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Converting your thesis into a research paper

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Introduction and General Principles

Deciding to do postgraduate work

- Personal trajectory
- Motivation
 - Better employment opportunities
 - Curiosity
 - Title
- Reality
 - Time and effort
 - Cost
 - Sacrifices

Being a researcher

- Requirement to publish your work
 - Academic
 - Other
- Importance of peer review



Planning, executing and writing up your post- graduate work

Planning and executing your project

- Identification of a topic
- Identification of a supervisor
- Planning/outline of project
- Funding
- Being realistic
- Critical mass
 - Not working in isolation
 - Trouble shooting

Writing your dissertation/thesis

- Timing
- Planning/outline
 - Content
 - Time required
 - Assistance with writing
 - Supervisor response

Making it easier to publish

- Visualize while writing your dissertation/thesis
 - Article
 - Journal
 - Read similar articles in your target journal
- Quality versus quantity
 - Start slowly
 - Get it right!

Selecting a journal

- Topic
- Impact factor
 - Reflects the average number of citations of articles published in science and social science journals
 - Used as a proxy for the relative importance of a journal within its field
 - Journals with higher impact factors are deemed to be more important than those with lower ones

Article structure

- Title page
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Materials and Methods
- Results
- Discussion
- Acknowledgements
- References
- Figure legends
- Figures and tables

Editor's advice on how to get your article published

Study the journal. The first step is to know who the journal is for and the kinds of articles it publishes

Use good English. Reviewers often reject papers because the grammar is bad, rather than on the basis of the content

Be realistic. Be aware of the value of your results but don't over-interpret them

Don't try too hard to sound important; don't use a pompous voice

Editor's advice on how to get your article published

Tell a coherent story, and don't make sweeping conclusions if you don't have the results to support them; i.e. don't be over-speculative

Make sure the title matches the content, e.g. don't use the title "Impact of climate change on bird ecology" when there isn't a single climate parameter in your paper

Read lots of papers and learn from them

Common problems

- The paper is too long
- The paper is not well structured The writing and figures are not clear
- The author has not explained the general interest of the specific issues
- The author assumes too much specific knowledge from the reader
- The subject matter is not suitable for the journal

Key elements to success


- Hard work
- Don't be afraid to try new things or to enter into previously uncharted waters
- Foster the ability to adapt
 - To ones own circumstances
 - To change
- Respect other's dignity

Perceived failure

- Challenges
 - Studies
 - Fund raising
 - Publishing

**“The greatest glory in living
lies not in never falling,
but in rising every time we
fall.”**

**Nelson
Mandela**



Translating your post-graduate work into a research paper

Why publish?

- Academic requirement
 - Funding
 - Promotion
 - Ranking/rating
- Sharing your ideas
 - Advancement of your domain
 - Recognition
- Intellectual property

Key points

- Tell a story
 - Capture the interest of your reader
 - Keep your reader's interest
- Focus on the reader and not on yourself
- You need to sell your story
 - It is your work, you must sell it
 - Simply having done the work does not mean it will be recognized
- Be concise – use only as many words as you need and no more

Take-home messages

- When you start your project, do so with publications in mind
- If you are to be recognized as a serious researcher, you must publish
- The importance of peer review
- Practice, practice, practice
- Enjoy what you are doing

Thank you