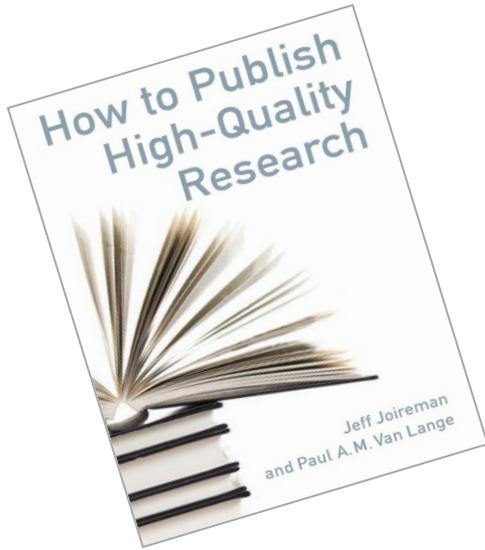


How to Publish High-Quality Research

Discovering, Building
and Sharing the Contribution

Jeff Joireman and Paul van Lange



(Coming in December 2014, American Psychological Association)

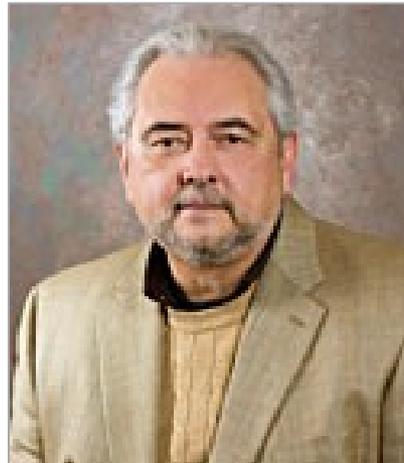
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Leonard Stern



Mike Kuhlman



Paul Van Lange

Inspiration



What is High-Quality Research?

High-Quality Research is...

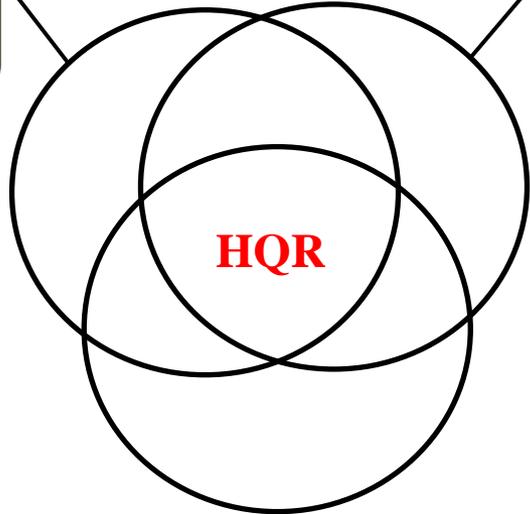
Research that combines high quality ideas, methods, analyses, writing, revising, and promotion to fill a meaningful gap in the literature by advancing an understanding of:

- How, why, or when a phenomenon occurs
- How to best measure and/or study a phenomenon
- How well a phenomenon generalizes across situations/people and/or applies to the real world

High-Quality Research at the Intersection of Discovering, Building and Sharing

Discovering the Contribution
(Quality of Ideas and
Framework)

Building the Contribution
(Quality of Methods,
Data and Analyses)



HQR

Sharing the Contribution
(Quality of Writing,
Revising and Promoting)

The 3Q Assumption

The probability of publishing “high quality research” is a function of three types of quality, including:

(a) the *quality of the ideas (and theoretical framework)* at the heart of the manuscript

(b) the *quality of the methods and empirical findings* supporting those ideas

(c) the *quality of the initial submission, revision and one’s promotion activities*, such as sharing one’s work with colleagues and/or the media (i.e., the 3Qs).

Workshop Overview

- ✓ Action strategies for discovering high-quality ideas
- ✓ Crucial role of theory in framing hypotheses
- ✓ Navigating emerging ethical challenges in data collection, analysis and reporting
- ✓ Eight distinct “paradigms for publishing high-quality research” (e.g., bridging disciplines, challenging assumptions, combining moderators and mediators, venturing into the real world).
- ✓ Tips for writing and revising
- ✓ Process Model for Publishing High-Quality Research with implications for training and mentoring

Discussion Questions

1. How do you discover research questions?
2. How did you come up with your best idea?
3. What are some advantages and disadvantages of different idea-generating approaches?



Discovering High-Quality Ideas: The Many Roads to Rome



Styles and Action Strategies for Discovering Ideas

Style	Action Strategy	Object
Interactive	Interact Read	with colleagues across disciplines
Observant	Draw on Observe	personal, social, or historical observations a real-world phenomenon
Societal	Address Generalize	a real-world problem theory to a societal problem
Integrative	Merge Organize	disciplines a literature
Challenging	Challenge Test	intuition, common sense or assumptions competing theories (or reverse an effect)
Inquisitive	Resolve Understand	a paradox a mechanism
Creative	Develop Introduce	new methods a new model
Comparative	Compare Explore	cultures boundary conditions

Useful Questions by Style

1. **Interactive:** How do my colleagues in different disciplines approach this problem? What ideas can I gather by reading other disciplines that can help me better understand my own research?
2. **Observant:** What interesting and important phenomena am I observing in my own life or the world at large? Is there a serious, real-world problem that needs to be better understood?
3. **Societal:** How might theory and research be applied to a real-world problem? What study could make a real contribution to understanding this societal issue – and perhaps even help resolve it?
4. **Integrative:** What new insights could we gain by drawing on fields outside our own? How might a variety of disciplines be integrated to help bring order to disparate (but related) literatures?
5. **Challenging:** Is conventional wisdom correct? Under what circumstances might it not hold? Are the hypotheses advanced by a given theory correct? Is there an alternative logic or theory that would suggest opposing hypotheses?
6. **Inquisitive:** We know this phenomenon occurs, but why? How can we understand this puzzling paradox?
7. **Creative:** How can we develop better methods to gain greater insight into this problem? Can I offer a novel theoretical framework to bring order to this area?
8. **Comparative:** Do these findings generalize across situations and cultures? What might be some boundary conditions that would eliminate or even reverse this effect?

