

Turning Bright Ideas Into Research Careers



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Bruce White, Massey University Library
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The business of research has its own rules and strategies – just like any game!




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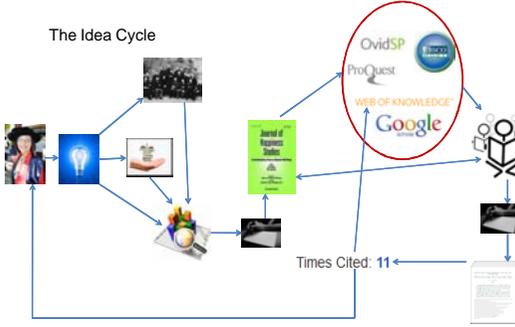

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But I'm really smart - and I have lots of bright ideas!




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The Idea Cycle




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To become public research an idea must

- Be original
- Address an existing research question or cast new light on an area that other researchers are interested in
- Attract the interest of an editor or publisher and satisfy the peer review process
- Appear "in print" in order to be available for scrutiny by fellow researchers



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And then ...

- It needs to be read by as many researchers in the field as possible
- Subsequent citation is an indicator that it has been taken seriously and is often used as a marker of the significance of the work
- The research conversation takes the form of publication and citation



But how do I know if my idea is original and significant?

- You need to keep on top of your field – turn the database searches you did at the start of your work into a series of search alerts that will keep sending you links to new work published on your topic
- What direction are things heading? Is there anything you know that they don't? Is there something in your research that is relevant to current topics of interest?



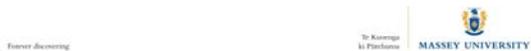
And ...

- Scan newsletters and other publications in your field
- What is happening at conferences?
- Are there discussion lists, blogs and other web resources in your area?
- Check out the Scholarly Societies Project
- Search both Google and Google Scholar and create email alerts



Don't ever stop scanning the horizon

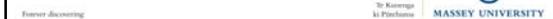
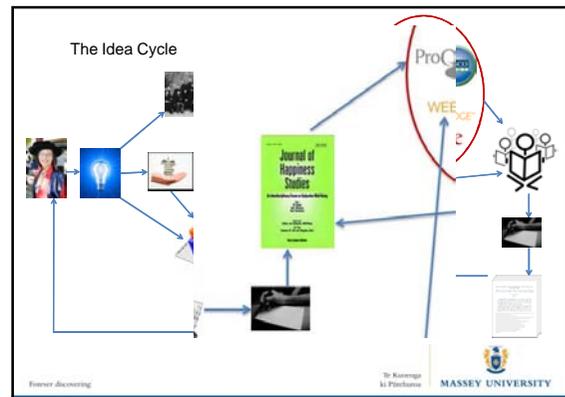
- Keep lists of keywords and use them in your database and Google searches
- Build up an EndNote Library of useful documents
- Get to know the people in your field – who are the most prolific and highly-cited authors, which are the most important institutions, which are the top journals?
- Keep an eye out for new books on your topic



Use a database search to identify key authors, institutions and journals

[Nicotine replacement therapy in smoking cessation](#)

| Author Name | A | | |
|---|--------|---|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> West, R. | (20) > | <input type="checkbox"/> Nicotine and Tobacco Research | (22) > |
| <input type="checkbox"/> McLenn, A. | (12) > | <input type="checkbox"/> Addiction | (21) > |
| <input type="checkbox"/> McRobbie, H. | (10) > | <input type="checkbox"/> UCL | (22) > |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cummings, K.M. | (8) > | <input type="checkbox"/> Start and The London Queen Mary's School of Medicine and Dentistry | (13) > |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hapik, P. | (7) > | <input type="checkbox"/> Addictive Behaviors | (8) > |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> BMC Public Health | (5) > |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Roswell Park Cancer Institute | (12) > |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> University of Nottingham | (11) > |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> St George's Hospital, London | (8) > |



Choosing your journal

- You only get the chance to publish this piece of work once!
- Choosing the right journal will maximise the number of readers of your work
- And how they view it
- Try to find a mainstream journal in your subject area and make sure that its articles are regularly cited

Forever documenting



Some journals just don't get much action

[Journal for Global Business Advancement](#)

A tip – do a Google Scholar Advanced Search for the journal. Do its articles get cited?

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Author | Return articles written by | e.g. "J. Hayes" or McCarthy |
| Publication | Return articles published in | Journal for Global Business Adv. or e.g. J Biol Chem or Nature |
| Date | Return articles published between | e.g. 1990 |

Forever documenting



Some questions

- Does this journal come from a recognised publisher or scholarly society?
- Does it have an issn?
- Do known scholars in your field publish in it?
- Does it appear in the major databases in your field?
- Will they put your work through a proper peer review process?

Forever documenting



Making your work visible and accessible

- Identify what is unique and original about your work
- Identify the main ideas in your article
- Your title should express each of these main ideas and give information searchers a reason to click on it
- Use plenty of synonyms in your abstract and keywords
- Make yourself a big target!



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Some titles just don't work!

- An article in *Computer Aided Chemical Engineering* - [CAPE tools in biotechnology: why, when, what, who, which ones and where?](#)
- This article is about teaching teamwork, cooperation, planning, decision making, problem-solving and communication skills to biotechnology students
- Which words in the title tell us this?

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After you have published

- Set up a citation alert on your article to be notified when it is cited
- Who cited you and why?
- What did they say?
- Don't be discouraged if you are not cited but think about how you might do it better next time

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Citation alerts can keep you in the research conversation

Cited by since 1996

This article has been cited 0 times in Scopus.

Inform me when this document is cited in Scopus:

Set alert Set feed

Times Cited: 0

This article has been cited 0 times in Web of Knowledge.

[Create Citation Alert](#)

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And a final tip ...

- Who would you like to be cited by?
- Have you cited their work?



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