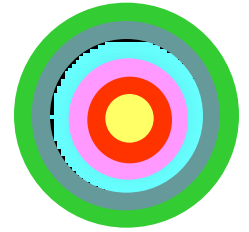


Write-shop: writing for academic publication



University of Oxford: CDKN
9th March 2011

Phil Race

(from Newcastle-upon-Tyne)

BSc PhD PGCE FCIPD SFHEA NTF

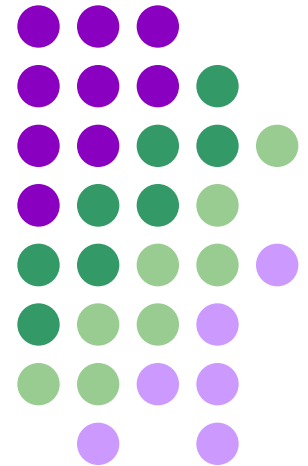
Visiting Professor: University of Plymouth

Visiting Professor: University Campus Suffolk

(Adjunct Professor; James Cook University, and Central
Queensland University)

Emeritus Professor, Leeds Metropolitan University

www.phil-race.co.uk

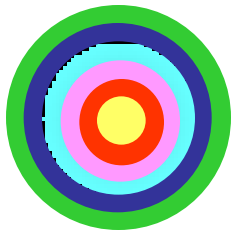


Revised Outline Programme

- 9:30 Arrival and refreshments
- 9:45 Introduction to CDKN and write-shop expectations: Dr. Natasha Grist
- 10:00 Introduction of Phil Race; participants' expectations.
- 10.20 Exercise: 'writing would be much better for me if only...' and discussion of matters arising.
- 1100 Coffee.
- 11.20 Exercises on writing for academic audiences, and discussion of matters arising.
- 12.00 Planning a piece of writing - creative brainstorming and mind-mapping techniques.
- 12.30 Lunch.**
- 13:30 Speaker: Dr. Tom Downing: Academic writing on climate change
- 14:30 What journal editors and referees look for: exercises and discussion. Choosing titles and writing your abstract – how to make that vital good first impression.
- 15:15 Tea/coffee.**
- 15.31 Speaker: Professor Tom Thornton: Identifying journals for impact and personal reflections on getting published
- 16.15 Creative problem-solving exercise: 'What can I do when...' issues and responses.
- 16:45 Workshop feedback
- 17:00 Close of workshop.**

Thanks to students

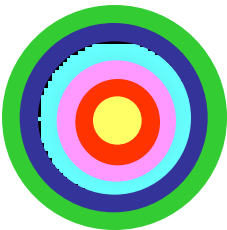
- ❖ I could not do what I do nowadays if I did not continue to spend a fair bit of my time working with **students** – they've taught me most of what I know.



Bonus feature...

A short exam

- ❖ **Where your scores will be taken down and used against you in evidence!**



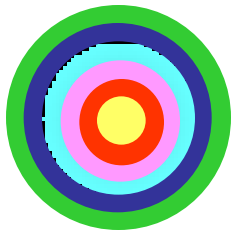
About Phil...

- ❖ Born a Geordie
 - ❖ First a musician
 - ❖ Then a writer
 - ❖ Then a scientist
 - ❖ Then a researcher
 - ❖ Then a lecturer and warden
 - ❖ Got interested in how students learn
 - ❖ And the effects assessment and feedback have on them
 - ❖ And how we teach them
 - ❖ Gradually became an educational developer
 - ❖ And now 'retired'! (1995, 2009)
 - ❖ Working with students on learning techniques
 - ❖ And lecturers on teaching and assessment strategies
 - ❖ And trainers on training design
- Currently...
- ❖ Visiting Prof: University of Plymouth;
 - ❖ Emeritus Prof: Leeds Met
 - ❖ Travelling around as usual!
 - ❖ Based at Newcastle...
 - ❖ And still a Geordie.

**And an expert...
on train routes and timetables!**

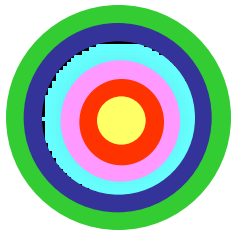
What's an 'Emeritus Professor?'

- ❖ Someone really old?
- ❖ Someone who has not been sacked for gross moral turpitude?
- ❖ Someone who's still on the books, but not on the payroll?
- ❖ Or perhaps as in 'edentate', the 'e' signifies 'without'.
- ❖ (c.f. e-learning?).



