

# *How to Get Your Research Published*

**Prof Simon Capewell &**

**Liverpool NCD Prevention & Food Policy Research Group**

**With thanks to: Jo Thompson-Coon, Aileen Clarke, Ian Harvey, Sarah Wild**

**SSM ECR Day**

**6<sup>th</sup> September 2022**



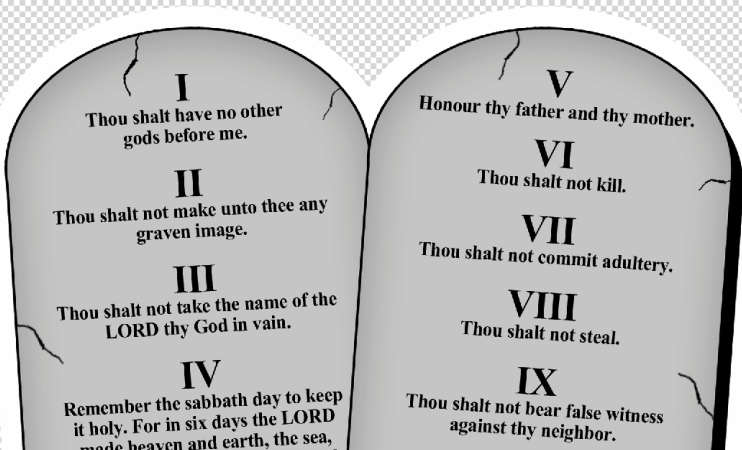
UNIVERSITY OF  
**LIVERPOOL**

*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

# Learning Outcomes

# Learning Outcomes

- Reflect on one's own writing practice
- Understand strengths and weaknesses of one's own writing practice
- Determine strategies for writing for different audiences
- **Develop practical strategies for writing scientific articles for publication**
- **Understand the process of publication in peer-reviewed publication, including interacting with reviewers and editors**
- Development of publication action plans to assist with career planning



*Thanks to our Team*

***NCD Prevention & Food  
Policy Research Group***

**Simon Capewell, Martin O'Flaherty  
Chris Kypridemos & Sadia Khan**

**Olga Anosova    Piotr Bandosz  
Helen Bromley    Bren Collins  
Jose Coronado    Kate Fleming  
Mark Green    Anna Head  
Vincy Huang    Lirije Hyseni**

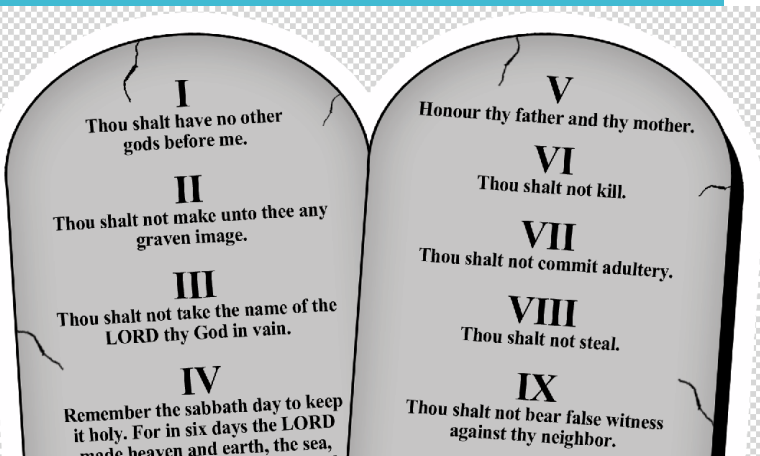
**Helena Kjeldgaard  
Ffion Lloyd-Williams  
Hendy Maheswaran  
Manu Mathur    Moez Subhani  
Jonny Pearson-Stuttard  
Pieta Schofield    Ellen Schwaller  
Claudia Soiland-Reyes**



*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

# Principles

# 5 Key Principles



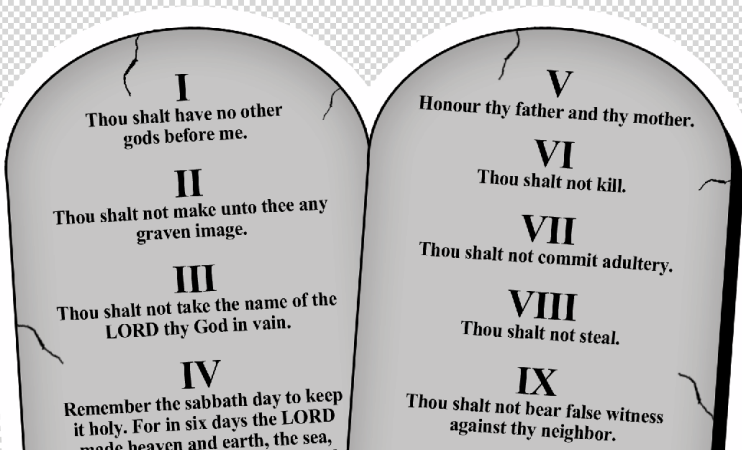
*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

# Principles

## 5 Key Principles

*What, do YOU think, are the  
most important contributors  
to successful research ??*

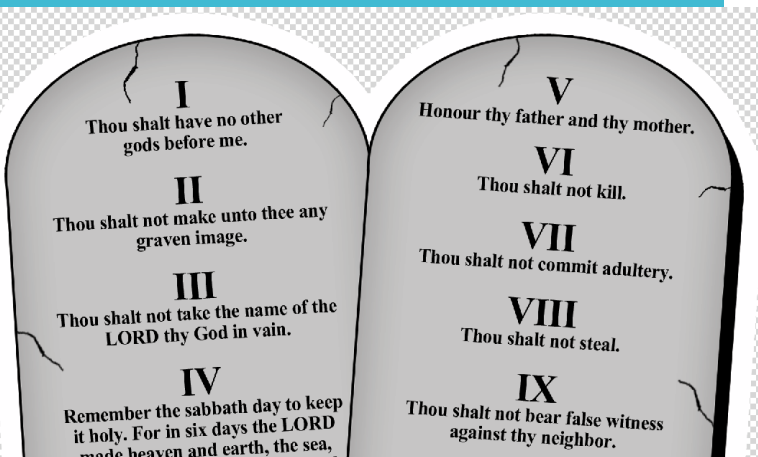
*Jot down your ideas (30 seconds),  
Share with your neighbours*



