Reviewing with Empathy

4 guiding principles for being a considerate reviewer

Be critical, but constructive

Focus on improvement:
Criticism is always more beneficial when it comes with suggestions for improvement.

Be considerate:
Don't let your anonymity tempt you into being derogatory; never include anything that you wouldn't be prepared to discuss with the author face-to-face.

Meet deadlines

Be realistic about how long it'll take to do the job properly.

Put time aside accordingly. Add it to your diary, and stick to it like you would any other commitment.

Keep the editor informed. Of course, unforeseen and unavoidable things do come up. If that happens, let your editor know as soon as possible.

Maintain Anonymity

Confidentiality regarding the paper you're reviewing is a must. Don't discuss the paper with anyone except the journal editor or editorial office.

Protect your anonymity, according to the review model of the journal*. If you happen to know the author, don't be tempted to discuss your review with them.

*In journals using a single or double anonymised review process, the reviewer's identity is anonymous. In journals using an open or transparent review process, the reviewer's identity may be disclosed to the authors.