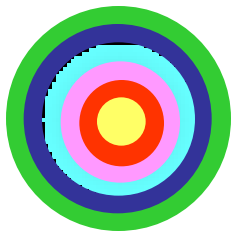
About these slides

- ❖ I'll put the main slides I use up on my website before the end of the day, so you can download them or see them again if you wish.
- ❖ Relevant handout materials are also downloadable from my website, on the 'archived downloads' page.



Will it be all on the slides?

- ❖ “Knowledge is experience – everything else is just information”.
- ❖ The slides will have all the information on them, but the real knowledge comes with what you do during the workshop.



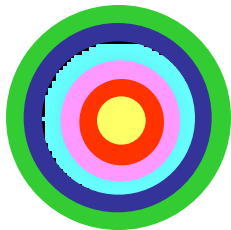
Writing for publication: the ten most important words

- ❖ Why?
- ❖ What?
- ❖ Who?
- ❖ Where?
- ❖ When?
- ❖ How?

- ❖ Which?
- ❖ So what?
- ❖ Wow?

And the most powerful
four-letter word in
the English
language...

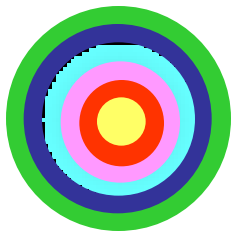
?????



Writing for publication: the ten most important words

- ❖ Why? (rationale)
 - ❖ What? (content)
 - ❖ Who? (people, you, me, them)
 - ❖ Where? (locations)
 - ❖ When? (times)
 - ❖ How? (processes)
 - ❖ Which? (decisions)
 - ❖ So what? (importance?)
 - ❖ Wow? (impact?)
- And the most powerful four-letter word in the English language...

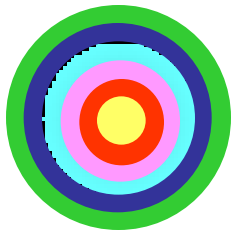
????



Writing for publication: the ten most important words

- ❖ Why? (rationale)
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 - ❖ Where? (locations)
 - ❖ When? (times)
 - ❖ How? (processes)
 - ❖ Which? (decisions)
 - ❖ So what? (importance?)
 - ❖ Wow? (impact?)
- And the most powerful four-letter word in the English language...

Remember?



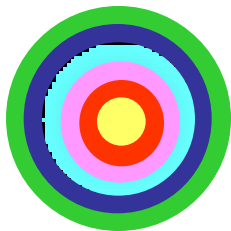
And two useful acronyms

❖ **WIRMI**

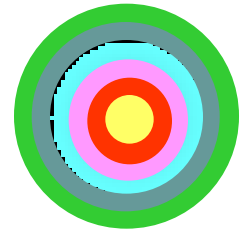
‘what it really means is.....’

❖ **WIIFM?**

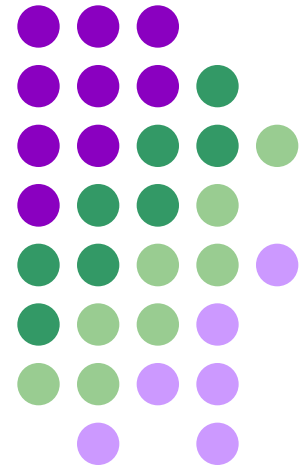
What’s in it for me?’



Getting Published

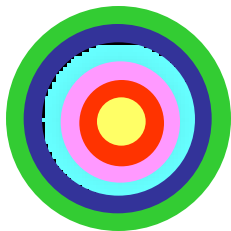


Setting the scene



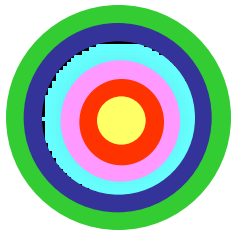
Workshop aims

- ❖ To help you to get into print more easily or efficiently.
- ❖ To maximise your hit rate with journal editors.
- ❖ To help your University to further enhance its reputation as a source of scholarship and expertise.



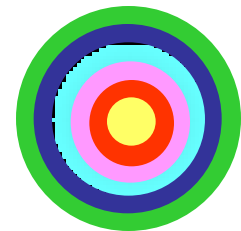
Normally...

- ❖ I run staff development workshops on teaching, learning and assessment, and
- ❖ Study-skills development workshops for students,
- ❖ But because I write a lot, I'm also asked to share with colleagues ways of getting into print.



