

Turning Bright Ideas Into Research Careers



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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distinction
fame standing
name
visibility
rank status
authority prestige
author
reputation
brand

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

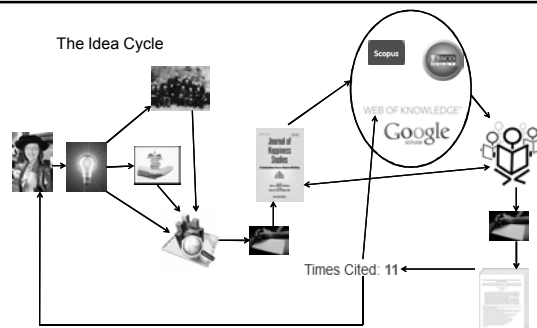


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The Idea Cycle



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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

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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?

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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

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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

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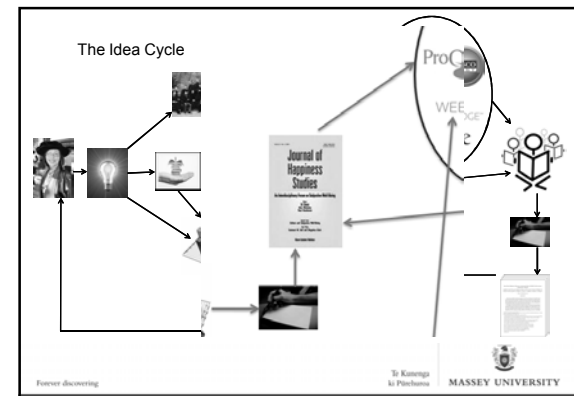


Use a database search to identify key authors, institutions and journals

Nicotine replacement therapy in smoking cessation

Author Name	Citations	Institution	Citations
West, R.	(20) >	Nicotine and Tobacco Research	(22) >
McEwen, A.	(12) >	Addiction	(21) >
McRobbie, H.	(10) >	Tobacco Control	(8) >
Cummings, K.M.	(8) >	Addictive Behaviors	(6) >
Haek, P.	(7) >	BMC Public Health	(5) >
		UCL	(22) >
		Barts and The London Queen Mary's School of Medicine and Dentistry	(13) >
		Roswell Park Cancer Institute	(12) >
		University of Nottingham	(11) >
		St George's Hospital, London	(8) >

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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 influence how they view it
- Try to find a mainstream journal in your subject area and make sure that its articles are regularly cited

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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.
e.g. J Biol Chem or Nature
Date Return articles published between -
e.g. 1990

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Some questions

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

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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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