*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

# Principles

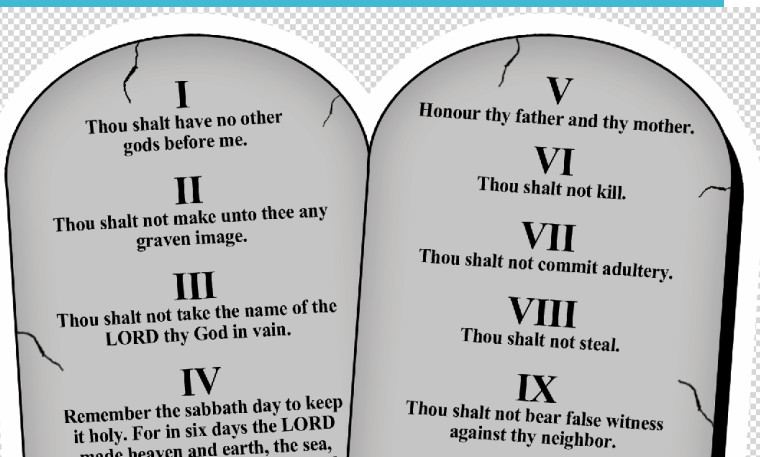
## 1. Build relationships (*80% success*)



*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

# Principles

- 1. Build relationships** (*80% success*)
- 2. Collaboration not competition**

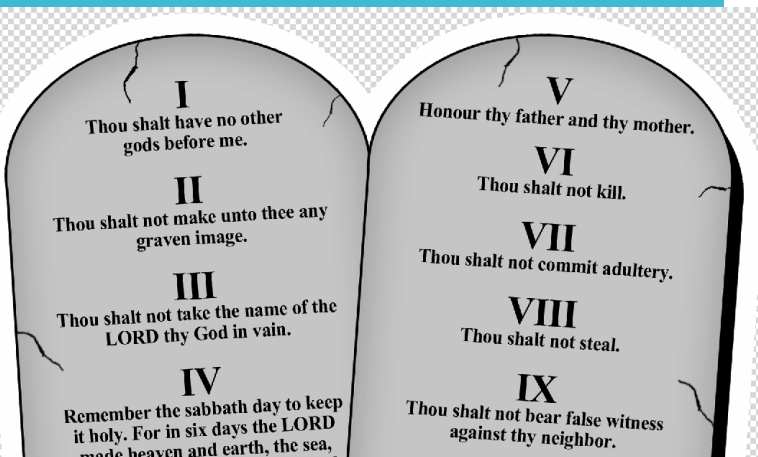




*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

# Principles

- 1. Build relationships** *(80% success)*
- 2. Collaboration not competition**
- 3. Apprenticeship** *Try & work with good researchers, or offer to lend a hand*

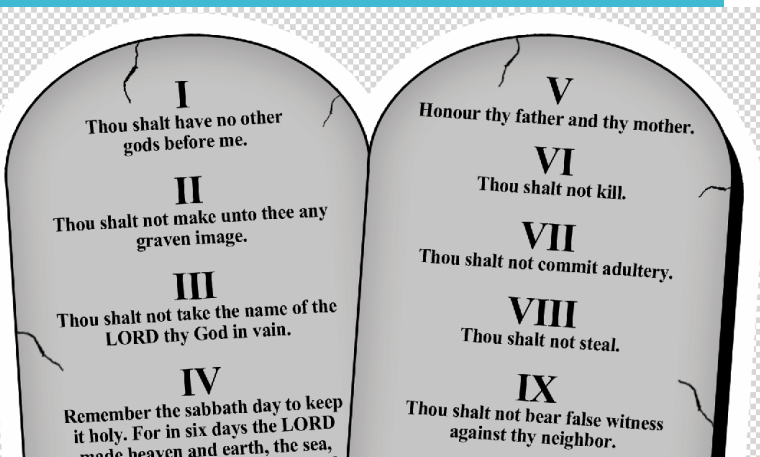




*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

# Principles

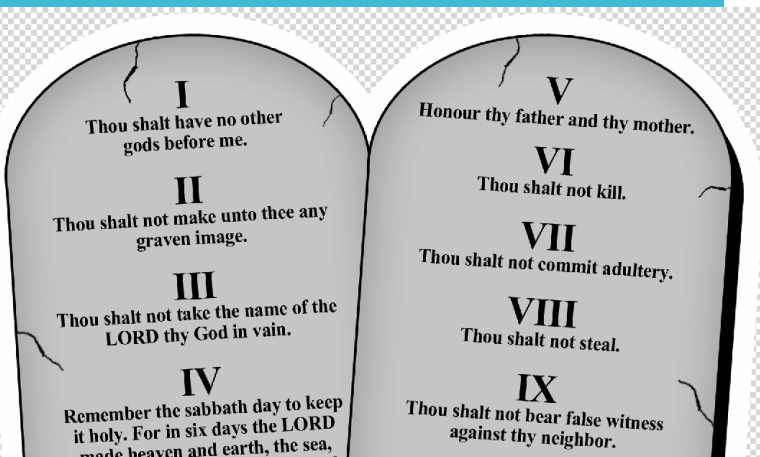
- 1. Build relationships** (*80% success*)
- 2. Collaboration not competition**
- 3. Apprenticeship** *Try & work with good researchers, or offer to lend a hand*
- 4. Determination / Fortitude/Persistence**



*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

# Principles

- 1. Build relationships** (*80% success*)
- 2. Collaboration not competition**
- 3. Apprenticeship** *Try & work with good researchers, or offer to lend a hand*
- 4. Determination / Fortitude/Persistence**
- 5. Break big tasks into smaller bits**  
*"Micro-productivity"*





# **KATE'S TIPS: Things you need to do**

- 1. Manage your time – PLAN, PLAN, PLAN.**
- 2. Manage your boss's/supervisors' time**
- 3. Ask for help**
- 4. Accept comments/criticism**
- 5. Challenge comments/criticism**
- 6. Anticipate the end game**

