



# Growing Your Profile

## International Collaboration

A key to growing your career is developing productive collaborations with researchers around the world in your own field. In most institutions there are only a few people who research the same things as you and while there may be others who use the same methods as you, they are often in other faculties.

So growth depends on making contacts with people in other institutions and countries with the same interests as you--and better if they don't hate your methods. Obviously, making contact with them is essential--send them your papers especially if you cite theirs, seek them out at conferences to say hello. An interesting side-effect of international collaborations is that it increases the pool of possible readers who might eventually cite your research.

Consequently, the real question for me, in light of my experience publishing with international collaborators (Brazil, Hong Kong, China, Portugal, Sweden, Cyprus, South Africa, to name a few) has to do with how do you make those collaborations happen?

In this blog, I'll reflect on that problem based on my own experience.

1. Enthusiasm for the topic combined with research in your own context into that topic makes you interesting to similar researchers elsewhere in the world. Share your research--give talks! Be passionate about your own research...how else will you get it published?
2. Have something to share that collaborators need. In my experience that has been methods! Whether it's a research tool, an analytic protocol, or whatever, if you have expertise in some method that they need you become valuable to other researchers. For me that started with the development and



Others have been interested in my ability and willingness to teach factor analysis. So during your PhD develop strong command of methods so that you can help other folk with analysis or design. Methods matter!

3. Be interested and curious. If you have findings from your world, be motivated to find out if those results replicate elsewhere in other contexts, languages, levels, etc. Be curious to find out how your collaborators' world is different to your own. Use the new context to test your theories and results. It could well be you learn more from your model or theory doesn't work in the new context than you would if you successfully replicated something. Context really matters too!
4. Be responsive. If an opportunity comes up, jump in! Don't say no to research collaborations. Of course, be sensible about how much time you can give. But be inclined to say YES! Your input could make the difference to getting your colleagues' research published and that will make you look good too.
5. Read widely! Look for connections from new research to old ideas, theories, researchers. There really isn't all that much new under the sun. Many new results make sense if you connect to the seminal theories and writers of the 20th century or earlier. You never know when reading some 18th century philosopher might shed useful light on your current work. Being able to link new results to well-established research can save you from the mistake of thinking you've discovered something we already know. If you read widely, you are likely to have read something your colleagues haven't and which may shed light on a new finding.





# Publish and Prosper

How do you get a bigger impact? Well clearly writing material that other people are influenced by is the key. But is it really true that the more you write, the more you get cited? It isn't a perfect linear relationship but my experience is that if you haven't said very much about a topic, the less likely you are to get cited when people review that space. As my supervisors said: "If you write 1 or 2 papers on a topic, you can be overlooked. But when you've written 10 papers on a topic, your can't be overlooked." Indeed, I have had reviewers insist that Brown's work on xxxx is included when topics I work on are included in the review section of a new paper--happened to us, when we disguised our own publications from reviewers.

In my own career of publications, I can see that the correlation between research publications and citations (data from Google Scholar) is  $r = 0.74$ . So the more you write, the more you can be cited. The chart below shows my publications and citations over time. Time is our friend in education and social sciences. So if you don't write for publication, you can't get cited...but when you do, good things tend to happen in your career. You get asked to help, to review, to speak. And you tend to get promoted.

