

“The Business of Doing Research” A Few Weird Principles

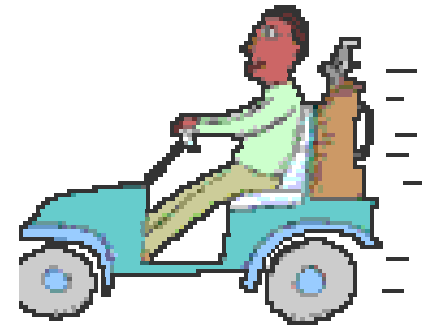
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Outline

- Weird Research Practices
 - Take time off, enjoy life
 - I think I'm in love – with research??????
 - Do research with flaws
 - Choose random co-authors

Take Time Off, Enjoy Life



- Work on writing “a little” everyday.
- Create “sacred” blocks of time for writing.
- Once its time to quit, leave it at the office.
- Psalm 127: 1 & 2 – “Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman keeps awake in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to retire late, to eat the bread of painful labors; For He gives to His beloved *even in his sleep.*”

Take Time Off, Enjoy Life

- Recent survey of professors asked:

“How many hours of deep thinking do you get done each day?”

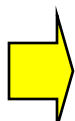


mean = 1.82, sd = 1.03

Take Time Off, Enjoy Life

“How many hours of deep thinking do you get done each day?”

mean = 1.82, sd = 1.03



“How many hours of deep thinking do you think you’ll get done each day?”

mean = 5.63, sd = 3.21



Take Time Off, Enjoy Life

- Typical day:
 - Deep thinking
 - Practical thinking
 - Creative thinking
 - No thinking

Take Time Off, Enjoy Life

- Typical day:
 - Deep thinking (first drafts, revisions)
 - Practical thinking (teaching prep)
 - Creative thinking (running, haircut, café)
 - No thinking (email)



I think I'm in love – with research??????

A recent survey asked leading academics to reflect back on their careers and think about what principles, ideas, philosophies and practices contributed to their success

These distinguished professors wrote essays and their ideas were analyzed and synthesized to core themes:

I think I'm in love – with research??????

- By far the most common theme was *passion*.
- The research and review process is very challenging.
- These successful researchers engage themselves in projects they *love*.
- Ask yourself these questions:

Do you get excited and can talk to anyone about your research?

Does your research keep you up at night?



I think I'm in love – with research??????

- “The critical thing that contributes to the success of an academic is a **passion for research**, and more specifically, for the domain of research in which one is immersed. Successful Ph.D. graduates are naturally curious about the phenomenon they investigate—they look at it not because it is “hot” but because they are intrinsically interested in it. This curiosity and passion is what will drive them through multiple rounds of reviews and comments from reviewers.”

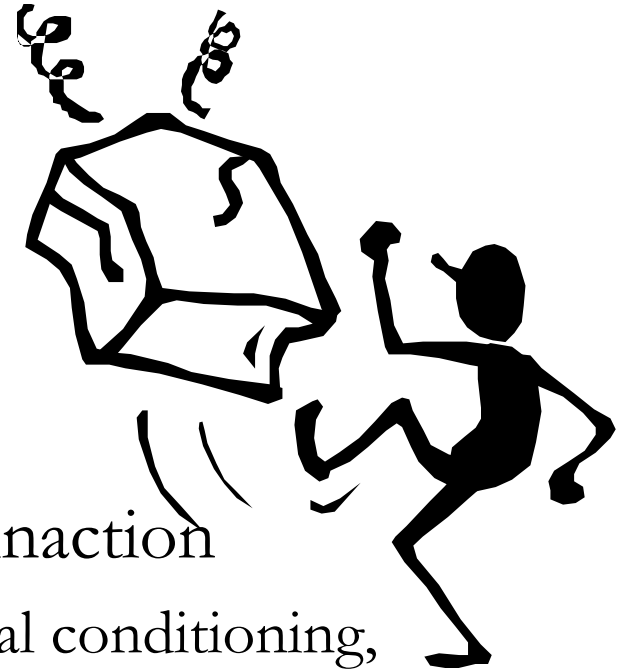
– **Dr. Debbie MacInnis,**
University of Southern California

I think I'm in love – with research??????