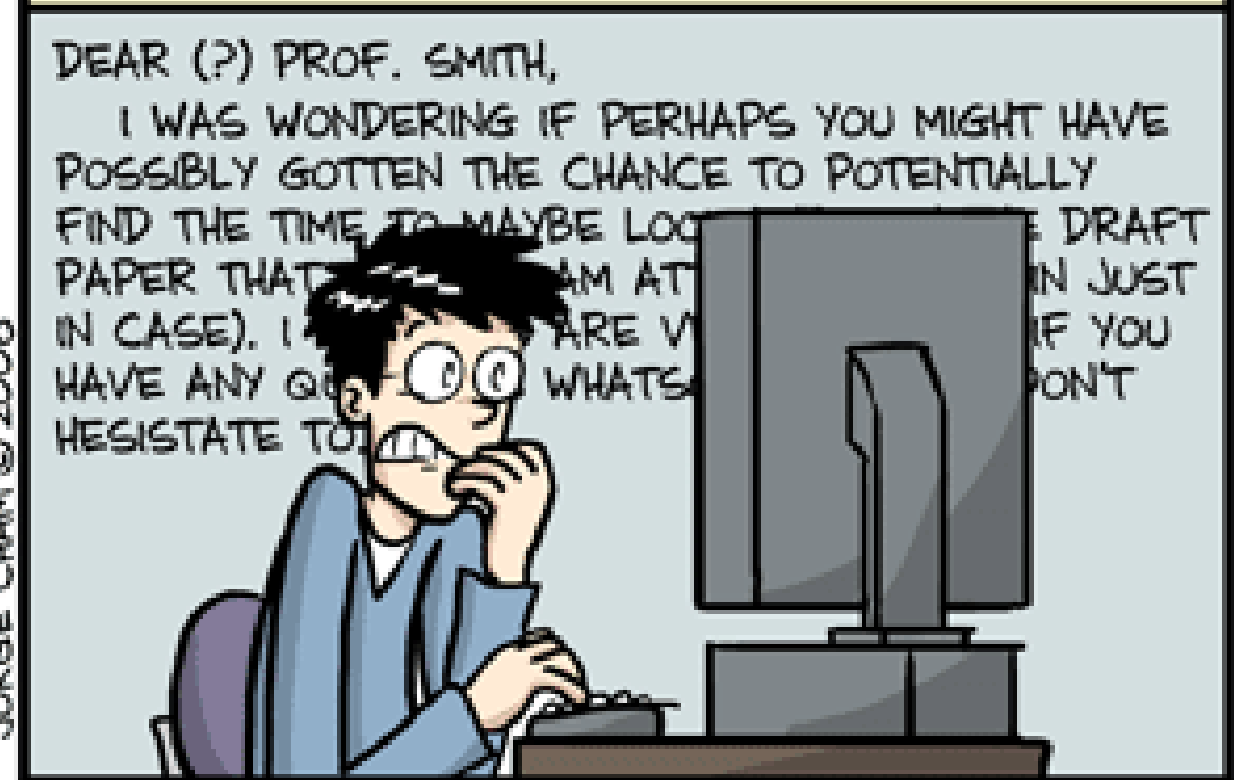
# How & When? Time management

## AVERAGE TIME SPENT COMPOSING ONE E-MAIL

PROFESSORS: 1.3 SECONDS



GRAD STUDENTS: 1.3 DAYS



*Getting  
Published*

Four simple  
steps

1. Operationalise Study Protocol
2. Draft Abstract
3. Draft & Submit Manuscript
4. Satisfy journal editor & reviewers



*Getting  
Published*

**Four simple  
steps**

- 1. Operationalise Study Protocol**
2. Draft Abstract
3. Draft & Submit Manuscript
4. Satisfy journal editor & reviewers



*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

# Protocol



- 1. Crucial bedrock**
- 2. Seek advice widely**  
including mentor (s)
- 3. Include scoping review**  
or systematic review
- 4. Clear Research Question**
- 5. Draft dummy tables**



*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

# Protocol



- 1. Crucial bedrock**
- 2. Seek advice widely**  
including mentor (s)
- 3. Include scoping review**  
or systematic review
- 4. Clear Research Question**
- 5. Draft dummy tables**
- 6. Pilot or die**

*Getting  
Published*

Four simple  
steps

1. Operationalise Study Protocol
2. Draft Abstract
3. Draft & Submit Manuscript
4. Satisfy journal editor & reviewers



*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

**Group  
Discussion**

## Questions to facilitate Discussion

**How many abstracts have you  
been involved in drafting?**

**What was the most scary/tricky bit?**

*Jot down your thoughts*

*Share with your neighbour*

*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

## Abstract (1)



**Draft Abstract EARLY** *Before project has finished*

**Use IMRAD structure**

**Involve team, senior author, friends, partner, mentor etc**

*Helps clarify focus, identify key issues and results*

*Look for novel/"sexy" angles*

*Submit as soon as initial results available  
(more will be available by conference date)*

*Iterate the best possible title*

*Sort out authorship issues*

*= Scaffold for "fleshing out" subsequent manuscript*

*Simon Capewell 2021*

*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

## Abstract (2)



**Draft Abstract EARLY** *Before project has finished*

Use IMRAD structure

Involve team, senior author, friends, partner, mentor etc

*Helps clarify focus, identify key issues and results*

**Look for novel/"sexy" angles,** *find market niche*

**Submit as soon as initial results available**

*(more will become available by conference date)*

**Iteration** → **key messages & best title,** *consider media angles*

**Sort out authorship issues** *(BMJ authorship guidelines useful)*

**Plan ahead regarding possible target journals**

**Abstract = Scaffold for subsequent manuscript** *Simon Capewell 2021*

# Asking for help

*“There is no such thing as a stupid question”*

# Asking for help

*“There is no such thing as a stupid question”*

- Supervisor / other researchers/academics
- Co-authors
- Mentors
- PEERS – your institution, SSM, other
- Taught courses
- Student advice centre



*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

**Seek Feedback**

# Seek Feedback

- 1. GRAB any opportunity to elicit feedback advice, suggestions, new collaborators**
- 2. Seek presentations to conferences, department, institute, visitors**



*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

**Seek Feedback**



# Seek Feedback

- 1. GRAB any opportunity to elicit feedback advice, suggestions, new collaborators**
- 2. Seek presentations to conferences, department, institute, visitors**
- 3. Presenting "Research in Progress" is GOOD**
- 4. Use audience feedback to improve study/ abstract/ manuscript**

*Getting  
Published*

Four simple  
steps

1. Operationalise Study Protocol
2. Draft Abstract
3. **Draft & Submit Manuscript**
4. Satisfy journal editor & reviewers



# Pause for Q&A



*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

**Group  
Discussion**

# Questions to Facilitate Discussion

**How many abstracts have you been involved in drafting?**

**What was the most scary/tricky bit?**

**What might you do differently next time?**

*Jot down your thoughts*

*Share with your neighbour*

# Part 2

*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

**Group  
Discussion**

## Questions to facilitate Discussion

How many **manuscripts** have you been involved in drafting?

