EM Basic Submission guidelines

Updated 4/21/2015

* First- please read the distribution agreement. If you have any issues with the agreement, please contact me first at [steve@embasic.org](mailto:steve@embasic.org) and we can talk about it. This spells out who owns the final product (you!) and how embasic.org will distribute your materials that you provide.
* This is a collaborative project. I am here to help in any way possible and set you up for success.
* This EM Basic Project is open to any 3rd or 4th year EM residents, attending, or any certified/licensed providers with significant emergency medicine experience. I will also accept submissions from 3rd and 4th year medical students, EM interns, and junior residents provided that you work with an EM attending in creating and editing the script. I am happy to review drafts as you write them but please have them reviewed by your attending before you send them to me for review.
* Look at the topics posted on embasic.org and choose a topic that you are knowledgeable about and would like to speak on. Email me at the above address and let me know you are interested. I will take down that topic to avoid duplication of efforts.
* Before you start- please realize that this is a HUGE time commitment. I spend anywhere between 8 to 12 hours preparing the script for EACH EPISODE. These scripts span 10-15 pages single spaced for a 20-30 minute podcast. I then spend about 1-2 hours recording, another hour editing the recording, another hour uploading/posting the content, and 1-2 hours on creating the show notes. Overall, I put about 15-20 hours into each episode and you should be willing to do the same
* If you’re still with me- let’s talk equipment
  + Computer- any laptop/computer will do- MAC or PC doesn’t matter as long as you can convert your audio file into an MP3 at the end of the day
  + Microphone- this can be cheap (Logitech headset $30-50) or more pricey (Blue Yetti microphone $100) or the sky is the limit. I like the audio quality of the Blue Yetti microphone but I realize that is a lot for what could be a one time thing. However, you may find podcasting to be addictive so you may want to spend the cash on the Blue microphone upfront instead of buying a cheap one first.
  + Audio recording software- this can be free (Audacity) or part of an operating system (Garage band, iMovie, etc.). Audacity is easy to use and user friendly so there is no need to spend lots of money here.
* Preparing the script
  + First- read the relevant chapter in Rosen’s or Tintinalli’s. UptoDate is a great source for more updated information but is usually not comprehensive enough for most topics.
  + Prepare a script- word for word on what you are going to say. Here is a general outline to follow
    - Introduction- the topic you will be talking about, who you are, credentials, plugs for your own website/projects, etc.
    - Disclaimer- optional- check with your employer/institution to see if they want you to include this. Use mine as an example
    - Start with picking up the chart and entering the room- address vital signs, red flags in the chief complaint, initial impression, etc.
    - Relevant history questions for the chief complaint
    - Relevant exam findings and maneuvers, tips on doing exam
    - Summary of the above
    - Labs, imagining, other testing for chief complaint with emphasis on evidence based medicine testing
    - Differential Diagnosis for chief complaint with a discussion on working up each relevant differential diagnosis
    - Disposition- where to admit the patient, pitfalls
    - Final summary on labs/imagining, diagnosis, disposition
    - Bonus section- if relevant to chief complaint and you want to do it- for example- in the febrile infants episode I included a bonus section on how to do a lumbar puncture
  + Once you have the script ready, email it to me and I will review it and edit it as necessary. Feel free to send me partial drafts if you want to make sure you are on the right track.
  + Tips
    - Keep it focused, brief, and relevant- Listeners aren’t looking for a differential from Robbins- they want to know the most common differentials and the can’t miss diagnoses with tricks of the trade that you have learned
    - Keep the banter to a minimum- you can lighten it up a few times per episode but this is supposed to be focused. The most consistent feedback I get from listeners is that they like the straightforward and focused style without any unnecessary banter or joke every minute
    - Make sure to keep the summaries in place- also something listeners like a lot
    - With all of this- keep in mind that your audience is an MS-3/MS-4 or EM intern.
    - If there is a clinical controversy in a particular area, let the listener know that but avoid any big rants or injecting your own opinion too much. Let the listener know what they should do as a medical student/intern and let the listener know that there is controversy. For example, there is much controversy about TPA for ischemic strokes and the debate gets really heated. I am not here to get into that debate- I am here to educate medical students and interns. For a medical student or intern, the answer will always be to give TPA in those patients whom it is indicated- not argue with their attending regarding the latest literature. There are other resources if listeners want to hear the debate on a certain subject- feel free to refer them there.
