

WRITING PUBLISHABLE ECONOMICS
AND BUSINESS RESEARCH PAPERS ...
AND GETTING THEM PUBLISHED

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MAIN CONTENTS

- Writing papers in social sciences with concentration on economic and business disciplines;
- Creative thinking vs rational thinking;
- Creating a new research idea (deductive approach, inductive, and abductive approach);
- Painful and successful stories of researchers with international experience in scientific research;
- The bottleneck of a good scientific research;
- Critical tips of having your research work published and avoid rejection.
- How best to choose your international peer-review journal? and where should be indexed?;

DISCLOSURE

- I have written many papers. Some have been published, some not.
- I am on the Editorial Board of several journals.
- I am working as a reviewer for several journals.
- I have many rejection letters from journals, and some acceptance letters.

THE GOOD NEWS

- I know a method that guarantees that my papers will not be rejected by a journal.

THE BAD NEWS

- This 100% effective method of avoiding rejection is *never to submit my papers to any journal.*

THE BAD NEWS

- The disadvantages of this strategy are obvious.

My goal is to *get published*, not to avoid rejection. *Getting published requires risking rejection.*

GENERATING RESEARCH IDEAS

CREATIVE THINKING VS RATIONAL THINKING

Rational thinking

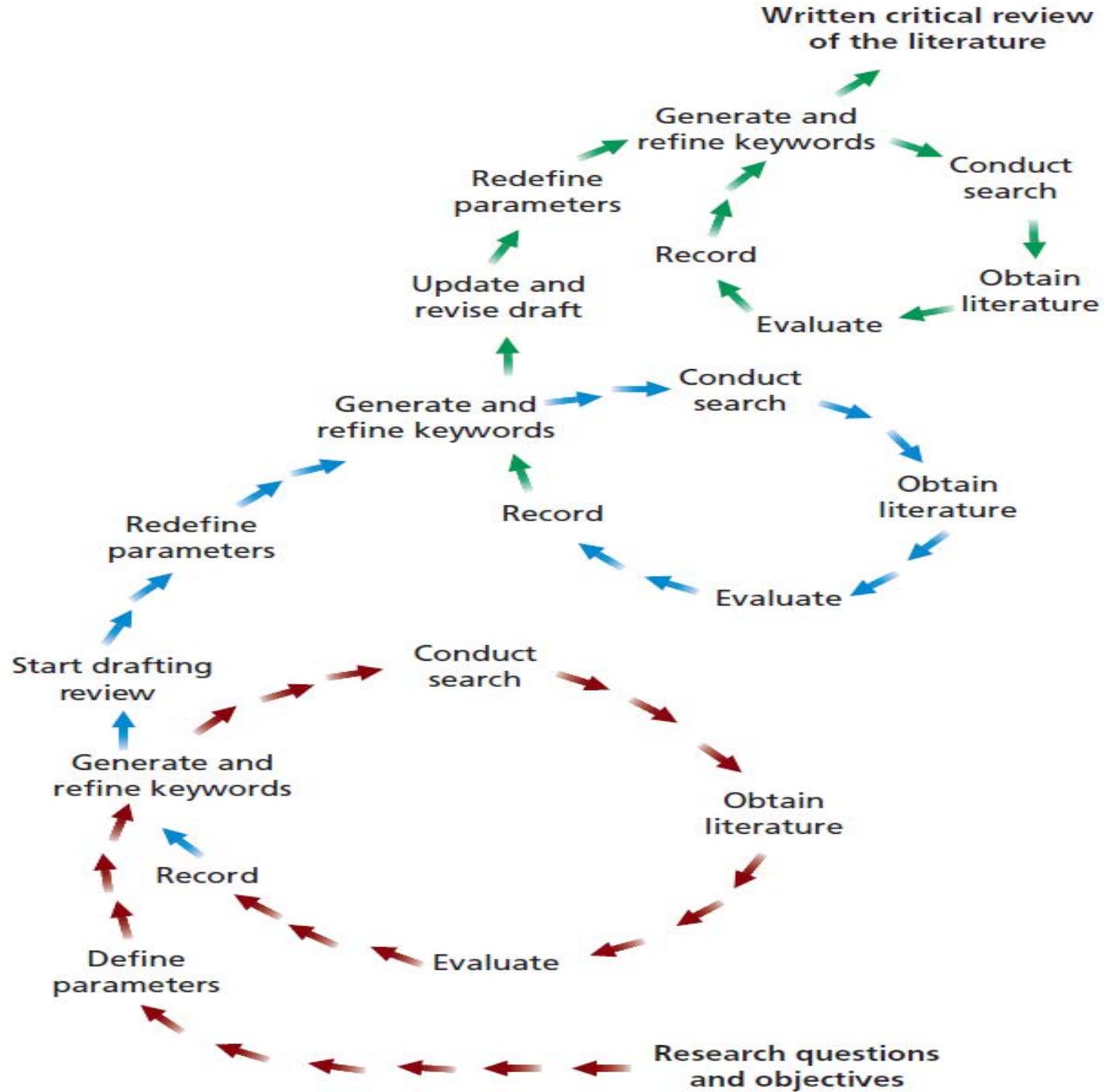
- Examining your own strengths and interests
- Looking at past project titles
- Discussion
- Searching the literature
- Scanning the media

Creative thinking

- Keeping a notebook of ideas
- Exploring personal preferences using past projects
- Relevance trees
- Brainstorming

To construct a relevance tree:

- 1 Start with your research question or objective at the top level.
- 2 Identify two or more subject areas that you think are important.
- 3 Further subdivide each major subject area into sub-areas that you think are of relevance.
- 4 Further divide the sub-areas into more precise sub-areas that you think are of relevance.



