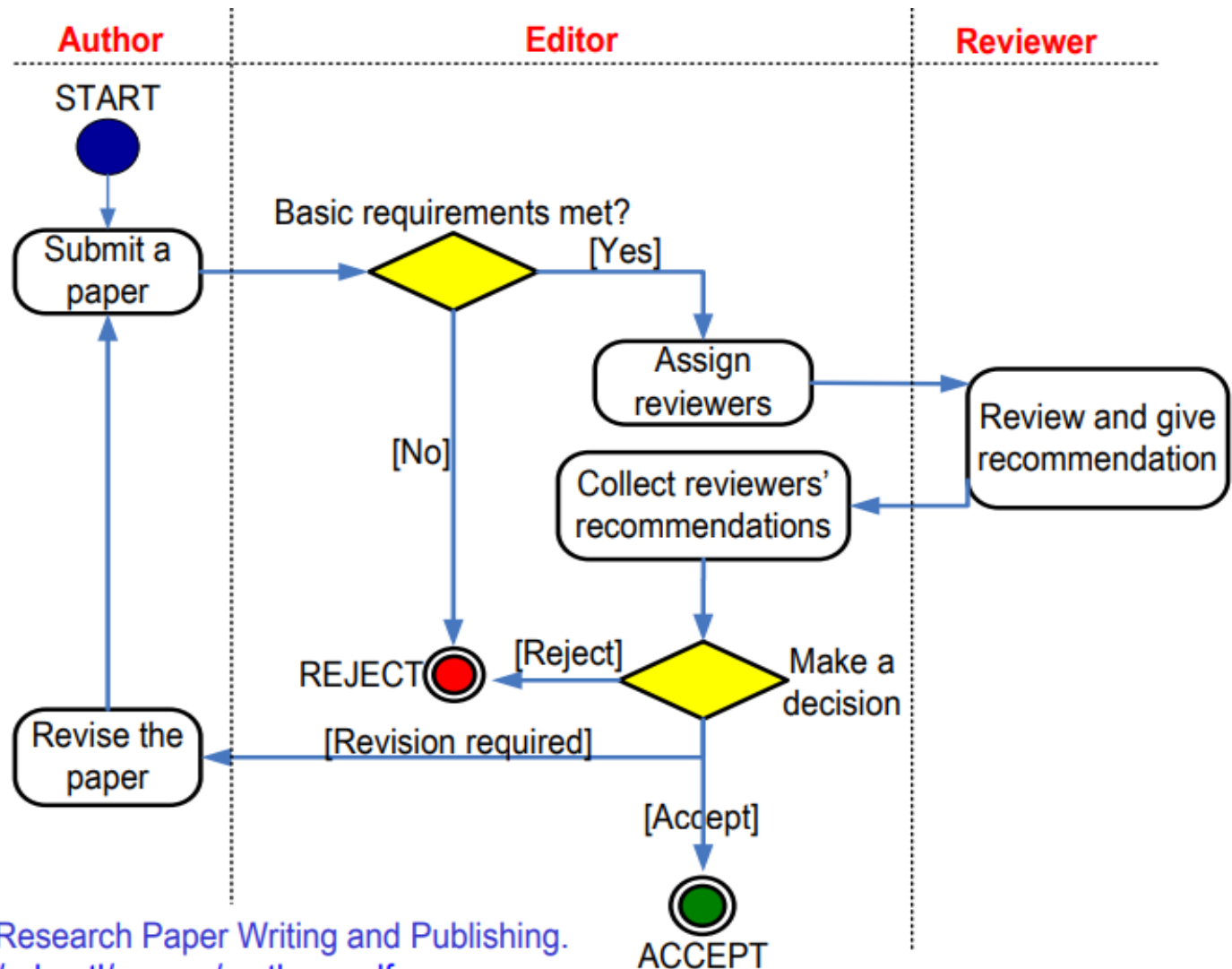
## What should you check?

- Read the Guide for Authors again! Check your manuscript point by point. Make sure every aspect of the manuscript is in accordance with the guidelines. (Word count, layout of the text and illustrations, format of the references and in-text citations, etc.)
- Are there too many self-citations, or references that are difficult for the international reader to access?
- Did the first readers of your manuscript easily grasp the essence? Correct all the grammatical and spelling mistakes.

