

BOOK REVIEW

Publish don't perish: 100 tips that improve your ability to get published, by Robert N. Lussier, Information Age Publishing Inc., 2010 (new edition), 195 pp, soft cover, ISBN: 978-1-61735-113-6

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In *Publish don't perish*, Management Professor Robert Lussier of Springfield College, Massachusetts has written a book that can only be described as no-nonsense and on-point. The book is written on the premise that as much as we may love to teach, without publishing we may not get a faculty position, tenure, the salary we expect, or the promotion we seek. The purpose of this book is therefore quite simple: to help you get your academic work published. Based on more than 25 years of the author's own experience in publishing over 340 publications, and drawn largely from material used in his 'Publish Don't Perish' workshops (including audience feedback), this book is aimed mostly at doctoral students and early career researchers just getting started. But seasoned authors will also find new tips and ideas they perhaps had not thought of. What makes the book especially useful is the accessible and easy-to-read writing style that undoubtedly will appeal to its targeted audience, as it did to this ECR reviewer. Additionally, the author is direct in his advice, with headings such as '*Don't fool yourself*' and '*Listen – don't be defensive*' peppered throughout. Importantly, Lussier's practical advice is not geared towards only getting published in the top journals. Rather, in a timely departure from what is often espoused as the only goal worth striving for (i.e., A-star journals), Lussier takes a far more pragmatic view in suggesting that one should aim for the publishing requirements of their current university and, if unable to do so, then consider a job change to a university whose publishing requirements you can meet. The advice is not to suggest that top journals are to be avoided, but instead to instill a *practice of writing* that will subsequently improve one's overall publishing ability (and confidence) over time, thereby leading to the greater likelihood of eventually getting published in the top journals.

The book is structured into nine chapters. Chapter 1 sets the tone by introducing a 'how to use this book' guide (including a very relevant section on 'skip or rush it' for those short on time), as well as foundational knowledge. Each subsequent chapter then tackles a different aspect of publishing. Topics include getting publishing assistance, selecting and matching topics and publication sources, time management, multiplying publications, and using refereed and non-refereed sources. Each chapter begins with an overview to 'set the scene', including a chapter outline of section topics, and concludes with a 'summary of tips', which can be photocopied and compiled into a personal 'publish don't perish' booklet. Throughout each chapter there are small 'application' boxes where the reader can pencil in their own notes in relation to what has just been read. The most important feature is that the book does not need to be read in sequence; sections that are familiar to the experienced academic can be skipped without losing the logic and flow of the central ideas (although be warned: skipping sections can lead to missing some simple and very effective tips!).

Chapter 1 is foundational. Topics include the different types of academic publications (journals, books, conference papers), types of articles (conceptual, empirical), how to list publications on a CV (including a very handy 'publication summary' table by year of publication), and dealing with rejection. I found one of the best tips of the entire book in this chapter – the 'publishing pipeline'.

Here Lussier advises to have work in each stage of the publishing process: (1) ideas and proposals; (2) actual writing; (3) out to review or revise and resubmit; (4) accepted, waiting to be published or in press; and (5) published. The trick is to have a written list to keep track of. The major benefit of a full pipeline is that you have a constant flow of publications. A second benefit is the motivation to keep going; a rejection letter one week can be offset by a win the next to keep your head (and heart) in the game. Of all the tips in the book, this is the one I implemented almost immediately and from which I've gained the most surprising results: in little more than 3 months my publishing output has quadrupled simply because I now have an organized method for keeping track of the various opportunities at any given point in time. I'm also becoming adept at securing 'quick publications' (editor selected articles, case studies, conference papers, book chapters) while waiting for the high-level journal articles to move through the process of multiple R&Rs.

Chapter 2 provides practical guidance relating to the various forms of publishing assistance. This includes getting a mentor and starting the publishing journey early as a doctoral student, joining and utilizing relevant professional associations, reading the journals you want to publish in, as well as writing and grammar tips. Another great tip is found here – to write a proposal for every research project even if not seeking funding or applying for a grant. Next, have the proposal reviewed. As Lussier advises, the simple act of writing a proposal forces one to consider whether there is a clear research question and purpose and what methodology to use. Editors of journals will want to see evidence of this too, so doing it upfront can improve the chances of your ultimate goal – getting the research published.

Chapter 3 helps the reader to understand the lies we tell ourselves to get around a weak publishing record, as well as the pitfalls in not understanding our particular university's publishing requirements. In his usual no-nonsense style, Lussier clearly spells out that 20 conference proceedings is not equal to one refereed journal paper, nor are five low-level journal papers equal to one in a specified top-tier journal. Teaching will not take the place of publishing (even among those with outstanding evaluations), nor will university service on committees count for all that much. He openly discusses leaving a university to find a school where you can meet the publication requirements without being denied tenure. The rest of the chapter is devoted to finding your publishing niche, and how to balance quality and quantity to establish a foundation of publications that ensures you can remain employable.

Chapter 4 gets to the heart of publishing by discussing the ins and outs of the review process. Here Lussier provides a myriad of tips including referencing from the journal you intend to publish in, referencing reviewers and editors of the journal, being a reviewer, cover letters to editors, and playing politics.

Chapter 5 builds on the publishing skillset by tackling time management. One of the best tips here is to log in time spent on actual publishing and to track whether it matches what you need to be doing in order to get tenure and promotion. Another is to get teaching preparation under control and to build a teaching portfolio of the same courses over many years to reduce teaching loads and put more time back in your schedule for publishing activities. This chapter is loaded with tips for getting one's time under control and sorting out where your priorities need to be and how to achieve that.

Chapter 6 focuses on increasing the number of publications. Here Lussier first spells out the benefits of having co-authors, and then how to find them. Next is a roadmap for how to work with co-authors without the relationship getting off track. The remainder of this chapter is devoted to getting the most number of publications out of one manuscript or one data set (i.e., local conference, regional or international conference, and then journal). Tips include how to split the sample, split the variables, and develop a niche in your particular topic to attract collaborators. The chapter concludes with tips on promoting your publications to build your network.

Chapters 7 and 8 discuss the various merits of refereed and non-refereed publications. In this section good advice is given relating to the revise and resubmit process, how to use conference

presentations to improve your chances of publication, and publishing case studies. Non-refereed publications are also considered such as book reviews, textbooks, and edited books including tips on how to secure book contracts. Chapter 9 rounds out the book by providing an overview of 'empirical research' largely for the novice researcher.

In sum, the central message in *Publish don't perish* is that, with rare exception, academics need to publish and the more tips and advice they have at their disposal, the easier this goal will be to achieve. There is really only one limitation of the book in that the author is a professor of business management, therefore some tips may not be applicable across all disciplines. Personally, I find the book generalizable enough that this likely won't be a problem. Clearly, this is not a 'short-cut to getting published' book, but a solid contribution to the literature on how to publish successfully. In my view, a must-read for any doctoral student or early career researcher, and a very nice graduation or post-confirmation gift for those just starting out.