* Recording the podcast
  + Audacity tutorial
  + Take a couple of dry runs with your computer/microphone set up. In general, speak at a distance of about the length of your hand away from the microphone. Adjust the volume settings so that it is loud enough.
  + Eliminate as much background noise as possible. For example, at my apartment you can hear when the refrigerator clicks on so I unplug it for the hour or so it takes me to record the podcast (and keep the door closed!). In general a closed off room works best.
  + Record 5-10 seconds of silence so you can use the nosie removal tool after you have recorded. This will “clean up” the audio a lot.
  + Read from your script and speak into the microphone slower than you think you should. International listeners (and native English speakers!) have a hard time following you if you speak too fast so speak slower than you think you should. It’s ok to have random clicks in from your mouse- some can be edited out later and they aren’t that bothersome in the final project.
  + If you mess up, stop the recording, clip out the offending part, and re-record it. In theory you could wait until the very end and spend a lot of time editing out your mistakes but I find it much easier to do it then and there. This goes not only for mispronunciations but “ahs” and “ums” as well.
  + Be cognizant of your breaths and pops made by words that begin with the letter “P”. You can get a pop filter but they aren’t totally necessary. Just make sure that your “Ps” don’t land hard
  + Save your work early and often- don’t lost it to a computer crash!
* Editing the podcast
  + Once you have recorded the entire episode, play it back in the recording software and edit it along with way. You will want to take out any loud pops or mouse clicks or anything else that gets in the way. On occsasion, you may have to go back and re-record a section because you messed it up for some reason. You may be able to take out “ahs” and “ums” at this point, just make sure that the final product sounds ok
  + Do noise removal- for audacity- highlight that 5 to 10 second clip at the beginning where you only record “silence” (it’s more like your baseline background noise). Go to \_\_\_\_\_, scroll down and click on “noise removal” Click on the button that says “get noise profile” then click ok. The dialog box will close. Now select the entire track by pushing “Control-A”. Click on noise removal again and click on \_\_\_\_\_. This will take out any baseline background noise and make the recording sound much better.
  + For Audacity- export and save as MP3 format. I will take care of the “details” section
  + Upload the file to dropbox- [scarroll@gmail.com](mailto:scarroll@gmail.com). I will take a listen and edit as necessary. In an extreme case, I may ask you to re-record a section but I think this will be rare.
  + Please feel free at any time during script writing or podcast recording to send me drafts to review to make sure you are on the right track. My number one priority is to publish a quality product without wasting anyone’s time
* Show notes
  + This can be done before or after you record the podcast. You may find it helpful to make these before you record the podcast so you know the material better. I recommend printing out the script and using that to make your show notes. This may help you correct errors before you record and make additions of things you may have forgotten.
  + Use the provided template- change the Title at the top and put your name by the author. This is a simple landscape format with two columns and the website/twitter handle at the bottom.
  + Write a brief, bulleted outline of your topic. Use previous show notes from embasic.org as a guide. Cut and paste pictures, graphs, tables, etc as needed to get your point across. \*WARNING: Be careful not to infringe on copyright. If an image has a specific copyright warning next to it saying not to use it, please don’t. Since this product is being distributed for free, we have pretty wide latitude to use images under “fair use” but use some common sense on this. You can never go wrong by citing the source\*
* Publication
  + After all the final editing is done, I will publish it to the embasic.org website and to iTunes, facebook, and twitter. I will put my own introduction at the beginning introducing the podcast and my standard disclaimer- otherwise this will be all your own work and you will be credited for it every step of the way. I am here as the “executive producer” if you will.
  + Please keep in mind the distribution agreement. You will keep the copyright but give embasic.org (run by EM Basic, LLC) the right to distribute your podcast indefinitely. Also, there is a part of the agreement (unless we both agree to waive it) that says that EM Basic LLC has the exclusive distribution rights for the first 30 days. This means that you can link to it as much as you want but we can be the only source for the podcast downloads for the first 30 days. This allows me to keep track of the stats