What was the most scary/tricky bit?

*Jot down your thoughts*

*Share with your neighbour*



# *HOW to write*

## Jo's Top Tips 1

[J.Thompson-Coon@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:J.Thompson-Coon@exeter.ac.uk)

- **Work out WHEN you write best** – eg if mornings, schedule that time for new writing (and schedule editing/referencing tasks for afternoon, or vice versa)
- **Work out HOW you write best.** Some prefer **little and often**, eg 20 minutes every day before your emails. (Others might **block out a day**, or even a week).
- **Create a routine for getting down to writing**, and then...
- **Block that time off in your diary** (others can see what you're doing)
- Start writing before you turn your **emails** on, and keep them turned OFF
- **Take regular breaks** – short writing sessions then breaks are more productive

# *HOW to write*

## Jo's Top Tips 2

[J.Thompson-Coon@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:J.Thompson-Coon@exeter.ac.uk)

- **Work out WHEN you write best** – eg if mornings, schedule that time for new writing (and schedule editing/referencing tasks for afternoon, or vice versa)
- **Work out HOW you write best.** Some prefer **little and often**, eg 20 minutes every day before your emails. (Others might **block out a day**, or even a week).
- **Create a routine for getting down to writing**, and then...
- **Block that time off in your diary** (others can see what you're doing)
- Start writing before you turn your **emails** on, and keep them turned OFF
- **Take regular breaks** – short writing sessions then breaks are more productive
- **Start with the Methods** - is often easiest, you should know what you've done (and there may be reporting standards one can follow)
- **Find an easy bit that you really know, & start there** (Aileen Clarke's advice)
- **Finish in the middle of a sentence** (or paragraph), so that when you come back to it, the first few words are easier
- **Create First; later, Prune hard** – (Make each word earn its place)
- Build in accountability by **agreeing a date to share with a colleague** and ask them to block out time to read- you then have to meet your own deadline!
- **Write with others, if you prefer** – the collective silence can be addictive!

*WHAT to write*

# Four simple steps

1. Operationalise Study Protocol
2. Draft Abstract
3. **Draft & Submit Manuscript**
4. Satisfy journal editor & reviewers



*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

**Grow your  
writing  
skills**

**Simon's lessons slowly learned** (*huge thanks to Tim Albert, Gordon Leitch, Sandy Muir, Jim McEwan, Norman Horne, Dwight McLeod etc etc*)

1. Plan before writing: *Draft an Outline, & be willing to refine it*
2. Create Text First, Criticise Later
3. Use deadlines: Draft a timetable to maintain momentum & morale
4. Break task into manageable bits (*less daunting, easier to see progress*)
5. Work with a buddy, (*or ideally with a team*)
6. Define your audience (*for journals, it is just 1 editor & 2 reviewers*)

The Perfect I

5.

15



# Getting Your Research Published & Disseminated

# Grow your writing skills

**Simon's lessons slowly learned** (*huge thanks to Tim Albert, Gordon Leitch, Sandy Muir, Jim McEwan, Norman Horne, Dwight McLeod etc etc*)

1. Plan before writing: Draft an Outline, & be willing to refine it
2. Create Text First, Criticise Later
3. Use deadlines: Draft a timetable to maintain momentum & morale
4. Break task into manageable bits (*less daunting, easier to see progress*)
5. Work with a buddy, (*or ideally with a team*)
6. Define your audience (*for journals, it is just 1 editor & 2 reviewers*)
7. Write bullet points for each section; *expand later into paragraphs*
8. Keep sentences short and clear.
9. Use "inverted pyramid" paragraphs, *ie "front-load" your main message first, followed by supporting evidence. (especially Intro & Discussion & Editorials).*
10. Aim for a narrative thread running through a series of paragraphs
11. Find an easy bit that you really know, and start there (*Aileen Clarke's advice*)

The Perfect I

5.

15



*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

# Manuscript drafting

1. **Break big tasks into small bits ✓**
2. **Write bullet point sentences for each section, ✓**  
*expand later into paragraphs*
3. **Concise sentences. Each paragraph <8 lines ✓**
4. **Clear, concise messages & threads ✓**

**The Perfect Pizza**

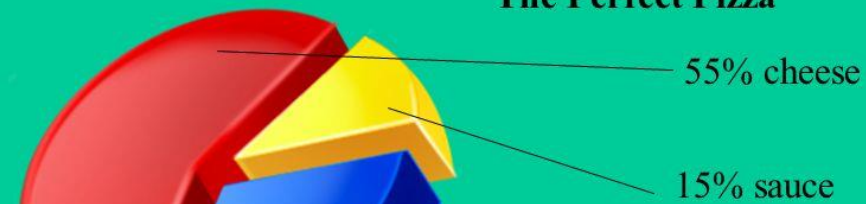


*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

# Manuscript drafting

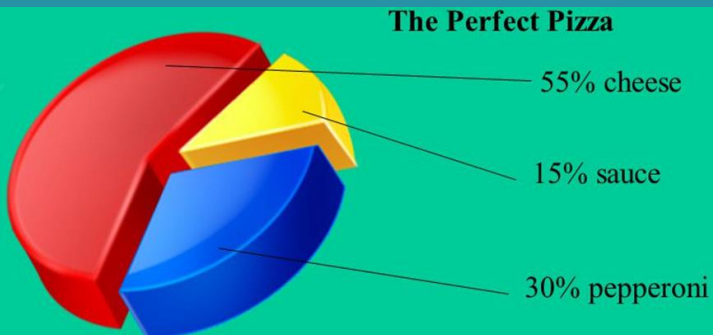
1. Break big tasks into small bits
2. Write bullet point sentences for each section, *expand later into paragraphs*
3. Concise sentences. *Each paragraph <8 lines*
4. Clear, concise messages & threads
5. **Shape your STORY for Reviewer & Editor**  
*"How this work contributes to current debate on topic."*
6. **Best stories are SIMPLE; Likewise best papers**  
*KISS principle: KEEP IT SIMPLE & SHORT*
7. **Consider Reporting Guidelines to structure paper**  
*e.g. STROBE (Cohorts), CONSORT (RCTS)  
PRISMA (systematic reviews) etc.*