Interactive Style

- *Interacting with colleagues within and outside one's discipline, and reading across disciplines.*



Melissa Bateson's Free-Rider Problem: An Inspiration for Ground-Breaking Research



Honor Box
(Voluntary Payment for
Coffee, Tea, Condiments)



Week 1



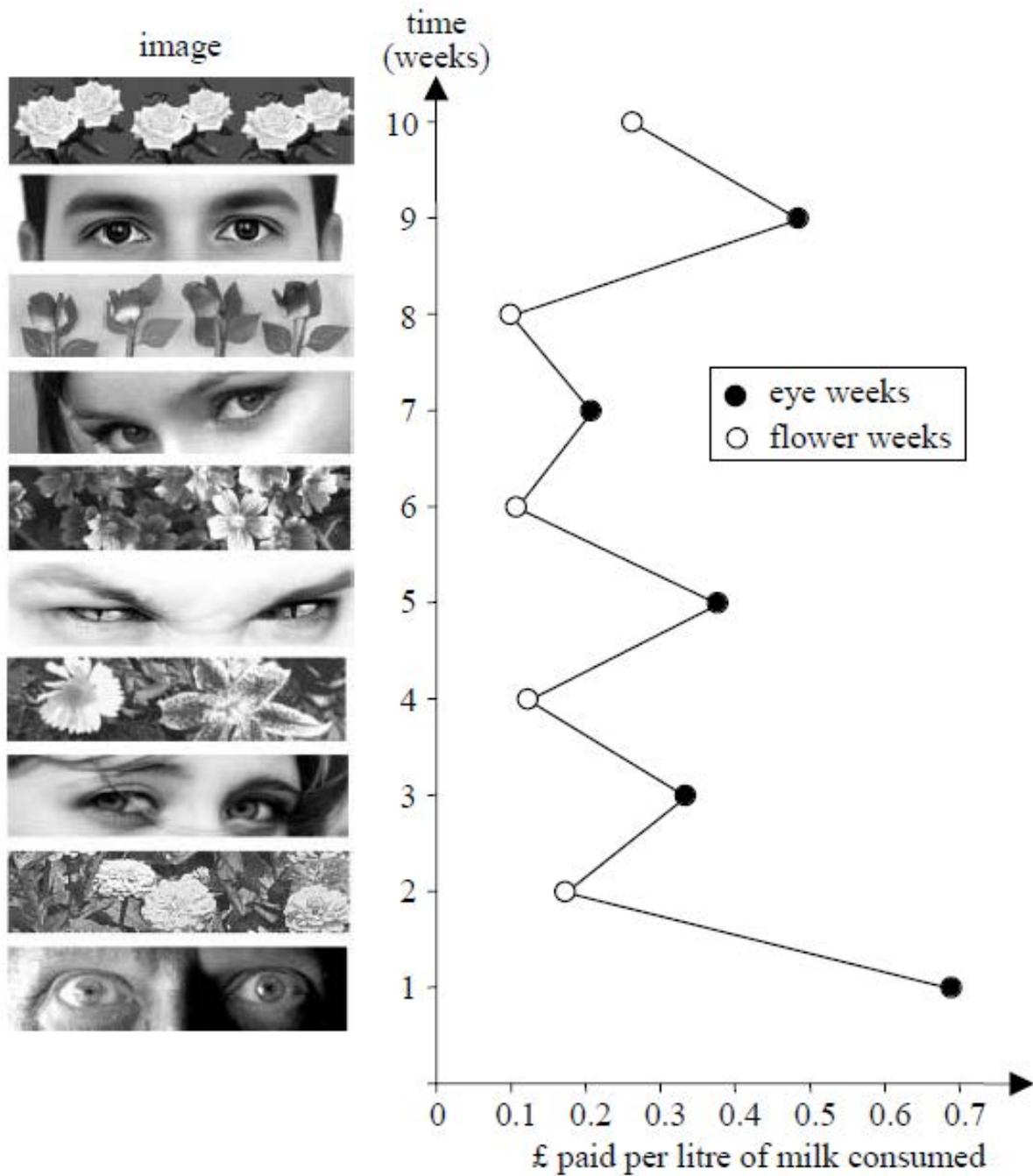
Week 2



Week 3



Week 4



Styles and Action Strategies for Discovering Ideas

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Observant Style

- *Drawing on personal, social, or historical observations as the starting point for an interesting idea or set of questions.*



- **Personal Observations**

- Barnhart and Peñaloza (2013) studied how aging people and their caretakers (children) negotiate consumption based on Barnhart's experience selling emergency services to elderly customers and working with her own older family members.



- **Shared Social Observations**

- Silver et al. (2013) studied how images of September 11th, Twin Towers attack impacted posttraumatic stress symptoms



- **Historical Observations**

- Condon et al. (2013) tested hypothesis, based on Buddhist teachings, that meditation increases compassion.