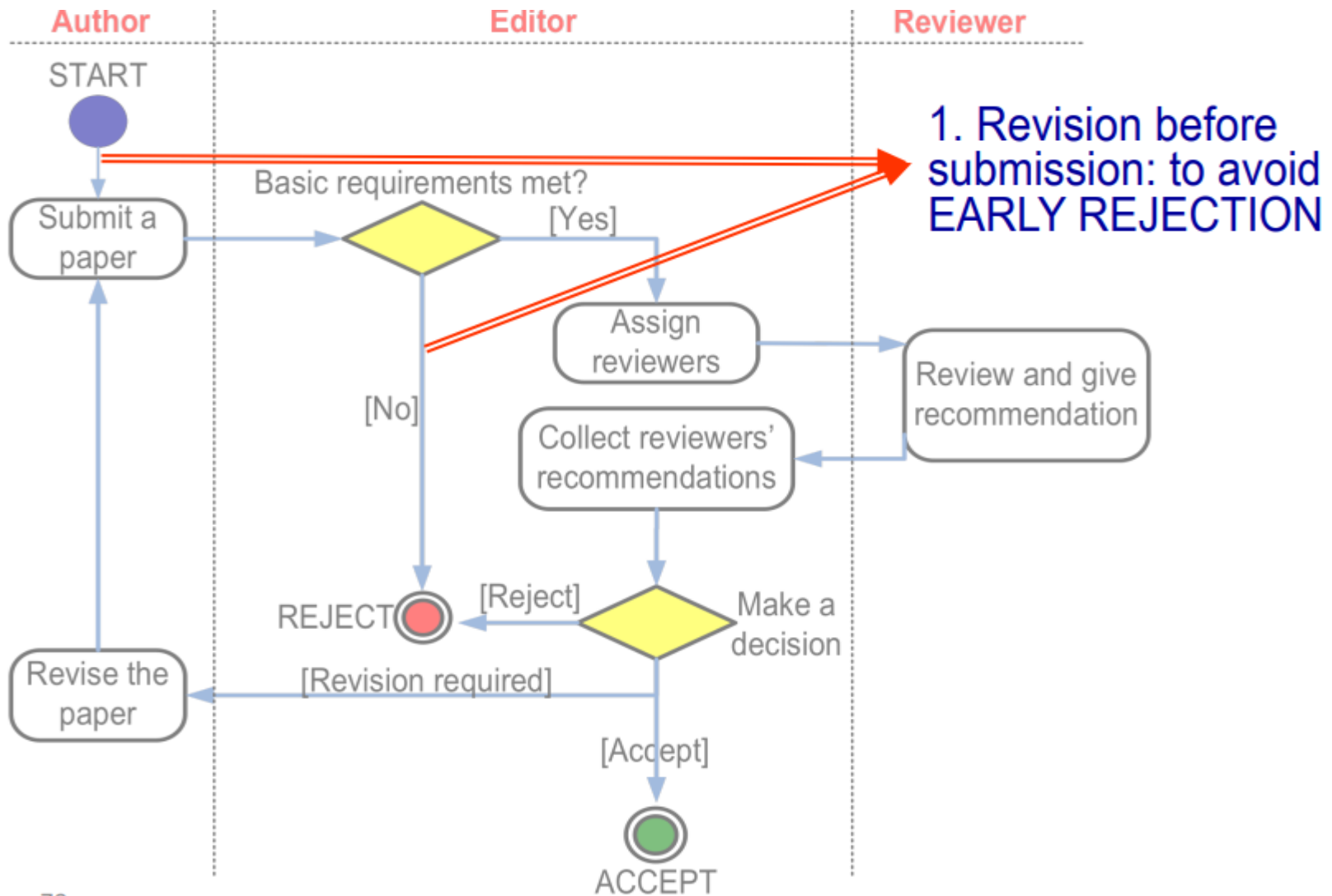
# Submission Process

- Understand the differences (formatting, structure, word limit, figure & table limit, etc) among journal articles (full length research, short research article, review article, communication, opinion, letter, data/ method/ process article, etc), conference article, book or book chapter, working paper, policy brief, newspaper article, thesis, project proposal, blog, and tweet/ status !
- Read Tutorials from [SCOPUS](#), [ELSEVIER](#), [SPRINGER](#), etc.
- Follow submission guidelines carefully - Authors name, affiliation, email, **Corresponding author**, Key words, link authors' profiles from ORCID, Researcher ID, Kudos, etc.
- **Letter to the editor** (small/large, minimum confirmation)
- **Suggest reviewers** (official email, international diversity, inform)
- Journals have different format styles - citations & references
- Upload correct version of file
- Know the reasons for returning the manuscript: [link](#)

# The Process after Submission



# The Process after Submission **cont...**



# Who will handle your manuscripts?

- Many journals use initial screening (e.g. format, style, English, references, etc.) system checked by solarized staffs of journal/publisher.
- The Editor and Reviewers are not the solarized staffs of the journal/publisher
- They work to serve the scientific community. Some cases Editors get some honorarium but mostly the reviewers work as volunteer.
- So understanding their motives will help authors to approach them properly.
- Editor and reviewers are same as like as other authors. They have their own job, supervision, project, articles, KPI, family, etc. This is their volunteer job. So, in every communication, editor and reviewers deserve the full respect from authors.



