

## EDITORIAL

### Lessons in empowerment: Transparency

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A previous editorial addressed the importance of honesty (Scanes, 2010). This editorial discusses the issues of transparency. In my opinion, transparency is one of the requirements for engendering trust, and trust is critical to so much of what we do.

A culture of transparency is essential for research. The results section of a paper is arguably the most important section. We expect that the results presented fairly summarize the data obtained. It is clearly wrong to selectively present data to be included. This is falsification of results and this is scientific misconduct. The corollary is that we should not bury data that does not fit with our well-established position or working hypothesis. Alter the results or there is statistical significance. Again, this is falsification of results *and* scientific misconduct. I encourage authors to place their raw data into the journal's data repository (as a data supplement) linked electronically to the paper.

A culture of transparency is also important for a journal. There needs to be clarity of expectations. For instance, what statistics are appropriate to report? An area where transparency is not used is with review of manuscripts. I firmly believe in the peer-review process: reviewers need keep confidential the manuscripts they

review, and papers are frequently reviewed “blind”; that is, not identifying the authors or the institution where the research was conducted. I say “frequently” because an experienced reviewer can often discern the laboratory where the work was done.

A culture of transparency is critically important for teaching. Students need to understand the expectations of the instructor. What metrics will be used? What materials will be covered and at what level? How will the textbook be used? Most importantly, when will examinations and tests occur?

I would argue for a culture of transparency in a university, a company, a government laboratory, and in society as a whole. Thomas Jefferson stated that, “Whenever the people are well-informed, they can be trusted with their own government.” I would suggest that this be paraphrased to “when people are well-informed, they trust their own government.”

#### REFERENCES

Scanes, C. G. 2010. Lessons in empowerment: Honesty is essential for trust. *Poult. Sci.* 89:859.