INCREASING YOUR VISIBILITY
GETTING PUBLISHED

What is visibility?

- Stanford faculty know your name, your interests, and your future plans
- Faculty have heard your questions in seminars & discussions
- You give talks at Stanford outside your own lab
- People in your field know your name … you are much more than et al.

Search committees often call people NOT on your list of referees

Search committees ask faculty....

• Do you know this person?
• Is the candidate a contributor to the intellectual environment?
• Why is this person outstanding?
• Is this person a great speaker?
• Make sure that as many faculty as possible have a copy of your resume. Don’t ask for a letter, just make a 10 minute appointment and ask faculty to keep you in mind when they hear about positions. Go over your scientific highlights briefly. Update faculty when something great happens (fellowship funded or a paper accepted).
3 things you can do today to increase your visibility

- Introduce yourself to several people here
- Put your name & the date on protocols you have developed and pass them out to your lab and collaborators (“just in case you need this in writing”)
- Update your resume and make appointments to discuss it with two professors - get advice now on applying for the types of jobs you want

3 things to do this year to increase your visibility as a colleague

- Volunteer to give a talk in another lab
- Start a short term “journal” or techniques club and invite the members
- Make an appointment with a faculty member in another discipline to discuss the applicability of a technique used in that lab for your research

What if I’ve just arrived at Stanford?

- Visit labs doing work similar to your Ph.D. thesis or former position
- Volunteer to give your thesis talk to these labs (for practice and to meet more people)
- Make a commitment to invest in your future!
3 things to do this year to increase your visibility as a future faculty member

- Mentor a Stanford undergraduate
- With several other postdocs design the syllabuses for 2 courses in your area. Ask a faculty member to critique the plans. Many job applications require a teaching plan → you’ll be able to provide well thought out plans for 2 classes.
- Have yourself coached and filmed by the Center for Teaching & Learning to improve your speaking skills.

3 things to do this year to increase your visibility as a future industry scientist

- Get Stanford business cards and use them!
- Go to product shows on campus and introduce yourself; ask about job openings
- Call 3 people in industry to arrange informational interviews; give them copies of your resume and ask them to keep you in mind if positions open up

What is an informational interview?

#1 Do this when you are not looking for a job.
- How did you get your position?
- What responsibilities do you have?
- If you could be a postdoc again, how would you prepare for your current position? Most often people will mention mentoring and learning to write-up/finish projects quickly.
- What are the best and worst aspects of your current job?
Resume Writing

- **Faculty style**: Ask two new assistant professors for their resumes and research and teaching plans from their successful applications to Stanford. A group of postdocs could do this and then discuss the "interview process" with the assistant professors.
- **Industry style**: Go to the web to get examples of resumes of company scientists (lots of bullet points & accomplishments) or ask friends in the private sector for copies.

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**GETTING PUBLISHED**

- Breakthrough, high impact
- Solid, important and new in your field
- Confirmatory (few citations)
- Technique (lots of citations)

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**When to write? Today.**

- Prepare "final" figures and legends for group meetings and posters
- Write up Materials & Methods at least once per month
- Make an outline of your "goal" manuscript - use it as a checklist of what's left to do
- Write the Introduction as an exercise in your grasp of the literature and what you are doing

**Goal**: 50% of manuscript written before you "start" writing!
How long should a manuscript take?
• More authors = more time required
• Prepared author will save weeks or months (budget at least 1 week per table or figure, plus a week for Materials & Methods = things you can do in advance)
• Finish the results before the discussion
• Now, rewrite the Introduction to be specific for the ms. you actually wrote
• Abstract and title are last

Decide the merits of your contribution & whether “impact” is crucial

Science or Nature
- Hard to condense
- Quick rejection
PNAS, CELL, top journal in field
- Seen by most
- Longer paper and longer wait for reviews
Specialty or archival journal
- Seen by specialists
- Long wait for publication

Quantifying Publications
• Impact factor average number of citations per article in a journal - measures the reviews & hot articles primarily
• Citation tracking number of times per year that your article is cited
• Citation classic paper with >100 citations
• Citation “star” person with >1000 citations
Who should be an author?

1.0 Pub Credit
Number of authors < 0.2 Too many

Your resume will be more impressive with a few 2-3 author publications than many 10 author publications.

Who should be an author? Stanford "On Authorship" Policy

• Substantial contribution to conception of the study
• Substantial work on the project
• Substantial effort in analysis and/or writing
• Ability to defend the entire story and all of the methods

Writing reviews, yes if

➢ You can define the questions in your field and are seen as an intellectual leader
➢ You can recycle material from grant proposals and fellowship applications
➢ The "stars" in your field and allied fields read the review (consider sending drafts to them for comments)
Submitting to a journal

- Local critique: Ask 2 colleagues with excellent grammar and critical skills to read your text. **Hear tough criticism before submitting.** Recheck the spelling, references, and format (again) before submitting.
- Cover letter: Keep it short, state your main findings in terms of answering a key question, and indicate if there is competition in the field.

Responding to reviews

- Be calm.
- Respond point by point to every item of each review. Pay special attention to suggestions of the Editor.
- Change MOST minor things suggested by reviewers - don’t waste effort over small points.
- Argue persuasively against changes you think are unwise or are mis-interpretations by the reviewer (or the reviewer wished you had done a different study) but state it as “there is a legitimate difference of scientific opinion about this.” Don’t trash the reviewers.

Congratulations your paper is accepted ....

- Accepted = not yet in press; you will receive page proofs to correct. Do not state that your article is “in press” at this point.
- In press = finalized copy waiting to be published
- PDF: Ask if the journal permits distribution of your article. Some journals DO NOT ALLOW YOU TO POST copies of your own article!
- Consider sending a PDF to leaders in the field with a cover note on what in particular should interest them - particularly if you cite their work.
Learn to be a good reviewer

- Help campus friends finalize their manuscripts
- Ask to help your faculty mentor review a few manuscripts for practice writing reviews (the faculty member must get permission from the Editor)
- Learn to be helpful and kind but also a critical thinker

Visibility now as a postdoc

- Participate in more activities and know more ⇒ better preparation. Get more help with your publications.
- Better job interviews and offers. Invitations to write reviews.
- More choices and more likely to succeed

But I don’t have time….

In a 3 year postdoc
if you invest 3 hours per week in career development ⇒ 450 hours
- 1 hour for “visibility” activities
- 2 hours in pre-manuscript writing
If you accept a job that you don’t like, in one year you will work 2000 hours filled with regrets about your fate.
Investments pay dividends

- If you invest in your future and recruit faculty and colleagues to help you, your "team" can accomplish more than you can working alone.
- You will have more choices and feel more confident about the choices you make.