Societal Style

- *Motivated by a desire to understand or solve a real-world social problem, or test how a theory applies to a real-world phenomenon.*



- **Understanding a Real-World Problem**

- Wolke et al. (2013) found that students involved in bullying had poorer health, financial, and social outcomes, and increased risky and illegal behavior.



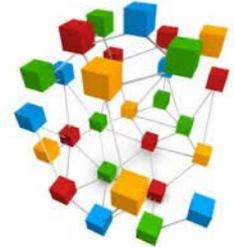
- **Applying a Theory to a Real-World Problem**

- Tangney et al. (2014) applied theories of shame and guilt to understand how likely people released from jail would engage in another crime. Guilt reduced recidivism, while shame increased recidivism.



Integrative Style

- *Motivated by a desire to merge two or more disciplines to gain insight into a problem, or organize a literature, for example, via meta-analysis.*
- **Merge Disciplines**
 - Vohs and Faber (2007) integrated social psychology and marketing by drawing on the social-psychological “strength model of self-control” to understand an impulsive buying. Depleted consumers were more likely to engage in impulsive buying.
- **Organize a Literature**
 - Taylor and Brown (1988) drew on literatures in social, clinical, cognitive, personality, developmental, educational and motivational psychology to show that mental health is often promoted by systematic cognitive biases (e.g., unrealistically positive views of the self and perceptions of personal control).



Challenging Style

- *Motivated by a desire to challenge intuition or commonly held assumptions, or to test competing theories.*
- **Challenge Intuition**
 - Grant (2013) challenged assumption that extraverts are always better leaders, showing instead that “ambiverts” (who can switch between extraversion and introversion) make better leaders.
- **Test Competing Theories**
 - Balliet et al. (2011) tested two competing theoretical models on forgiveness: (a) forgiveness requires both prosocial orientation and self-control (synergistic model); (b) forgiveness requires either prosocial orientation or self-control (compensatory model). (Results supported the compensatory model).



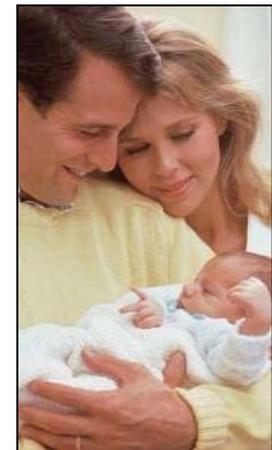
Inquisitive Style

- *Motivated by a desire to understand why* a phenomenon works the way it does (i.e., the mechanism responsible for an established effect) or resolve a paradox.
- **Why Does it Happen?**
 - Jaremka et al. (2013) wanted to understand the mechanism explaining why loneliness leads to poorer health outcomes. Their results suggest that lonely people have more adverse reactions to stress, which contributes to poorer health outcomes.
- **Resolve a Paradox**
 - Dunn et al. (2008) wanted to understand the paradox that while media suggests “money can buy happiness”, studies show weak link between money and happiness. They found that money leads people to focus less on others, which can reduce happiness.



Creative Style

- *Motivated by a desire to develop new methods to better study a phenomenon, or a new model to explain a phenomenon.*
- **Developing a Better Method**
 - Park and colleagues (2014) were looking for a creative way to study the benefits of cognitive engagement on cognitive functioning in older adults. To do this, they developed the 14-week “*Synapse Project*” (involving challenging activities like digital photography).
- **Developing a New Model**
 - Wayne et al. (2013) developed a model to understand how “family friendly” organizational policies (e.g., generous maternity leave) impact organizational commitment. Results suggest that family friendly policies reduce work-to-family conflict and lead one’s partner to show more support, in turn increasing the employee’s organizational commitment.



Comparative Style

- *Motivated by a desire to understand the extent to which a phenomenon generalizes across situations, including cultures, or is altered by certain boundary conditions.*



- **Comparing Cultures**

- Oishi and Deiner (2014) reported large, cross-national study on GDP, religiosity, and meaning in life and suicide rates. Poorer nations were more religious, had higher meaning in life, and lower suicide rates.



- **Identifying Boundary Conditions (Buffers, Susceptibility)**

- Chan and Wan (2012) studied whether service employees' fatigue always led to lower service quality and customer satisfaction. Results showed that fatigue only led to reduced service quality and customer satisfaction when supervisor support was low. High supervisor support was a “buffer” against fatigue.



