Publish-or-Perish

Dr. Rajesh Ramanathan
Research Fellow,
Nanobiotechnology Research Laboratory (NBRL)
Centre for Advanced Materials and Industrial Chemistry
School of Applied Sciences, RMIT University
How does publications help you with PhD?
My Story...

In a time frame of little more than three and half years

• Finished PhD (thesis accepted without any corrections!) 😊😊😊

• Eight peer-reviewed high-impact journal articles including two reviews and a cover page article (Three papers under peer-review)

• Six peer-reviewed conference articles

• Travelled to Sydney, Adelaide, Perth (Australia); Zurich (Switzerland) and Ottawa (Canada) – for conferences

• Three months research visit to University of Waterloo

• Working part-time
  – Demonstrator for bioinformatics and biological chemistry
  – Duty microscopist
Why Publish? What’s in it for me?

• **Ideally**
  – To share your findings with peers and the advancement of science (Save the world!)
  – Personal satisfaction

• **Practically**
  – Personal satisfaction
  – To get funding
  – To get promoted
  – Reputation
  – To get a job
  – To keep your job!
Why don’t people Publish?

• It is not an easy task and takes a lot of effort
• It takes a lot of time
• Even with work and time, sometimes it doesn’t work
• Fear of failure
  – Paper rejection
  – Bad comments
• Benefits not seen immediately.
Building Up Your Research Profile

- Baby Steps!
- Work Hard (experiments, analysing results)
- Learn the art of scientific writing
- Spoken English and Written English are very different
- It takes a lot of hard work! REMEMBER it is not an overnight process
- Read Journal articles! (Probably the most important)
  - Make it a point to read at least one or two articles everyday.
- Start writing early...DO NOT PROCRASTINATE!!
Writing for my first publication?

- Looks pretty straight forward!
- Research – If you work very very hard (6-12 months)
- Draft – another 3 months (add an extra 3-5 months if you don’t read journal articles)
- Corrections (If you are new to scientific writing, this would take a long time)
- Once you all the corrections are done – submit the paper and hope that it will get accepted.

Everyone goes through this process (my first publication came after a year and half)
Following first publication...

- You should have some understanding on how to write as well as what to write!
  - Introduction
  - Methods
  - Results and Discussion
  - Conclusion
  - Figures
- The more articles you write the better you get at it
- Every person has a unique style of writing
- **DO NOT COPY EVEN FROM YOUR OWN PAPERS**
- Learn from your mistakes!
Higher Degree by Research Publication Grant (HDRPG)

• Why is this award important?
  – Gives you the opportunity to build up your profile for your future
  – You get paid to write your publications that you could not finish during PhD

• How to get the award?
  – Work hard during PhD and try and get a few publications

• What do you do if you get the award?
  – Write as many publications you can! By this time you are expected to have learnt the art of writing.
  – Try and send as many publications as you can
  – Build you your research profile (When you go for interviews, this is what people will look at!)
The Importance of Having a Good Research Profile

- Think about your future! It is your future and only you can help it, no one else can!

- Helps you get your PhD/Masters Research! 😊

- When you have a good research profile,
  - You feel good about yourself
  - You feel more confident
  - Helps you getting a jobs, grants
  - More importantly, you learn and master the art of scientific writing which will help you in your future work.
Too Long; Didn't Read (tl;dr)

• Publish or Perish!
• The earlier you build your profile the better it is for you
• Writing is an art, it takes a lot of work to master it.
• Read journal articles
  – It broadens your horizon
  – Helps you write
  – You learn what is important in articles

Remember! A few papers would help your reviewers assessing your thesis and for finding a JOB!
Thank you