**The Perfect Pizza**



# Getting Your Research Published & Disseminated

## Introduction

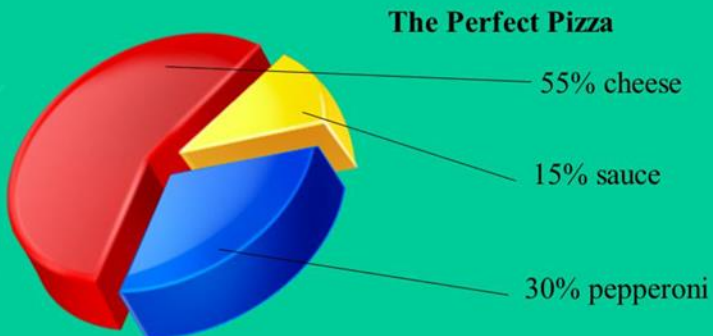


## Introduction section

1. Build on text from Protocol & Systematic Review/ Scoping Review
2. Involve a topic expert
3. Most journals only want 2-3 paragraphs (*WHY topic is important, WHAT research needed*)
4. **Sell Your Story** (*Share your excitement & enthusiasm*)
5. **First & last sentences are crucial**



# Methods



## Methods section

- 1. Build on abstract & protocol text**
- 2. Ideally provide sufficient detail so another researcher could replicate the study**
- 3. Excess detail might be transferred into a Technical Appendix (*journals mostly electronic*)**
- 4. OK to copy & paste relevant text from previous papers, then edit.**

*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

# Results

## Results section

1. Build on abstract
2. Lay out structure early
3. Create dummy tables early, *to clarify most important results, & how best to present them.*
4. Excess detail might be transferred into a **Technical Appendix** (*journals mostly electronic*)
5. Interpret in Discussion, not in Results

The Perfect Pizza



# Getting Your Research Published & Disseminated

## Discussion 1

### Discussion section

Draft using structure, eg BMJ. One para each:

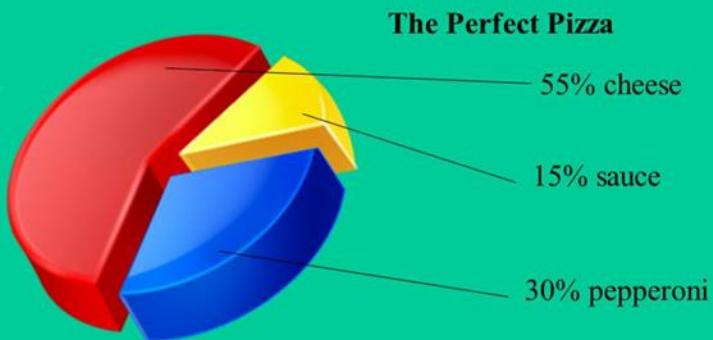
1. **Summary of Main Findings** (*journalist's focus*)
2. **Relate these to previous studies**
  - Main finding #1
  - Main finding #2
  - Main finding #3
3. **Strengths & limitations\*** (CRUCIAL)

The Perfect Pizza



# Getting Your Research Published & Disseminated

## Discussion 2



## Discussion section

Draft using structure, eg BMJ. One para each:

1. Summary of Main Findings (*journalist's focus*)
2. Relate these to previous studies
  - Main finding #1
  - Main finding #2
  - Main finding #3
3. Strengths & limitations\* (CRUCIAL)
4. Implications for..... Policy, Public Health, Future Research
5. Brief conclusions (*Media focus: To spin, or not?*)
6. First & last sentences are crucial
7. Throughout study, jot down thoughts as they occur to you, & grab feedback suggestions

*Getting Your  
Research Published  
& Disseminated*

**Finalising &  
submitting  
manuscript**

- 1. First author does 80% of work**
- 2. But MUST get 20% input from colleagues, especially experienced ones**
- 3. Co-authors prefer a formatted (tidy) draft**  
*(but bullet points are perfectly OK, initially)*
- 4. Give co-authors deadline for comments**
- 5. A perfectionist critic has value,**  
*(but try & engage them early, not last minute)*

Initially accept comments & criticism, then reflect, then challenge later

Initially accept comments & criticism, then reflect, then challenge later



JORGE CHAM © 2006

Never, EVER,  
call a  
document  
“FINAL”



Never, EVER,  
call a  
document  
"FINAL"

# "FINAL".doc



FINAL.doc!



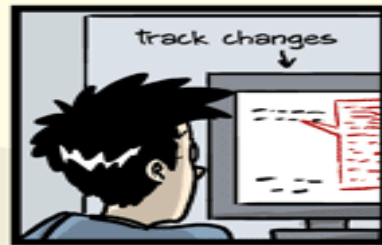
FINAL\_rev.2.doc



FINAL\_rev.6.COMMENTS.doc



FINAL\_rev.8.comments5.  
CORRECTIONS.doc



FINAL\_rev.18.comments7.  
corrections9.MORE.30.doc



FINAL\_rev.22.comments49.  
corrections.10.#@\$%WHYDID  
ICOMETOGRADSCHOOL?????.doc



JORGE CHAN © 2012

# Pause for Q&A



*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

# Group Discussion

## Questions to facilitate Discussion

**How many manuscripts have you been involved in drafting?**

**What was the most scary/tricky bit?**

**What might you do differently next time?**

*Jot down your thoughts*

*Share with your neighbour*

# Part 3

*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

**Plan a journal  
hit-list in advance**

## **Plan a journal hit-list in advance**

- 1. Be systematic**
- 2. Research your target journals early on**  
*Scope & intended readership?  
Has it published similar papers?  
Skim issues to see topics; structure; writing & referencing style etc  
Unsolicited reviews welcomed/not?*
- 3. Impact Factors (IF) matter**  
*Lancet, BMJ, PLoS, BMC etc  
Jane helps you to choose target journals:  
<http://jane.biosemantics.org/>*
- 4. Aim high,** *α your ambition, energy, persistence & time available*
- 5. Identify ~4 target journals–** *one with a higher IF than you think your manuscript is suitable for, & one lower*
- 6. It is a “marketplace”**  
*You are selling your story to journal editor*