Styles and Action Strategies for Discovering Ideas

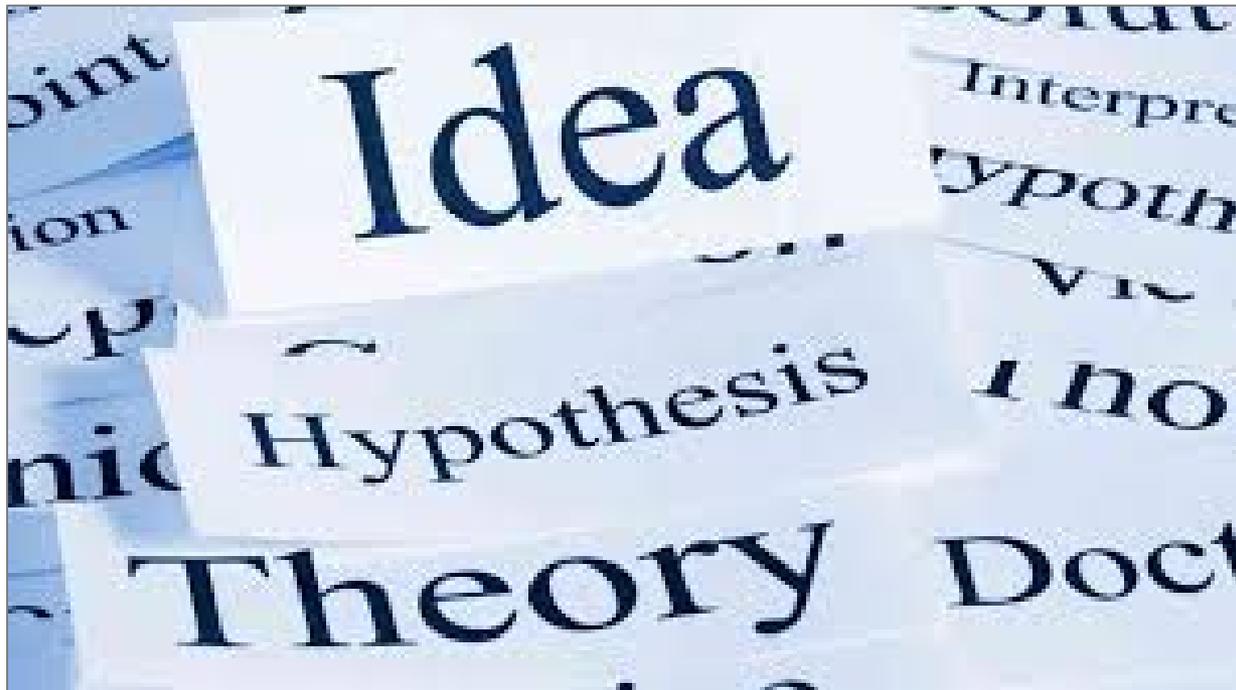
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Discussion Questions

1. Once you discover a good question, how do you frame it?
2. How important is theory?
3. What is the difference between theories, models, and hypotheses?



Theory, Models and Hypotheses



What Theory Is

- *Theory is the answer to queries of why. Theory is about the connections among phenomena, a story about why acts, events, structure, and thoughts occur. Theory emphasizes the nature of causal relationships, identifying what comes first as well as the timing of such events. Strong theory, in our view, delves into underlying processes so as to understand the systematic reasons for a particular occurrence or nonoccurrence” and “it may have implications that run counter to our common sense.”*

– Sutton and Staw (1995, p. 378)
- In short, theory can be defined as *a set of interrelated propositions (or principles) concerning how, why or when a phenomenon or set of phenomena occur.*

What Theory Is Not

According to Sutton and Staw (1995), theory is not...

- Referring to past research
- Describing previous empirical findings
- Listing and defining a long list of variables
- Testing the strength of different predictors
- Evaluating the fit of a causal model
- Drawing diagrams
- Hypotheses

Why Theory is Important

- Theories are “tools for communication” that go beyond unique methods, allowing researchers from different areas to “bridge” findings.
- Theories allow researchers to organize disparate and sometimes loosely connected empirical findings into an overall explanatory framework.
- Theories address the most important questions of “how,” “why” and “when” a phenomenon occurs, facilitating our understanding of the phenomenon and interventions.

Theories vs. Hypotheses: An Illustration

- **Theory**

- Self-control operates like a muscle
- People have limited self-control resources
- Self-control resources can be “depleted” over time
- Self-control can also be built up over time



- **Hypothesis**

- When people regulate their emotions, they will show a reduction in self-control



- **Operationalization**

- Participants watch funny or sad video
- React naturally or suppress emotions
- Solve anagrams

umlsac → muscle

Van Lange's (2013) TAPAS System for Evaluating Theories

- **Truth**
 - Lead to hypotheses that receive empirical support through carefully conducted research.
- **Abstraction**
 - Particulars (e.g., phenomena and events) are described in general terms (concepts, principles, assumptions)
- **Progress**
 - Makes progress beyond what we knew, expanding our understanding of a phenomena, and/or connections between phenomena
- **Applicability**
 - Is relevant to everyday life and interventions aimed at addressing real-world problems

Discussion Questions

1. What ethical guidelines should we follow in conducting research studies?
2. What are some dilemmas researchers face when analyzing and writing up data?
3. What are 'best practices' to avoid unethical data analysis and reporting?



Ethics:

A Cornerstone of High-Quality Research



Problems Due to Unethical Research Practices

- Negative impacts on participants, and in turn, research in general (e.g., through increased suspicion)
- Prevent scientific progress
- Lead other researchers to waste time trying to “replicate” a finding based on fake/flawed data
- Lead others to question value of our disciplines, reducing our ability to solve real-world problems
- Harm colleagues’, students’, advisors’ careers

APA – Standard 8 (Research and Publication)

- Institutional review and approval
- Informed consent (risks, benefits, right to leave)
- Avoid exploiting participants (e.g., students in one's class)
- Avoid offering too large a reward in order to avoid coercion
- Limit deception
- Avoid harm
- Debrief
- Do not fabricate data
- Do not publish, as new data, data that have already been published
- Give and take appropriate credit for publication
- Share data with others if requested for verification
- Reviewers do not disclose or steal ideas of authors

Emerging Ethical Dilemmas in Data Analysis and Reporting

- How much of original data should be reported?
- If only one of two studies “works,” what should we do?
- What are appropriate guidelines for screening out certain observations?
- Should authors of published papers be required to share their data?