# Understand the Motivation of Editor

- Many journals use a system of initial screening (e.g. format, style, English, references, etc.) by journal staffs.
- When manuscript goes to managing Editors, S/he may reject without sending it for review (desk rejection)
- The peer-review system is grossly overloaded and editors wish to use reviewers only for those papers with a good probability of acceptance.
- Some Top journals also has publication capacity constraint. Suppose they publish (10article x 4 issue) in a year. So, editor may consider to send only double number in review.
- It is a disservice to ask reviewers to spend time on work that has clear and evident deficiencies.
- In Top journals, Editor looks the benefit of his journal. The big motivation is the probability of citation of the article to increase impact factors of journal
- Also cite some article of that journal & editor !

# Review Process

- Most articles usually reviewed by 2 to 4 external reviewers
  - These are experts (!) in your field who read the article and give their opinions
- They comment on scientific merit, suitability to the journal for which you are applying, and readability
- They are not likely to correct grammar or poor organization; however, negatives in these areas will probably lead to a negative assessment of the scientific merit
- By writing the best literary article, you maximize the chances that the reviewers will be favourable
- The bulk of the decision will then land where it should: on the scientific merit of your contribution
- The best-written article that presents poor science is still not publishable

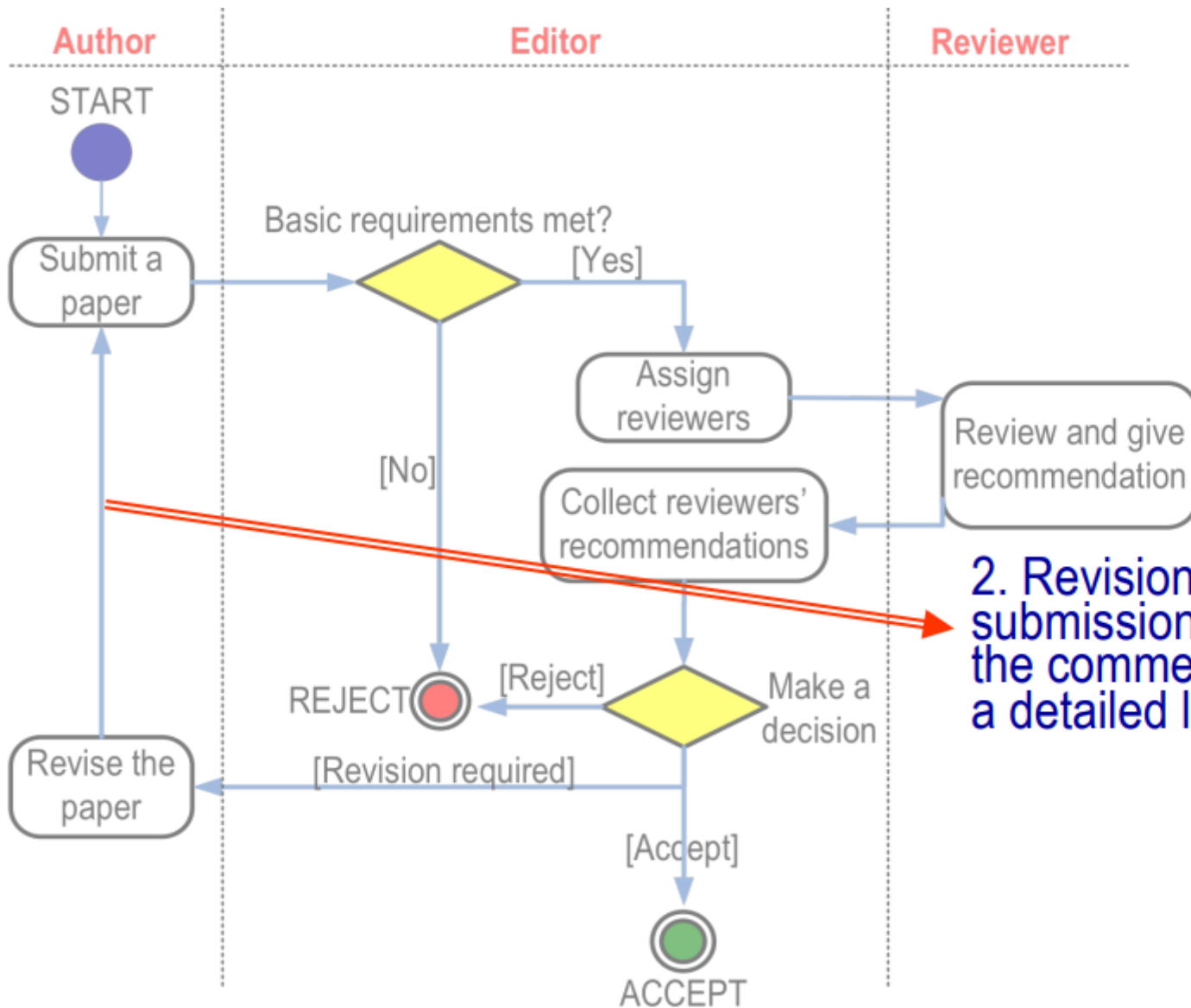
# Understand the Reading Style of Reviewer

