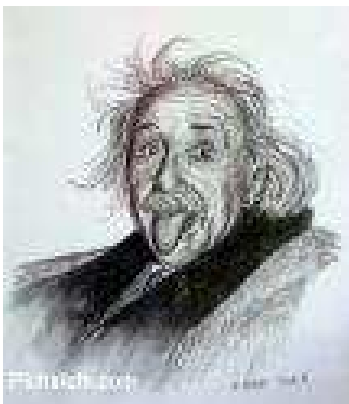


How to Understand a Research Paper

By Samuel Halpern

One of the difficulties that some people have when reading research papers on just about any topic is comprehending the meaning of some of the terms used by authors. The table below is an attempt to make some of the more common terms used easier to understand.



Phrase used	Translation
It is well known ...	I was too lazy to look up the original source.
What this points to ...	The real information is meaningless.
Of major importance...	Of major interest to me.
It can be shown ...	Trust me and don't really ask.
While it has not been possible to provide a definite answer ...	We will never really know the truth but I'm going to tell you what I believe anyway.
Forensic evidence shows ...	I think I might know what they found.
It has been said ...	Don't bother looking it up.
It is widely believed that ...	I for one believe it.
All the evidence points to ...	I found something that fits my hunch.
Additional work is needed ...	Maybe someone else can figure it out .
It was approximately ...	I'm not too sure how accurate it really is.
It is hoped that this will stimulate further investigation ...	Maybe somebody else can get it right after finding all my mistakes.
A careful analysis shows ...	I did some scribbling on the back of an envelope.
If we believe what the experts say about it ...	I'm right and they're obviously wrong.
The truth had been hidden from us ...	It can't be that simple even if all the evidence points that way.