Recommendations on Maintaining Integrity During Data Analysis

- Avoid collecting a large number of “exploratory conditions” in hypothesis-testing research
- Be transparent in methods and data analytic procedures so reviewers and editors can evaluate conclusions in light of data
- Become familiar with appropriate data screening techniques for dealing with outliers, etc.
- Analyze data “in public” (e.g., with graduate students) and openly discuss ethics of taking certain approaches to data analysis
- Be open with co-authors and reviewers about steps you’ve taken to “reduce the data” and report results before and after data screening
- Find a trusted colleague to discuss ethical issues
- Trust your gut; if it feels wrong, it is likely a sign that something is a problem, and you should discuss it with your colleagues

Discussion Questions

1. How can researchers “fill a gap”?
2. Are there general “paradigms” you can identify that allow researchers to “make a contribution”?



Publication Paradigms: The Bedrock of High-Quality Research



Eight “Publication Paradigms”

- 1. Bridge Disciplines**
- 2. Conduct a Meta-Analysis**
- 3. Launch a Paradigm Shift**
- 4. Combine Mediators and Moderators**
- 5. Develop a New Individual Difference Tool**
- 6. Introduce an Innovative New Method**
- 7. Venture into the Real World**
- 8. Explore the Role of Culture**



Bridge Disciplines

- **Definition**

- *An intentional effort to draw on the human, theoretical, methodological, and/or empirical resources of a related discipline to shed new light on one's own discipline, contribute new insights to a related discipline, and consequently advance progress in both disciplines.*

- **Benefits**

- Addresses questions of a very fundamental nature (that cross disciplines)
- Addressing real-world problems requires insights from different disciplines
- Diffusion of theories, research methods, and data analytic techniques
- Stimulating exercise that can advance your career and keep you engaged
- Increases impact of your research

- **Costs**

- Challenge to keep up with multiple literatures
- Reviewers/editors may resist new ideas outside their “disciplinary paradigm”
- Differing definitions/measures/methods across disciplines, contributing to miscommunication

Bridge Disciplines (Illustrations)

- **Going Green to be Seen**

- Griskevicius, Tybur and Van den Bergh (2010) bridged social, evolutionary, and consumer psychology to show that people buy environmentally-friendly products to gain status.



- **Social Exclusion and Consumer Spending**

- Mead and colleagues (2011) integrated work on social exclusion (within social psychology) and consumer behavior (in marketing) to show that socially-excluded consumers spend strategically to reestablish connection (e.g., evaluating and selecting products that are likely to be approved by a person with whom one will soon interact, including chicken feet and cocaine!).





Meta Analysis

- **Definition**

- *Statistical technique for averaging effect sizes across studies, and exploring how different study characteristics, such as the percentage of men and women in a sample, experimental methods, or outcome measures moderate (and/or mediate) the effect size.*

- **Benefits**

- Can bring order to disparate/conflicting findings and resolve controversies
- Helps identify how different methodological factors can change an effect
- Can shed light on mediating mechanisms
- Provides a helpful (easy to understand) basis for policy recommendations
- Are often heavily cited, increasing researcher's impact
- Exposes a researcher to a wide range of literature, refining theoretical, methodological, and analytic skills

- **Costs**

- Labor intensive and time consuming
- Some schools may place little value on 'secondary analysis' (vs. primary empirical contributions)

Meta Analysis (Illustrations)

- **Does Emotional Intelligence Enhance Job Performance?**

- Joseph and Newman (2010) used meta-analysis to test a “cascading model” of emotional intelligence as a predictor of job performance (emotion perception → emotion understanding → emotion regulation → job performance). Results supported the model, with strongest effects in jobs requiring high emotional labor. (Cited 306 times).



- **Does the Implicit Association Test (IAT) Predict Behavior?**

- Greenwald and colleagues (2009) used meta-analysis to determine whether the Implicit Association Test (IAT) predicts behavior. Results supported the validity of the IAT, with strongest effects in political and intergroup domains. (Cited 1036 times).





Launch a Paradigm Shift

- **Definition**
 - *A deliberate effort to “push boundaries” (theoretical, methodological, analytic) by challenging long-held assumptions, common wisdom, or intuition, and/or test competing theories.*
- **Benefits**
 - An inherent part of scientific inquiry
 - Can lead to an interesting (but also controversial) journey
 - May help establish a researcher’s standing
- **Costs**
 - “Gate Keepers” may resist change, making it difficult to publish
 - May risk offending or alienating established scholars

Launch a Paradigm Shift (Illustrations)

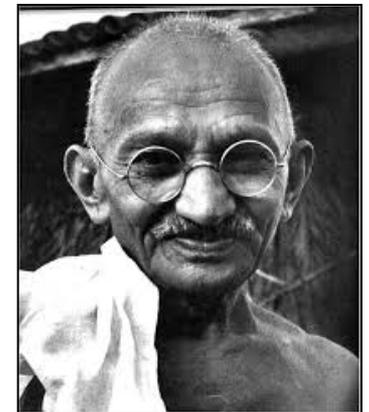
- **Can Low Status Consumers Influence People to Buy?**

- Shalev and Morwitz (2012) challenged the assumption that consumers would not model their behavior based on low status sources (e.g., a homeless person with an iPad). They argued that consumers engage in “comparison-driven self-evaluation and restoration”; if a low status person has a product we don’t, we want that product to restore our sense of self.



- **Is An Eye-for-an-Eye Always the Best Idea?**

- Van Lange and colleagues (2002) questioned whether “tit-for-tat” was always the best strategy for motivating cooperation in social dilemmas. They argued, and found, that in “noisy situations” (where cooperation can be reduced by factors outside one’s control), a more generous strategy (TFT+1) is viewed more favorably and is more effective at eliciting cooperation.