# Cover Letter

**EXCITING**



**STUFF**

1. **EDITOR is gatekeeper.** Wants simple, clear, original, punchy paper.  
(relies on the reviewers to detect bullshit or bias)
2. **COVER LETTER is v important:**  
*A brief summary where you can brag about the study,  
and how important this paper is for that journal.  
An opportunity to entice the editor to send manuscript for review.*



# Cover Letter

**EXCITING**



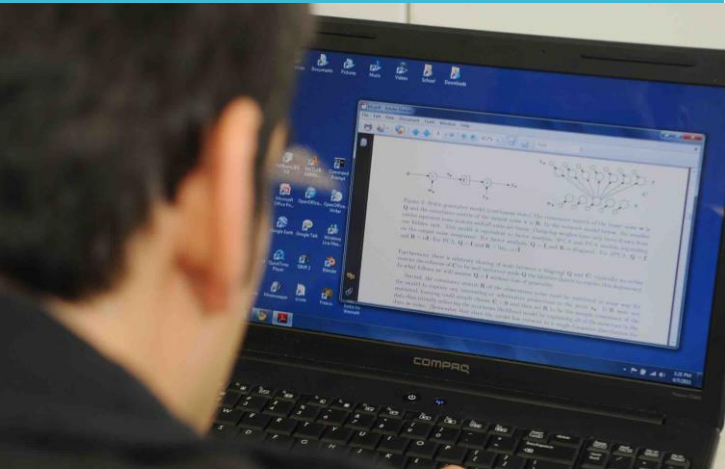
1. **EDITOR is gatekeeper.** Wants simple, clear, original, punchy paper.  
(relies on the reviewers to detect bullshit or bias)
2. **COVER LETTER is v important:**  
*A brief summary where you can brag about the study,  
and how important this paper is for that journal.  
An opportunity to entice the editor to send manuscript for review.*
3. Obtain an exemplar from your supervisor/boss/mentor
4. Reconsider your **TITLE**. A catchy Title can sell a paper.
5. **MONEY!** You & senior author need to identify the funds available (Most open access journals now charge £1000+)

# Getting Your Research Published & Disseminated

## Online Submission

### ONLINE SUBMISSION

- 1. Allow lots of time (1/2 – 1 day)**  
*Potentially confusing for beginners - lot of forms & questions that apparently make little sense.*
- 2. Can Register on the online submission site before the final draft stage: check all the information that will be needed**
- 3. Some info may be needed from/ approved by co-applicants:  
everyone's email, ± their ORCID number  
do that at same time as final manuscript amendments**
- 4. Seek advice from more experienced colleague / Senior Author**





*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

Positive  
thinking

**Positive Thinking  
Submission is a major milestone, but...**



*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

**Positive  
thinking**



## Positive Thinking

**Submission is a major milestone, but...**

- 1. Schedule SUBSTANTIAL time over next few months**

*Reviewer responses, proofs, publicity are all time consuming*

*Anticipate **1/3** entire manuscript production time is required AFTER first submission of manuscript*

- 2. Mentally prepare yourself for knock-backs**

*Very few manuscripts are immediately accepted first time*

*Your journal hit list is thus crucial*

*(I often just put a rejected m/s aside for one day, but NOT a month!)*

*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

**Positive  
thinking**



## Positive Thinking

**Submission is a major milestone, but...**

- 1. Schedule SUBSTANTIAL time over next few months**

*Reviewer responses, proofs, publicity are all time consuming*

*Anticipate **1/3** entire manuscript production time is required AFTER first submission of manuscript*

- 2. Mentally prepare yourself for knock-backs**

*Very few manuscripts are immediately accepted first time*

*Your journal hit list is thus crucial*

*(I often just put a rejected m/s aside for one day, but NOT a month!)*

- 3. You WILL succeed eventually!**

*There are 100,000 relevant journals out there.*

*Every paper has a home*

*Getting  
Published*

Four simple  
steps

1. Operationalise Study Protocol
2. Draft Abstract
3. Draft & Submit Manuscript
4. Satisfy journal editor & reviewers



*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

# Group Discussion

## Questions to facilitate Discussion

**Have you observed/been involved in responding to journal editors & reviewers?**

**What was the most scary/tricky bit?**

*Jot down your thoughts*

*Share with your neighbour*

Quiz Question

Who loves the  
journal editors &  
reviewers??

## *Satisfying the journal editor & reviewers*

# Principles

- 1. Consider editors' perspective:**  
*Competitive market place, so they need shiny products for their "shop window".*
- 2. Editors & reviewers mostly unpaid;**  
motivated by interest, ambition &  
genuine desire to improve the quality  
of published work.





*Satisfying the  
journal editor &  
reviewers*

# Principles

- 1. Consider editors' perspective:**  
*Competitive market place, so they need shiny products for their "shop window".*
- 2. Editors & reviewers mostly unpaid;**  
**motivated by interest, ambition &**  
**genuine desire to improve the quality**  
**of published work.**

*( 1% may be sadistic psychopaths.  
However, to win,  
You must Play the Game.....)*



# Top Tips

## Create a Response Table

1. Systematically address each point
2. Assume each point is intended as a helpful, constructive suggestion
3. Ensure ALL your language is positive and helpful
4. Address suggestions you don't like
5. ?Obtain an exemplar from your supervisor/boss/mentor

*Dealing With  
Journal  
Reviewers &  
Editors*

**Create a  
Response  
Table**

- 1. One row for each point raised by**
  - a) editor,**
  - b) each reviewer/referee**
- 2. Address EVERY point systematically**

*(That shows your professional approach,  
& is very helpful for them)*
- 3. Use format to make it crystal clear, eg**
  - Reviewer point in bold**
  - Your response in plain
  - New text "in italics & quotes"***

## Dealing With Journal Reviewers & Editors

# Create a Response Table

1. One row for each point raised by
  - a) editor,
  - b) each reviewer/referee
2. Address **EVERY** point **systematically**  
*(That shows your professional approach,  
& is very helpful for them)*
3. Use format to make it crystal clear, eg
  - Reviewer point in bold
  - Your response in plain
  - New text *"in italics & quotes"*