- Your reviewers are time-passed academics, not vacationers on a beach
- Most are going to read thing as quickly as possible to get the gist
- A few are going to read things carefully and critically (except paid & top class journals)
- Your reviewers may be reading long pieces in short bursts (e.g., the reviewers read a section or two at one time, with long interruptions)
- Your reader may be frequently interrupted (e. g. a surprising number of things get read on airplanes and your reader may be disrupted by crying babies or flight attendants selling duty free goods)

# Understand the Reading Style of Reviewers **cont...**

- Logically think how busy people read something
- Your reviewers should be able to get the basics of your article by:
  - Reading the abstract
  - Skimming the into/ objective/ motivation
  - Reading the into-methods transition
  - Looking at the figures and major output table
  - Skimming the discussion
  - Search the key words - theoretical & practical contribution, limitation of study, future scope
  - Count the number of latest references & check the journal name
  - Some repetition is good (but do not overdue it)

# Reviewers' Comments Adjustment



2. Revision after submission: carefully study the comments and prepare a detailed letter of response.

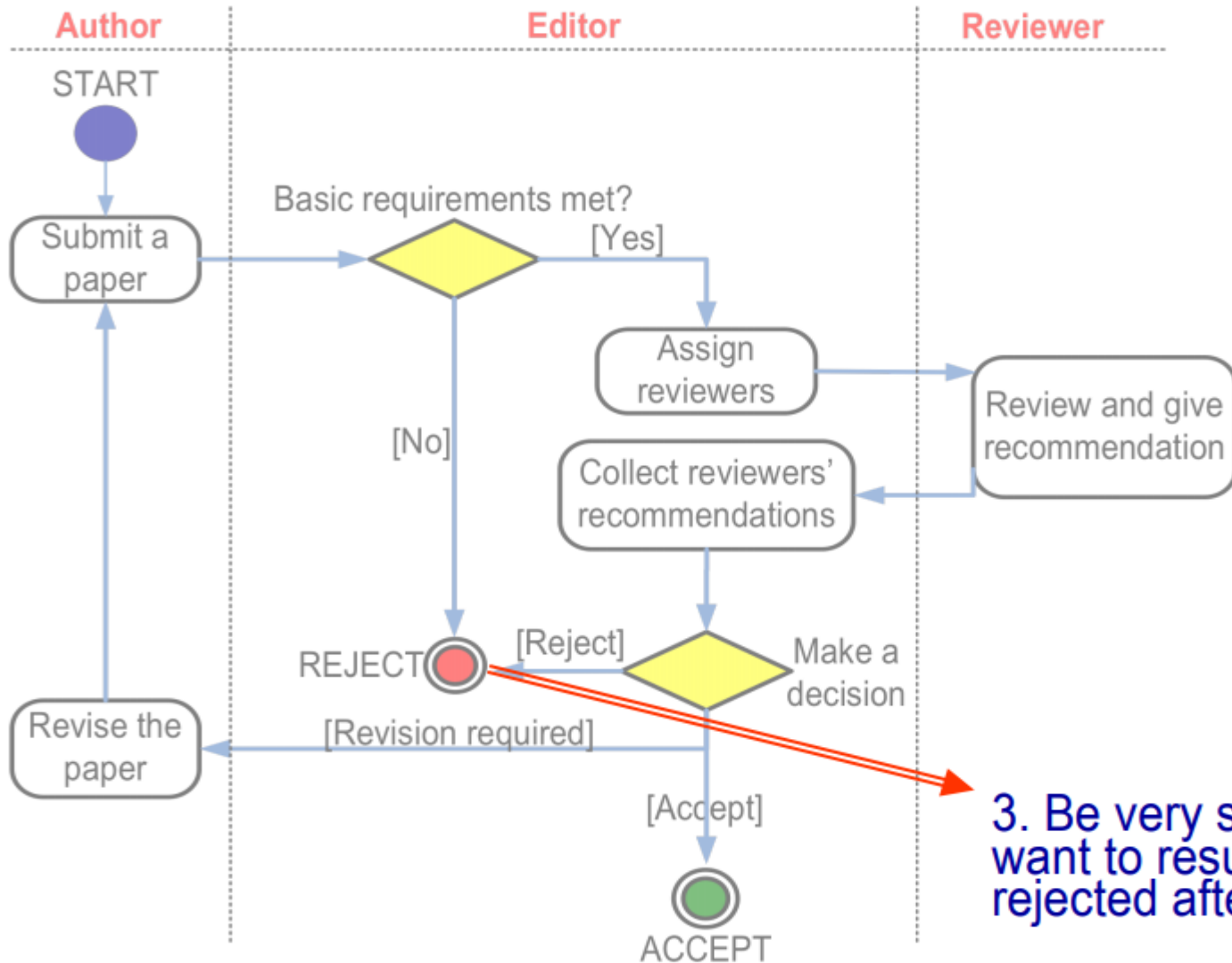
# Reviewers' Comments Adjustment **cont...**