Combine Mediators/Moderators

- **Definition**
 - *Motivated by a desire to understand the mechanism underlying a certain effect, and conditions that magnify/reduce/reverse an effect, and how interactions are mediated (mediated moderation), and mediational processes are moderated (moderated mediation).*
- **Benefits**
 - Helps to identify why and when a phenomenon occurs
 - Understanding mechanisms may help identify points of intervention
 - Identifying moderators can help identify “boundary conditions” for an effect, which may improve targeted interventions
 - Helps to advance a theoretical understanding of the phenomenon in question
- **Costs**
 - Mediation is open to alternative explanations
 - Combining mediation and moderation can lead to highly complicated models that are difficult to communicate

Combine Mediators/Moderators (Illustrations)

- **Negative Backlash Against Female Politicians**

- Okimoto and Brescoll (2010) used “mediated moderation” to determine why voters may have a negative reaction to female politicians seeking power. Voters evaluated females (but not males) seeking power less favorably, and this interaction was mediated through a perception that power-seeking females have a “communal deficit” which then led to moral outrage (disgust and contempt).



- **Strong Intentions Convert Plans into Action**

- Wiedemann et al. (2009) used “moderated mediation” to show that strong exercise and dental hygiene intentions make it more likely that a person’s actions plans will turn into action. In this case, intentions both influenced action plans, and moderated the impact of action plans on behavior.





Individual Difference Tool

- **Definition**

- *Motivated by a desire to measure a theoretical personality construct and capture meaningful individual differences that can predict behavior (perhaps in interaction with situation and/or other individual differences).*

- **Benefits**

- Scale development process can force a researcher to think carefully and systematically about the construct in question
- Improves ability to predict behavior
- Can inspire others to begin studying a construct (like Zimbardo!)
- High-quality scales in top tier outlets are often heavily cited (Zimbardo & Boyd, 1999, now cited 1,116 times!)

- **Costs**

- Time consuming
- Expectations for publishing very high
- Turf wars
- Personality traits “proliferate like rabbits” (Zuckerman, 1994) leading similar constructs to “fly” under different names, leading to theoretical confusion

Individual Difference Tool (Illustrations)

- **GRIT**

- Duckworth and colleagues (2007) developed the “GRIT Scale to assess “perseverance and passion toward long-term goals” and validated it by demonstrating its ability to predict GPA over and above SAT scores, and whether military cadets would make it through summer training camp.



- **Tightwads vs. Spendthrifts**

- Rick et al. (2008) developed the Spendthrift-Tightwad scale to assess the degree to which people find it easy (spendthrift) or hard (tightwad) to spend money, and validated it by showing it predicted retirement savings, and responses to manipulations designed to reduce the “pain of paying.”





Innovative New Method

- **Definition**

- *Can come in a variety of forms, including new ways of operationalizing an IV, or a DV; a data collection method or context; a sophisticated data analytic technique. Often go beyond “self-report” methods to establish the practical relevance of a phenomenon.*

- **Benefits**

- Reviewers, editors, readers like a “good story” (facilitated by a novel method), increasing odds of publication and impact
- Often deals with “real life,” enhancing generalizability/relevance of your work
- May offer researcher new insights into the phenomenon of interest
- Can be stimulating and fun to develop novel method

- **Costs**

- Can be very time consuming and expensive to execute
- The “tail may wag the dog” (the method becomes the primary focus) leading a researcher or a discipline to become “method bound”
- Reviewers may resist new methods

Innovative New Method (Illustrations)

- **Cortisol as a Measure of Response to Stereotype Threat**

- Townsend and colleagues (2011) noted that very little research established that stereotype threat led women to feel stressed. To address this puzzling null result, the authors used changes in stress hormone cortisol to study how women respond to stereotype threat in simulated interviews with males.



- **Social Mindfulness (SoMi) Paradigm**

- Van Doesum, Van Lange, and Van Lange (2013) developed the Social Mindfulness Paradigm to assess extent to which people “safeguard other people’s control over their own behavioral options in situations of interdependence.” The SoMi paradigm asks participants to choose an item among an array of objects, leaving the rest for the next person. The socially-mindful choice is to choose the more plentiful option, leaving the next person a choice.





Venture into the Real World

- **Definition**

- *Any effort to enhance the ‘face validity’ and real-world relevance of a research study by simulating realistic situations in the lab and/or observing behavior in a naturalistic setting.*

- **Benefits**

- Reviewers, editors, readers like a “good story” (facilitated by a novel method), increasing odds of publication and impact
- Often deals with “real life,” enhancing generalizability/relevance of your work
- May offer researcher new insights into the phenomenon of interest
- Could identify “boundary conditions” for an effect
- Can be stimulating and fun to develop novel method

- **Costs**

- Can be very time consuming and expensive to execute
- The “tail may wag the dog” (the method becomes the primary focus) leading a researcher or a discipline to become “method bound”
- Reviewers may resist new methods
- Real-world studies likely to have a lot of “noise” and confounds

Venture into the Real World (Illustrations)

- **Junk-Food-Eating Grad Students and On-line Gamers Encourage Undergraduates to Eat Healthy**
 - Berger and Rand (2008) reported three studies on how “dissociative outgroups” promote health behavior among undergraduates (e.g., graduate students are a dissociative outgroup for most undergraduates). Healthy choices were assessed via consumer choice task in a mock store, and observing and coding food choices in a university cafeteria.
- **Thinking About Money Reduces Time Socializing**
 - Mogilner (2010) aimed to understand why “money doesn’t buy happiness.” She hypothesized that thinking about money reduces time socializing. In one study, Mogilner used a scrambled sentence task to prime thoughts of time, money or neither, and unobtrusively coded how much time participants spent socializing (vs. working) in a coffee shop.