Zoom

1. Based on the high  
an overstatement  
outweigh the cost  
Thank you. We looked at  
For **food system**, the media  
according to the 2<sup>nd</sup> panel on  
for the **processed food indu**

We have therefore amended t

"The benefits to food system  
however for workers confi

## *Dealing With Journal Reviewers & Editors*

**Assume each  
point is  
constructive**

- 1. Pretend each point is intended as a helpful, constructive suggestion**  
*intended to improve the quality of the scientific corpus of knowledge*
- 2. If the reviewer has a problem with your research, so might the intended reader,**  
*so try to resolve all issues positively*
- 3. Try hard. Remember your objective – successful publication**

*(Relieve stress using favourite ventilation methods)*



# Dealing With Journal Reviewers & Editors

## Address every point raised

### Systematically address each point raised

1. Use Praise - thank them for their constructive and helpful comments.
2. Minor point – “Thank you. Addressed in full & sorted.”
3. Major point – “Thank you for highlighting this important issue. We have taken your helpful advice, and have totally rewritten the sentence/paragraph/whatever, as indicated below ’
4. Amend your manuscript as Track Changes
5. Paste the amended text into your response tab *using inverted commas and italics.*

#### Why?

*It shows you respect and value their suggestion.  
It saves them having to trawl through the entire manuscript (they are very busy people).*

1. Based on the high  
an overstatement  
outweigh the costs  
Thank you. We looked at t  
For food system, the media  
according to the 2<sup>nd</sup> panel on  
for the processed food indus  
We have therefore amended th  
“The benefits to food system  
however for workers confin

2. Why?

## *Dealing With Journal Reviewers & Editors*

### **Use positive language**

- 1. Ensure ALL your language is positive & helpful**
- 2. Do NOT rant, moan, or attack the editor**
- 3. Do NOT let anger seep in**
- 4. Do NOT try to score points**

*Do not even hint that reviewer is illegitimate, moronic, biased, stupid or sadistic (though possibly all true).*

*(Go & relieve frustration repeatedly, as necessary)*





From  
@cedric\_



# Dealing With Journal Reviewers & Editors

## Difficult points

### Difficult points, or suggestions you don't like

1. Avoid negative words like "No", "Not" or "Cannot"
2. Brainstorm possible responses with team colleagues, especially experienced ones
3. Choose best two options, then ask senior author to advise
4. Seek a Win/Win response to the point, while preserving your sense of scientific probity.
5. Or maybe say *"We agree issue is difficult, so we have deleted that problematic sentence"*.

**BUT** your objective is to get published.  
*Which sometimes requires Pragmatism > Principle.*





# Dealing With Journal Reviewers & Editors

## Rebuttals

- **Journal replies**
  - Accept
  - Revise & Resubmit
  - Reject
- **Options after rejection**
  - Try another journal
  - Improve the manuscript
  - Strengthen analysis or data
- **Rebuttal tactics**
  - Calm, Objective, Polite, Professional tone
  - Say WHY manuscript deserves reconsideration
  - Spell out scientific merits of paper
  - Flag merits which might have been overlooked

**BUT your objective is to get published.**  
*Sometimes need Diplomacy > Perfectionism*

Revisions, Rejections and Rebuttals: The show must go on!

Durga Prasanna Misra<sup>1</sup>, Vinod Ravindran<sup>2</sup>

**Keywords:** peer review, research, publications, desk rejections, editors, manuscripts

**Correspondence to:**

Vinod Ravindran  
Consultant Rheumatologist  
Centre for Rheumatology  
Calicut  
Kerala  
India

**Email:**  
drvinod12@gmail.com

**Financial and Competing Interests:** DPM is an Associate Editor of the *Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh (JRCPE)* and serves as Editor/Editorial board member/Reviewer for several other international journals. VR is the Editor-in-chief of the *JRCPE* and serves as Editor/Editorial board member/Reviewer for several other international journals. This paper has undergone peer review in accordance with *JRCPE*'s policies.



# Revisions, Rejections and Rebuttals: The show must go on!

Durga Prasanna Misra<sup>1</sup>, Vinod Ravindran<sup>2</sup>

**Keywords:** peer review, research, publications, desk rejections, editors, manuscripts

**Financial and Competing Interests:** DPM is an Associate Editor of the *Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh (JRCPE)* and serves as Editor/Editorial board member/Reviewer for several other international journals. VR is the Editor-in-chief of the *JRCPE* and serves as Editor/Editorial board member/Reviewer for several other international journals. This paper has undergone peer review in accordance with *JRCPE*'s policies.

**Correspondence to:**

Vinod Ravindran  
Consultant Rheumatologist  
Centre for Rheumatology  
Calicut  
Kerala  
India

[https://www.rcpe.ac.uk/sites/default/files/jrcpe\\_50\\_4\\_ravindran.pdf](https://www.rcpe.ac.uk/sites/default/files/jrcpe_50_4_ravindran.pdf)

**Email:**

drvinod12@gmail.com

Telling  
the World

# Disseminating your work

*Getting  
Published*

Disseminating  
Your Work

1. Operationalise Study Protocol
2. Draft Abstract
3. Draft & Submit Manuscript
4. Satisfy journal editor & reviewers
- 5. Innovative Ways To Disseminate Your Work**

*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

**Telling  
the World**

- 1. GRAB any opportunity to elicit feedback, advice, suggestions, new collaborators**
- 2. Seek presentations to conferences, department, institute, visitors.**
- 3. Presenting "Research in progress" is OK**
- 4. Submit work to conferences ASAP**



*Telling  
the World*

**Media  
Dissemination**

## **MEDIA DISSEMINATION**

- 1. Traditional media:**
  - Written media
  - Broadcast media - Radio & TV
  - Media training
- 2. Social media:**
  - Twitter as information source
  - Twitter to disseminate your work
  - Facebook
  - Your website

*Telling  
the World*

Traditional  
Media

# TRADITIONAL MEDIA

**1. Draft a press release**

One month before paper is published electronically  
**Involve wide team**, especially Senior Author, Uni Press /  
Media office (*Clarify time embargo journal places on press release*)

**2. Mark the day BEFORE paper is published in your diary,**  
*in case interviews are requested by journalists*

**3. Written media enquiries**

Questions come via Email or an easy phone discussion.  
Do NOT go beyond your script.