- “Work on things that you are **passionate about**. Impactful research requires original ideas, which require creativity as well as a deep knowledge of the literature. If you are not passionate about a topic, you will not read all there is to read, and you will not search deep within your own experience base to develop new ideas, connections, and insights. Passion drives a search for voids in knowledge as well as possible answers to those voids.”
 - **Dr. Ajay Kolhi, Emory University**
- “....I find my work **utterly engaging**. So along with a good measure of iconoclasm, my piece of advice is to find fully fun challenges that enrapture and fully engage you.”
 - **Dr. Russ Belk, University of Utah**

Do Research with Flaws

- All studies have flaws
 - Very good and famous scientists get their journal articles rejected.
- Reward success and failure, punish inaction
 - Being Pavlov and his dog (e.g., classical conditioning, gift giving)

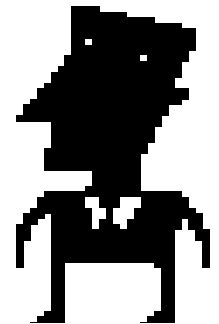


Pavlov and Dog



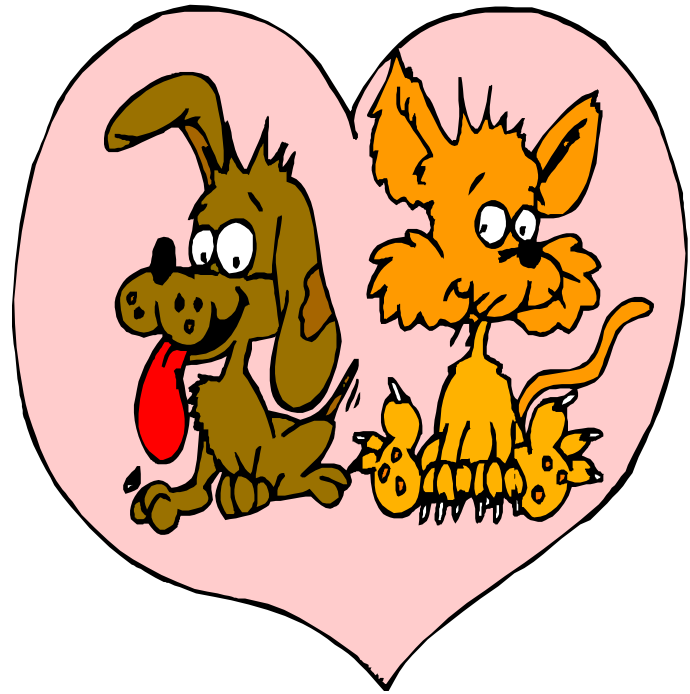
“Ever reward yourself?” yes = 79%, no = 21%

- Classical conditioning
 - During work: light candles, play music
 - Utilize the pressure of special issue journal CFPs
- Other reward systems
 - Write small section of paper: eat
 - Paper out for review: facial/massage, clothes, CD
 - “Finish” project: vacation



Choose Random Co-authors

- Choose someone you like.



Choose Random Co-authors

Choose (or say yes to) someone:

- (1) you like (71%)
- (2) with same goals (43%)
- (3) complementary skill set (43%)
- (4) tolerant/can argue with (36%)
- (5) you respect (29%)
- (6) positive energy (14%)
- (7) open communication (14%)



maximizing synergy and complementarities

Choose Random Co-authors

- Appreciate their strengths
 - Co-authors or spouses?
 - 140% total
- Basic needs:
 - Creativity (designing studies)
 - Execution (willingness to get things done)
 - Writing (can be a bad writer, but a good rewriter)
 - Flaw finding (designing new studies, thinking of new analyses)
 - Rewriting (positioning, integration of literatures)
 - Egocentric fighter OR cheerleader (get thru review process)
 - Copy editor (detailed eye)

References

- Significant portions of this presentation is drawn from similar presentations delivered by Jennifer Aaker (Stanford University) at the 2006 ACR Doctoral Consortium and Daniel Ladik (Suffolk University) at the 2006 Winter AMA Educators' Conference.