

Review Response Worksheet

Paper title:

Venue:

Decision / scores:

You got reviews!! People sat down and read your paper and gave you their thoughts — that's amazing. Seriously, take a second to appreciate that. No matter what the decision was, you now have a bunch of people telling you exactly how to make your work stronger. An acceptance? Fantastic, now let's make the camera-ready or follow up paper even better. A rejection? Cool, they just gave you the cheat code for the next submission. Either way, we revise and we improve. That's just what we do.

Step 1: Feel your feelings first.

Take *at least 24 hours after reading the reviews* before you start this worksheet. Read the reviews, have your reaction — celebrate, vent to a friend, take your puppy for a walk, talk it out at therapy (that's what I do), whatever you need. Your feelings are valid and they're (sometimes) important signals! If something a reviewer said makes you fired up, that might mean they hit a nerve worth paying attention to, or it might mean they completely missed the point. You'll figure out which one later with a clear head. But don't touch this worksheet until the emotional dust has settled.





Step 2: Fill out this table for each theme.

Group comments by theme. Now the fun part — treat this like a clustering task. Pull every comment from every reviewer and group them by what they're actually about. Tag each with its source in parentheses — e.g., (R1), (R2), (R1+R3) for overlapping concerns. If two reviewers say the same thing in different words, that's one theme, not two. And when multiple reviewers flag the same thing? That's not a coincidence. That's strong signal. Listen to it.




Decide your stance on each theme. The default is to address it — **plan to act on roughly 90% of what reviewers ask for**. I know that sounds like a lot, *but most feedback will genuinely make the paper better, even when the delivery is rough*. One thing I really need you to internalize: if a reviewer misunderstood something, your first instinct will be "they didn't read it carefully enough." Resist that! **If a reviewer didn't get it, that's a writing problem, not a reading problem.** They gave your

paper a finite amount of attention — just like every future reader will. The fix is always to write it clearer. That said, every once in a while a reviewer is truly asking for a different paper, or they contradict another reviewer, or the comment is just out of scope. In those rare cases, you can let it go. But be honest with yourself: are you rejecting it because it's actually off base, or because it stings? If you decide not to act on something, write down exactly why so we can talk through it together.

This is where it all comes together — you're turning fuzzy review feedback into a concrete action plan. For each theme, figure out what the reviewer is really asking for underneath the surface-level comment, and then decide what specific thing you're going to do about it (or why you're not).

Theme	Grouped Comments (R1, R2, ...)	What's the real concern?	Action
e.g., Evaluation gaps	"No human eval" (R1), "Only automatic metrics" (R2, R3)	Reviewers don't trust results without human judgment	 Run human eval on 100 samples, add table + discussion
e.g., Framing unclear	"Motivation is weak" (R1), "Not clear why this matters" (R2)	Intro doesn't connect contribution to a real problem	 Rewrite intro §1-2 with concrete motivating example
e.g., Missing context	"Doesn't cite [X]" (R2), "Ignores [Y]" (R3)	Paper looks unaware of relevant prior work	 Read and integrate [X], [Y], add comparison paragraph
e.g., Minor notation gripe	"Inconsistent subscripts in §4" (R3)	N/A	 Misunderstanding — notation is consistent, no change needed

Action type tags:

-  **Experiment** — new runs, ablations, human evals, additional baselines, new datasets, error analysis, statistical significance tests, hyperparameter sensitivity, cross-dataset generalization
-  **New study** — user study, survey, annotation task, interview study, think-aloud protocol, inter-annotator agreement
-  **Writing** — reframing, rewriting, clarifying claims, softening overclaims, adding limitations, tightening definitions, improving transitions, fixing the abstract

- 📖 **Related work / conceptual** — literature to find, frameworks to engage with, positioning against competing approaches, adding theoretical grounding, distinguishing from similar methods
- 📊 **Figures / tables** — new or revised visualizations, example outputs, qualitative examples, confusion matrices, architecture diagrams, comparison tables, workflow illustrations
- ❌ **No action** — misunderstanding, out of scope, contradicts another reviewer, already addressed in the paper — rejected with clear justification

Step 3: Go work on the action items from the table.

Now go make that paper stronger! We've got this. 💪