

# ECPN Publishing as an Early Career Scientist: Strategies and Tips for Success

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# Issues and Goals for Publishing Will Depend on:

- Type of Position & Research Environment
  - full-time research position in a medical school or a research institute working as part of a team on NIH funded grants
  - traditional academic position with responsibilities for teaching, mentoring graduate students, and conducting research

# Publishing in Different Settings

	Factors that promote productivity	Factors that can inhibit productivity
Medical School or Research Institute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪less teaching &amp; more time to focus on publishing</li><li>▪easy to collaborate if part of a research team</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪greater urgency to obtain grants</li></ul>
Traditional Academic Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪freedom to pursue your own research interests may increase productivity</li><li>▪more access to graduate students</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪many roles and responsibilities, esp. teaching, that limit time to publish</li></ul>

# Tips for Increasing Productivity

- Determine Your Publishing Goals
- Know Your Strengths re: Publishing Tasks
- Establish Collaborations in Which You Use Your Strongest Skills
- Focus in Order to Increase Efficiency
- Develop a Writing Routine
  - Write in Brief Daily Sessions

# Determine Your Publishing Goals

- Find out what types of publications are valued at your institution or in your academic department
  - Peer-reviewed original research – most important
  - Review papers and book chapters
- What is expected for successful promotion and/or tenure?
  - Some departments have specific publishing criteria, others are less clear
  - Who is on the promotions committee and what are they looking for?

# Know Your Strengths

## re: Publishing Tasks

- Carrying out the research
  - but try to avoid project management if possible
- Conceptualizing research questions
- Testing hypotheses and data analysis
- Interpreting output and writing results sections
- Copy-editing or restructuring paper outlines
- Responding to reviewers

# Be Open to Requests for Collaboration

- Be particularly open to collaborations in which you can use your strongest skills or take on activities that you particularly enjoy doing
- Be responsive and helpful when approached about possible collaboration
  - it is always OK to “think about it”
  - find out about the person seeking your help
  - leave yourself room to back out if the collaboration isn’t working for you
- When collaborating, get your share of the work done quickly and competently, and expect the same from others

# Ways to Seek Out Collaborators

- Ask others that are doing work in your area if they need help, both senior and more junior level colleagues
- Ask others with the appropriate expertise to help with your own papers and projects

# Seek Out Potential Collaborators Who:

- ...are more experienced researchers in your field
- ...have more experience publishing than you do
- ...have contacts that may be useful to you
- ...offer skills you don't have
- ...work at least as hard as you do
- ...you get along with interpersonally

# Recruit Mentors

- Offer your help to senior level people
  - by working together you learn from them
- After you've worked with them, it is easier to ask them for feedback on your research or grant applications
- Develop working relationships with others that have specific skills that you want to learn, even if they are junior

# Focus Equals Efficiency

- Establish an area of expertise in a specific content area
  - For most people, esp. early in one's career, publishing in several different areas of research (e.g., prevention and treatment and policy issues) is difficult and time consuming
- Staying focused helps both in terms of publishing and grant writing
- However, you can effectively help others with manuscripts outside your primary content area by offering specific skills where you are strong

# Develop Your Own Writing “Routine”

- Find out when and where you can concentrate best on writing tasks
- Use brief, daily writing sessions rather than less frequent, huge chunks of time
  - keeps you thinking about the research
  - makes writing part of your routine and less daunting
  - gives you “permission” to stop working on something and move on to another project
  - has been shown to help “blocked” writers

# Ideas About Papers

- Read the literature in your field
  - identify gaps, big and small, that you can aim to publish on
  - helps generate conceptual and analytical ideas
  - may help to identify potential collaborators
- Bounce paper ideas off more senior investigators and other colleagues

# First Author Papers

- For every major first author article you publish, aim to publish one or more first author brief reports
- Secondary data analysis: If available to you, analyze existing high quality datasets and write up results for publication

# Summary:

## Increasing Your Productivity

- Take advantage of as many publishing opportunities as you can
- But find a balance so that you can contribute in ways where you use your strongest skills
- If contributing as a co-author, don't take on primary responsibility if its not your role
- Ask colleagues for help and include people's names on your papers when they have made substantial contributions - what goes around comes around