- Consider reviewing as a procedure in which several peers discuss your work. Learn from their comments, and join the discussion.
- Nearly every manuscript requires revision.
- Bear in mind that editors and reviewers mean to help you improve your article – Do not take offense.
- Minor revision does **NOT** guarantee acceptance after revision.  
– Do not count on acceptance, but address all comments carefully
- Revise the whole manuscript – not just the parts the reviewers point out
- Send query email if already over the given time or if it will take more time to adjust the given comments. Find the editor's personal email and give CC !

## Reviewers' Comments Adjustment **cont...**

- A second review of the revised manuscript is common. Cherish the chance of discussing your work directly with other scientists in your community. Please prepare a detailed letter of response.
- Cut and paste each comment by the reviewer. Answer it directly below. Do not miss any point or hide or change comments.
- State specifically what changes (if any) you have made to the manuscript. Give page and line number, show the track change open, or color the content.
- Provide a scientific response to the comment you accept; or a convincing, solid and polite rebuttal to the point you think the reviewer is wrong.
- Write the response in a way that it will read by the reviewer.

# A Very Polite but Heart-breaking Rejection Letter



3. Be very sparing if you want to resubmit a paper rejected after review!



# Planning after Rejection

- Everyone has papers rejected – do not take it personally.
- Try to understand why the paper was rejected.
- Note that you have received the benefit of the editors and reviewers' time; take their advice serious!
- Re-evaluate your work and decide whether it is appropriate to submit the paper elsewhere.
- **If so, begin as if you are going to write a new article. Read the Guide for Authors of the new journal, again and again.**

# Planning after Rejection **cont...**

- Never treat publication as a lottery by resubmitting a rejected manuscript directly to another journal without any significant revision!!! It won't save any of your time and energy...
- The original reviewers (even editors) may eventually find it, which can lead to animosity towards the author.
- A suggested strategy
  - In your cover letter, declare that the paper was rejected and name the journal (!)
  - Include the referees' reports and a detailed letter of response, showing how each comment has been addressed.
  - Explain why you are resubmitting the paper to this journal, e.g., this journal is a more appropriate journal; the manuscript has been improved as a result of its previous review; etc.

# Issues Related to after Acceptance of the article

- Fund/ project acknowledgement
- Fees/ change payment
- Copyright transfer
- Author Add/ Drop repositioning & conflict of interest
- Sharing with others & upload in Self-Repository sites
- Preparing short video or podcast

# Ethics, Reality and the Gray Area

- Is there any syndicate in the publication process?
- Is there any discrimination among discipline/ topics?
- Does network/ relationship help?
- Are boss, funding, project matters?
- Are corresponding author, corresponding organization matter?
- Student/supervisor author position, project member author, ghost author has any role in publication?
- Do fees & waivers related to submission/ processing/ publication/ proof editing/ administrative/ open access/ conference linked journal/ special issues have any role in publication?