**4. Broadcast media - Radio & TV**  
**Essential to do a media training session first**

**5. Stick to 3x3 format:**

(3 main messages, each with just 3 supporting statements)  
& practice **Bridging Techniques**.

*Telling  
the World*

**Social Media**

# **SOCIAL MEDIA**

**Twitter as Information Source**

**Using Twitter to disseminate your work**

**Facebook**

**Webpage**



# SOCIAL MEDIA

## Twitter as Information Source

- Follow some role models, seek suggestions.
- Praise often, offer polite constructive suggestions, criticise rarely.
- Ask more experienced colleagues for examples of good practices.

## Using Twitter to disseminate your work

- Use a short, jazzy attention-grabbing headline. > Include a nice picture.
- Use #hashtags. > Avoid mornings
- Witty phrase & "Good News" work better than a negative message.
- Copy to lots of relevant folk, to raise your professional & policy profile.
- If a potentially controversial issue, get prior advice from an experienced colleague to
  - a) consider wisdom of doing it, b) prepare to handle some negativity.

**Facebook:** Ditto Jazzy journalistic handle, nice picture etc

**Webpage:** Worthwhile, but time consuming.

- Best done as a Group: with One designated Editor, &
- All members providing material on a regular basis

# The Iceberg Illusion

Success is an iceberg

SUCCESS!

WHAT PEOPLE SEE

Persistence



Failure



Sacrifice



Disappointment



WHAT PEOPLE DON'T SEE

Dedication



Hard work



Good habits



@sylviaaduckworth

# Getting Published & Disseminating Your Work



*Simon Capewell et al*  
*Cork SSM, 2019*

## CONCLUSIONS

1. Operationalise Study Protocol
2. Draft Abstract
3. Draft & Submit Manuscript
4. Satisfy Journal editor & reviewers
5. Use Innovative Ways to Disseminate Your Work



UNIVERSITY OF  
LIVERPOOL

*Getting Your  
Research  
Published &  
Disseminated*

# Group Discussion

## Questions to facilitate Discussion

**Have you observed/been involved in responding to journal editors & reviewers?**

**What was the most scary/tricky bit?**

**What might you do differently next time?**

*Jot down your thoughts*

*Share with your neighbour*

# Reserve Slides



# 20 cognitive biases that screw up your decisions

## 1. Anchoring bias.

People are **over-reliant** on the first piece of information they hear. In a salary negotiation, whoever makes the first offer establishes a range of reasonable possibilities in each person's mind.



## 2. Availability heuristic.

People **overestimate the importance** of information that is available to them. A person might argue that smoking is not unhealthy because they know someone who lived to 100 and smoked three packs a day.



## 3. Bandwagon effect.

The probability of one person adopting a belief increases based on the number of people who hold that belief. This is a powerful form of **groupthink** and is reason why meetings are often unproductive.



## 4. Blind-spot bias.

**Failing to recognize** your own cognitive biases is a bias in itself. People notice cognitive and motivational biases much more in others than in themselves.



## 13. Placebo effect.

When **simply believing** that something will have a certain effect on you causes it to have that effect. In medicine, people given fake pills often experience the same physiological effects as people given the real thing.



## 14. Pro-innovation bias.

When a proponent of an innovation tends to **overvalue its usefulness** and undervalue its limitations. Sound familiar, Silicon Valley?



## 15. Recency.

The tendency to weigh the **latest information** more heavily than older data. Investors often think the market will always look the way it looks today and make unwise decisions.



## 16. Salience.

Our tendency to focus on the **most easily recognizable features** of a person or concept. When you think about dying, you might worry about being mauled by a lion, as opposed to what is statistically more likely, like dying in a car accident.



## 5. Choice-supportive bias.

When you choose something, you tend to feel **positive about it**, even if that **choice has flaws**. Like how you think your dog is awesome — even if it bites people every once in a while.



## 6. Clustering illusion.

This is the tendency to **see patterns in random events**. It is key to various gambling fallacies, like the idea that red is more or less likely to turn up on a roulette table after a string of reds.



## 7. Confirmation bias.

We tend to listen only to information that confirms our **preconceptions** — one of the many reasons it's so hard to have an intelligent conversation about climate change.



## 8. Conservatism bias.

Where people favor **prior evidence over new evidence** or information that has emerged. People were **slow to accept** that the Earth was round because they maintained their earlier understanding that the planet was flat.



## 17. Selective perception.

Allowing our expectations to **influence how we perceive** the world. An experiment involving a football game between students from two universities showed that one team saw the opposing team commit more infractions.



## 18. Stereotyping.

Expecting a group or person to have certain qualities without having real information about the person. It allows us to quickly identify strangers as friends or enemies, but people tend to **overuse and abuse it**.



## 19. Survivorship bias.

An error that comes from focusing only on surviving examples, causing us to **misjudge a situation**. For instance, we might think that being an entrepreneur is easy because we haven't heard of all those who failed.



## 20. Zero-risk bias.

Sociologists have found that **we love certainty** — even if it's counterproductive. Eliminating risk entirely means there is no chance of harm being caused.



## 9. Information bias.

The tendency to **seek information when it does not affect action**. More information is not always better. With less information, people can often make more accurate predictions.



## 10. Ostrich effect.

The decision to **ignore dangerous or negative information** by "burying" one's head in the sand, like an ostrich. Research suggests that investors check the value of their holdings significantly less often during bad markets.



## 11. Outcome bias.

Judging a decision based on the **outcome** — rather than how exactly the decision was made in the moment. Just because you won a lot in Vegas doesn't mean gambling your money was a smart decision.



## 12. Overconfidence.

Some of us are **too confident about our abilities**, and this causes us to take greater risks in our daily lives. Experts are more prone to this bias than laypeople, since they are more convinced that they are right.



**SOURCES:** Brain Biases; Ethics Unwrapped; Explorable; Harvard Magazine; HowStuffWorks; LearnVest; Outcome bias in decision evaluation, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology; Psychology Today; The Bias Blind Spot; Perceptions of Bias in Self Versus Others, Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin; The Cognitive Effects of Mass Communication, Theory and Research in Mass Communications; The less is more effect: Predictions and tests, Judgment and Decision Making; The New York Times; The Wall Street Journal; Wikipedia; You Are Not So Smart; ZhurnalWiki

# Ikigai

A JAPANESE CONCEPT MEANING "A REASON FOR BEING"