Explore the Role of Culture

- **Definition**

- *Often takes on one of two forms:*

- *Cross-cultural psychology, defined as “the study of: similarities and differences in individual psychological functioning in various cultural and ethnocultural groups; of the relationships between psychological variables and socio-cultural, ecological and biological variables; and of ongoing changes in these variables” (Berry et al., 2002, p. 3)*
- *Cultural psychology, which focuses more on “understanding the person in a historical and sociocultural context” and discovering “how mind and culture define and constitute each other in specific contexts” (Adamopoulos & Lonner, 2001, p. 20).*

- **Benefits**

- Help determine generalizability of findings, and/or boundary conditions
- Comparing cultures may point to a useful theory that can explain individual differences
- Working in a new culture may lead a researcher to recognize a new phenomenon/process that does not exist within one’s own culture

- **Costs**

- Must take be sensitive to cultural differences and pay attention to subtleties (e.g., in meaning)
- Culture as an IV comes with many confounds and alternative explanations

Explore the Role of Culture (Illustrations)

- **Cultural Differences in Punishing Cooperators**

- Hermann and colleagues (2008) studied “antisocial punishment” (punishing cooperators) across 16 cultures. U.S. and Australia lowest, Greece and Oman highest, and antisocial punishment negatively related to norms of civic cooperation (importance of paying taxes) and rule of law (perceived fairness of law enforcing institutions) gathered from World Values Survey.



- **Cultural Differences in the Physical/Built Environment Shape Culture-Dependent Cognition**

- Miyamoto et al. (2006) coded pictures from scenes in U.S. and Japan, finding more complex environments in Japan. In a follow-up study, participants exposed to Japanese environments were more likely to identify changes in the background (context) of a scene, suggesting they were thinking from a more collectivistic perspective.



Discussion Questions

1. What are the key challenges you face when writing and revising?
2. What advice do you have for becoming a better writer, and publishing?



Tips for Writing and Revising



Edit Ruthlessly

Somebody ~~has~~ said that words are ~~a lot~~ like inflated money - the more ~~of them that~~ you use, the less each one ~~of them~~ is worth. ~~Right on.~~ Go through your entire letter ~~just~~ as many times as it takes. ~~Search out and~~ Annihilate all unnecessary words, ~~and~~ sentences—even ~~entire~~ paragraphs.

Malcolm Forbes
"How to write a business letter"
of 1946 A SPEECH

Writing

- Strive for perfection
- Objectively reflect on quality of your writing
- Gather feedback prior to submission
- Lead your reader by the hand
- Provide occasional overviews
- Utilize effective transitions
- Be (somewhat) redundant (especially in constructs)
- Use straightforward language
- Make every sentence count

Three to Four Paragraph Opener

- **Paragraph 1**
 - Grab readers' attention and raise the research question(s)
 - Anecdotes, statistics, quote(s)
- **Paragraph 2**
 - Provide preliminary answers to the question
 - Highlight remaining gaps
- **Paragraph 3**
 - Outline the purpose of your study (how you will fill the gap)
 - Give readers a brief overview of your hypotheses and key conclusions
- **Paragraph 4**
 - Clearly explain the contributions your work makes to the literature

An Example (Balliet et al., 2011, JPSP)

Forgiveness is a linchpin in successful relationships (Karremans & Van Lange, 2008; McCullough, Rachal, Sandage, Worthington, Brown, & Hight, 1998; McCullough, Worthington, Rachal, 1997; Tsang, McCullough, & Fincham, 2006; Worthington, Van Oyen Wetviliet, Pietrinit, & Miller, 2007) and an important determinant of psychological well-being (Bono, McCullough, & Root, 2008; Karremans, Van Lange, Ouwerkerk, & Kluwer, 2003; Lawler et al., 2003). One factor that influences willingness to forgive is an individual's personality.

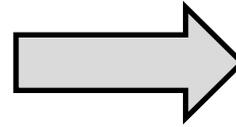
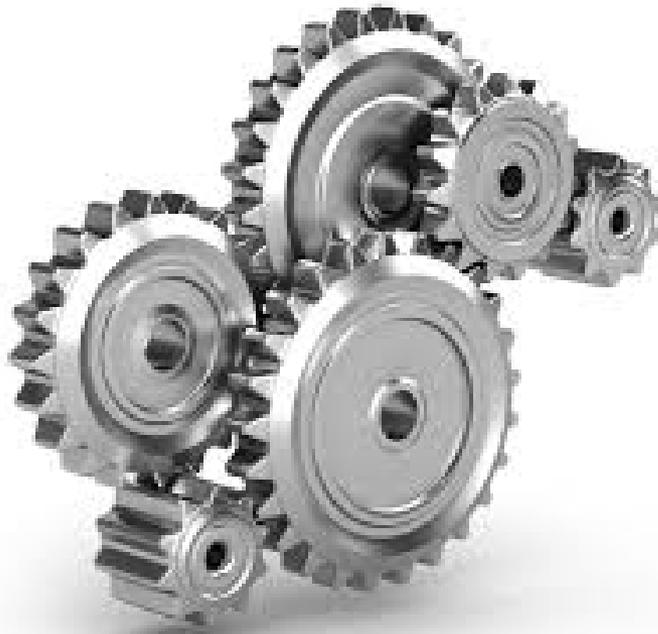
Prior research linking personality with forgiveness has implicated a variety of traits. The majority of this work suggests that the forgivers of the world are basically “nice” people – high in agreeableness (e.g., Leach & Lark, 2004; McCullough & Hoyt, 2002) or empathy (McCullough, et al., 1997; 1998; 2001) (for a recent review, see Fehr, Gelfand, & Nag, 2010). More recent work suggests that the world's forgivers may also be “smart” people – high in trait self-control (Finkel & Campbell, 2001) or executive functioning (Pronk, Karremans, Overbeek, Vermulst, & Wigboldus, 2010). Integrating these two lines of research, the present work poses the following questions: Can a high level of trait self-control predict higher levels of forgiveness even among people with a prosocial orientation? Can a prosocial orientation positively relate to forgiveness even among those with a low level of trait self-control? Or does forgiveness require both a prosocial orientation and high trait self-control?

