

Peer Reviewing

The good, the bad and the ugly.

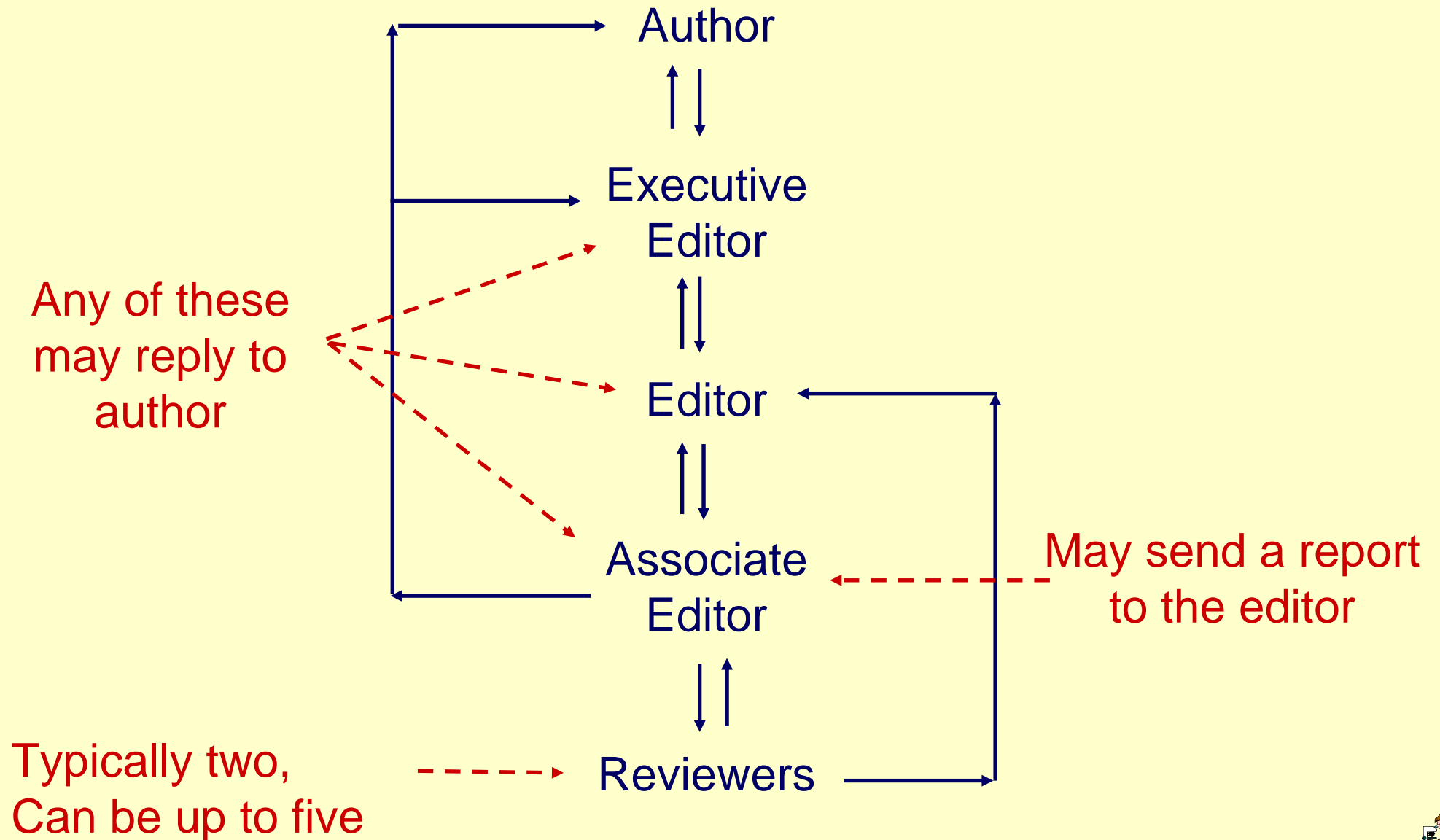


Agenda

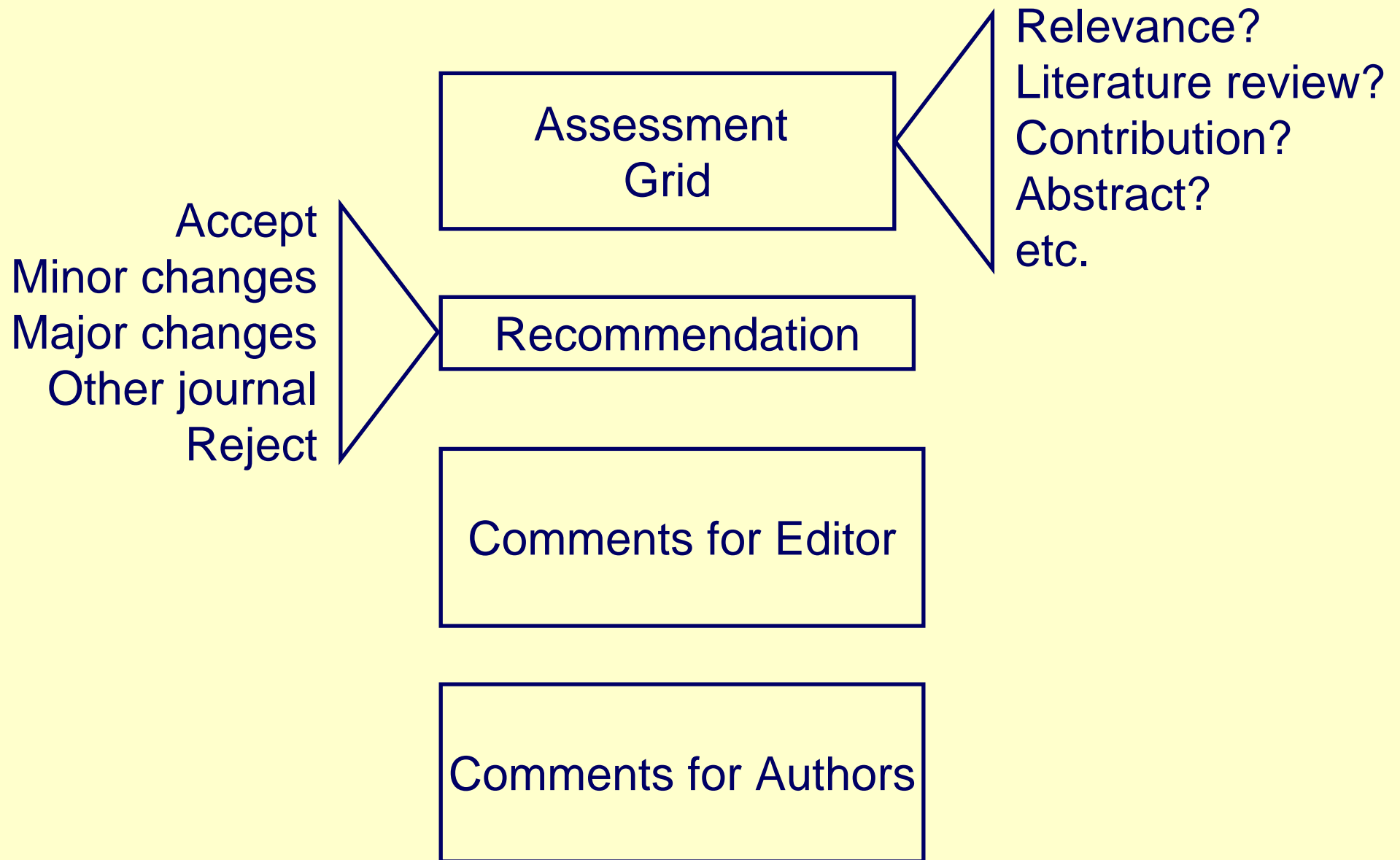
- The reviewing process.
- The review form.
- The good, the bad and the ugly.
- What determines quality.
- Good reviewing practice.
- Helping yourself.
- Other thoughts



The Process



Typical Review Form



The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

Review Quality

Outcome

	Good	Bad
Good	Encouraging	Unimportant
Bad	Enhancing	Unprofessional



What Determines Review Quality?