A STORY

Dr. George Akerlof
Nobel Prize, 2001



for “The Market for Lemons”,
Quarterly Journal of Economics,
1970

A STORY

In 2003 Akerlof published the story of how his “Lemons” paper got to be published.

(Quotes that follow are from that paper.)

A STORY

- He submitted the paper in 1967 to the *American Economic Review*. The editor wrote back that the journal “did not publish papers on subjects of such triviality.”

A STORY

- Then he submitted it to the *Journal of Political Economy*. He received two referee reports, both explaining why his article was wrong.

A STORY

- Then he submitted it to the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, which published it.
- What is the point of this story?

THE POINT

- (1) Most journal editors are clueless. Their opinion of your paper may have little or no relationship to its actual value. If your paper is rejected, *send it to another journal.*

THE POINT

(2) Most referees are narrow-minded, highly opinionated, unimaginative, dense, and inflexible (except myself, of course).

However, you still need to do what they tell you to do.

THE POINT

- (3) There is much randomness in the journal review process. Papers are often accepted that are not good. Papers are often rejected that are not bad. *If your paper is rejected, send it to another journal.*

THE POINT

(4) *Never give up*. No matter how good your paper is, you may have to submit it to several journals, one after the other, to get it published.

But it helps to find the right journal for your paper.

WHAT IS THE *BOTTLENECK?*

For you personally, what stands in the way of writing and publishing papers?

You tell me!

TIPS

#1

Make only one point per paper. If you have two points to make, write two papers. (Robert Hollaender, my dissertation advisor)

TIPS

#2

Find a co-author whose skills are different, and complementary to yours.

(Samuel Bowles & Herb Gintis;
Jagdish Bhagwati & T.N. Srinivasan)

TIPS

#3

Offer to edit or co-edit a special issue of a journal (perhaps the proceedings of a symposium); include your own paper in the issue

TIPS

#4

Choose to attend conferences
whose proceedings will be
published.

TIPS

#5

When you write a paper, send it to a list of scholars interested in the topic; one of them might invite you to a conference, or to submit to an edited volume. (From an editor of the *Journal of Labor Economics*)

TIPS

#6

Befriend journal editors and editorial board members. Ask them what they are looking for.

TIPS

#7

Develop a library of single issues of journals, to get an idea of what journals publish what kinds of articles.

TIPS

EXAMPLE:

Journal of Economic Issues accepts non-mathematical, non-technical articles on policy or theory. It publishes many short articles per issue.

TIPS

#8

Post your paper(s) on a standard website like RePec, Research Gate, Social Science Research Network, or International Development Economics Associates:
www.networkideas.org

TIPS

#9

When you find an opportunity, tell others about it; when they find an opportunity, they will tell you: Conferences; funding; periods when publishers have free downloads of journal articles; and so on.

TIPS

#10

What helps me most to do research:

- (1) Making a commitment to someone (like a conference) to write a paper by a specific date.
- (2) Having someone to talk to about the research.

TIPS

EXAMPLE

The book review editor of the *Economics of Peace and Security Journal* (who is Palestinian – Basel Saleh, Radford University) invites Palestinians and others to review books on this topic written in English, Arabic, or other languages.

TIPS

There are many types of articles & journals:

- Field research
- Analysis of an existing dataset
- Discussion of teaching techniques
- Discussion of policy
- Theory
- History of economic thought
- Discussion of the field of economics itself
- Research method/statistics/econometrics
- Book review essay (several books, same topic)

HOW BEST TO CHOOSE YOUR INTERNATIONAL PEER-REVIEW JOURNAL?

- Not limited to these publishers (Elsevier, Springer, Emerald, John Willy and Sons, Better Advances Press Canada, ... and so forth).
- Editorial Board.
- Authors of previous published issues.
- Quality of published papers in the Journal.
- Process of the journal publishing.

WHERE SHOULD BE INDEXED?

- Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) under Thompson and Reuters (ISI). Science Citation Index (SSCI) for natural sciences.
- Scopus.
- Academic Departments.
- But, The following indexes and others can be enough or NOT enough. It depends

ABDC, CABI, Canadiana, CrossRef, DOAJ, EBSCO, EconLit, e-journals, Google Scholar, LOCKSS, Open J-Gate, PKP Open Archives Harvester, RePEc, Standard Periodical Directory, Wanfang Data, ... and so forth.