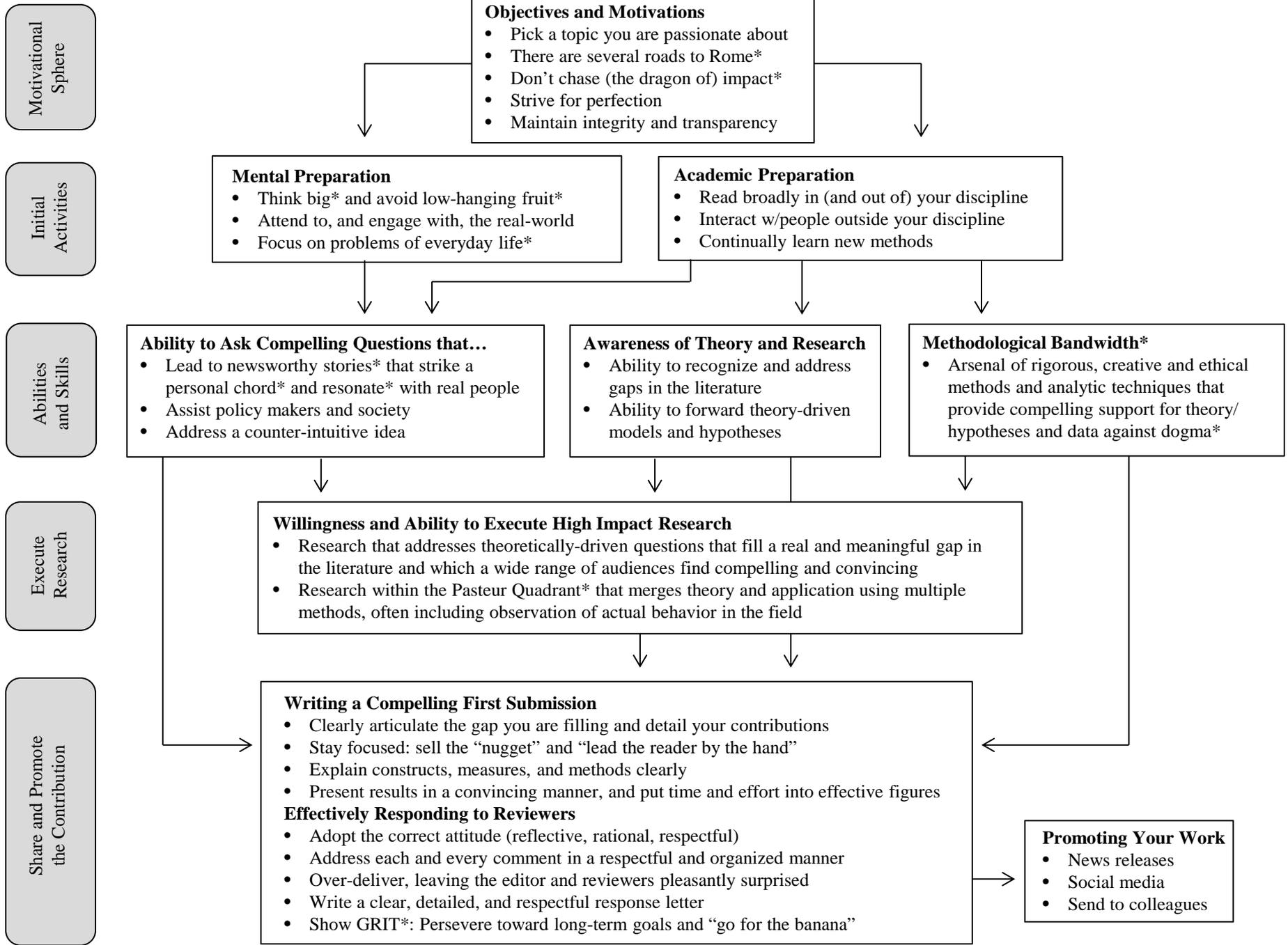
To address these questions, we advance a trait x trait interactionist perspective on forgiveness which gives rise to two competing theoretical models. Though both models are grounded in work on forgiveness and social interdependence theory, the models offer a notably different pattern of predictions. The compensatory model predicts that forgiveness requires a prosocial orientation or high self-control, and the synergistic model assumes that forgiveness requires both. We test these competing models across three primary studies exploring willingness to forgive an interaction partner who behaves non-cooperatively in a social dilemma.

Revising Principles

- Adopt the Correct Attitude
 - Reflective, Rational, Respectful
- Address each comment (even if it is a polite rebuttal)
- Over-deliver
- Don't try to “pull the wool over reviewers' eyes”
- Write a clear, well-organized and respectful response letter to the editor and reviewers
- Remember: you are the author (if you are truly uncomfortable with a suggested change, clearly and respectfully explain your reasoning)

Process Model for Publishing High-Quality Research





Grit and Go for the Banana!