- ❑ The Editor is key.
- ❑ Good editors:
 - *ensure that reviewers do their job properly;*
 - *resolve differences between reviewers;*
 - *review reviews before returning them;*
 - *add value of their own;*
 - *will engage constructively;*
 - *are objective;*
 - *will try to help authors.*
- ❑ Poor editors:
 - *do not get involved;*
 - *are dismissive;*
 - *will not engage.*



What Determines Review Quality?

- Good reviewers:
 - *Are knowledgeable about the topic;*
 - *Take the time to read the submission carefully;*
 - *Provide constructive criticism;*
 - *Provide helpful advice for improving the text;*
 - *Are diplomatic/tactful.*
- Poor reviewers:
 - *Don't read the text carefully;*
 - *Are more interested in scoring points than in helping authors;*
 - *Do not understand the topic;*
 - *Do not provide helpful comments;*
 - *Are be hurtful and dismissive;*
 - *Are prejudiced or have their own agenda.*



Good Reviewing: One Approach

- Read the abstract:
 - *Get a feel for the paper.*
- Read the conclusion:
 - *This is not a whodunit!*
- Scan the literature review:
 - *Are all important scholars/seminal papers included?*
- Read the text.
- Decide on recommendation.
- Write comments for author(s) and editor:
 - *When and why might these be different?*
- Re-read what you have written carefully.
 - *If you are highly critical, wait 24 hours and re-read.*
- Always think of the impact of what you say on the author.



Good Reviewing: Rejecting

- The first duty of the reviewer is to the reader.
- Need to be:
 - *Clear why;*
 - *Provide chapter and verse.*
- Common reasons for rejection include that the paper:
 - *is not convincing;*
 - *had a poor or not research methodology;*
 - *does not say anything new;*
 - *does not say anything interesting;*
 - *is not linked into existing literature;*
 - *is not linked into existing theory;*
 - *is badly written/argued/presented.*
- The role of editor and reviewer in rejection.



Helping Yourself

- When submitting for reviews:
 - *Read the submission guidelines;*
 - *In particular, check the formatting, font, spacing and other layout rules;*
 - *Remove references to your own work (although editors may do this);*
 - *If not a native speaker, have it checked by a native speakers of the journal's language;*
 - *Have it read by a colleague:*
 - ◆ especially important if you are a single author.
 - *Make sure that the title and abstract match the text:*
 - ◆ you would be surprised how often they do not.
 - *Familiarize yourself with the journal style;*
 - *Keep the writing style and language simple.*



Helping Yourself

- How long does the process take?
 - *Varies with journal;*
 - *Editorial discipline;*
 - *Reviewers are busy people;*
 - *Review is one thing; publication timing is another!*
- What if I don't hear?
 - *Writing to the editor;*
 - *Submitting elsewhere.*
- Some dos and don'ts.
 - *Do have patience;*
 - *Don't send the same article to several journals at once;*
 - *Do check on journal's rules about publication elsewhere;*
 - *Do check copyright on diagrams and pictures;*
 - *Don't get into a fight with an editor.*



Helping Yourself: Rejection

- ❑ Top journals reject over 80% of papers.
- ❑ It happens to everybody at some stage.
- ❑ It hurts, but you will recover.
- ❑ Strategies:
 - *Bin it!*
 - *Submit unchanged to another journal;*
 - ◆ More suitable;
 - ◆ Less competitive;
 - ◆ More specialised.
 - *Re-work it and submit to another journal;*
 - *Consider it as a book chapter;*
 - *Submit it to a conference.*
- ❑ Writing to the Editor
 - *Is it ever worth appealing a decision?*



Other Aspects of Reviewing

- Joining editorial boards.
- Benefits of reviewing:
 - *Makes you read papers!*
 - *Exposes you to new ideas;*
 - *Helps develop your own thinking;*
 - ◆ criticising other people's work helps your own writing.
 - *You are insulated from the problems – that's the editor's job.*
- Drawbacks:
 - *It is time consuming;*
 - *Some papers are truly terrible.*
- Some ground rules:
 - *Stick to what you know;*
 - *Learn to say no;*
 - *Take time and do the job right.*



Questions?