Why me?

- ❖ I've always been a writer.
- ❖ Music reviews and a science column in local newspapers.
- ❖ 20-odd published papers in analytical electrochemistry.
- ❖ 40-odd books as sole author, co-author, chapter author or editor.
- ❖ Lots more bits and pieces of all kinds, including web-based.

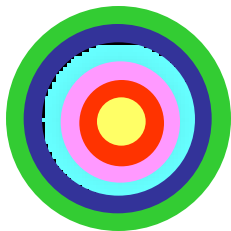


Latterly...

I'm probably the only writer to spread my writing energies more-or-less equally between:

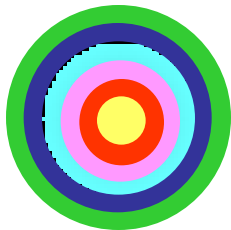
- ❖ writing for lecturers on the development of teaching, learning and assessment,
- ❖ Writing for trainers on the development of training methods and processes,
- ❖ And writing for students on study-skills, job-hunting, revision strategies and exam technique.

This reflects the balance of my workshops with staff, students and trainers.



Reference materials on www.phil-race.co.uk

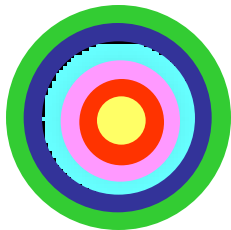
- ❖ Chapter 8 of '2000 Tips for Lecturers' (ed. Phil Race, 1999 London, Routledge).
- ❖ ...which was summarised from '500 Tips on Getting Published' (Sally Brown, Dolores Black, Abby Day and Phil Race, Kogan Page, 1998).
- ❖ Adapted extracts from 'The Student's Guide to Preparing Dissertations and Theses' (Phil Race and Brian Allison, 2004, London, Routledge).



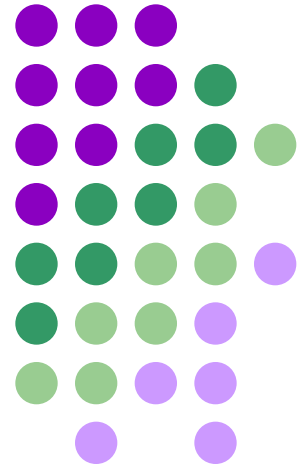
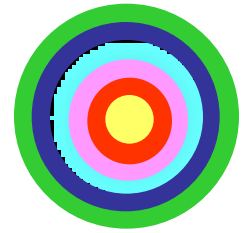
Intended workshop outcomes

After participating in this workshop, you will be better able to:

1. Confront constructively any writing-avoidance tactics which may be holding you up.
2. Adapt your tone and style to write effectively for different target audiences.
3. Get started on the planning of a new piece of writing.
4. Increase your hit-rate with journal editors.
5. Make your writing more efficient and enjoyable.
6. Gain feedback on your ideas from a variety of sources.

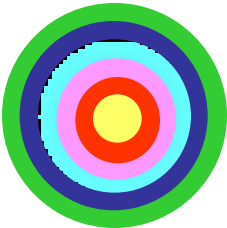


What do you need to get started?

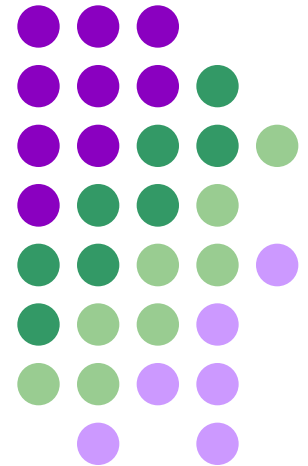
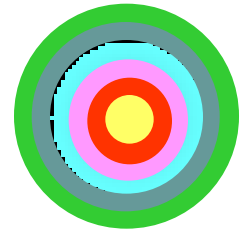


Post-it task...

- ❖ Please write on a post-it your own completion of:
‘getting published would be much better for me if only I...’
- ❖ Now please swap post-its, so you no longer know who has got yours.
- ❖ If chosen, please read out with passion and drama what’s on the post-it you now have.
- ❖ Finally, please stick all the post-its onto the flipchart.

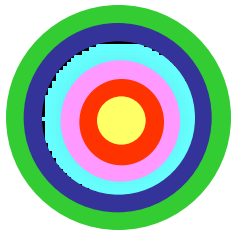


Making time to write

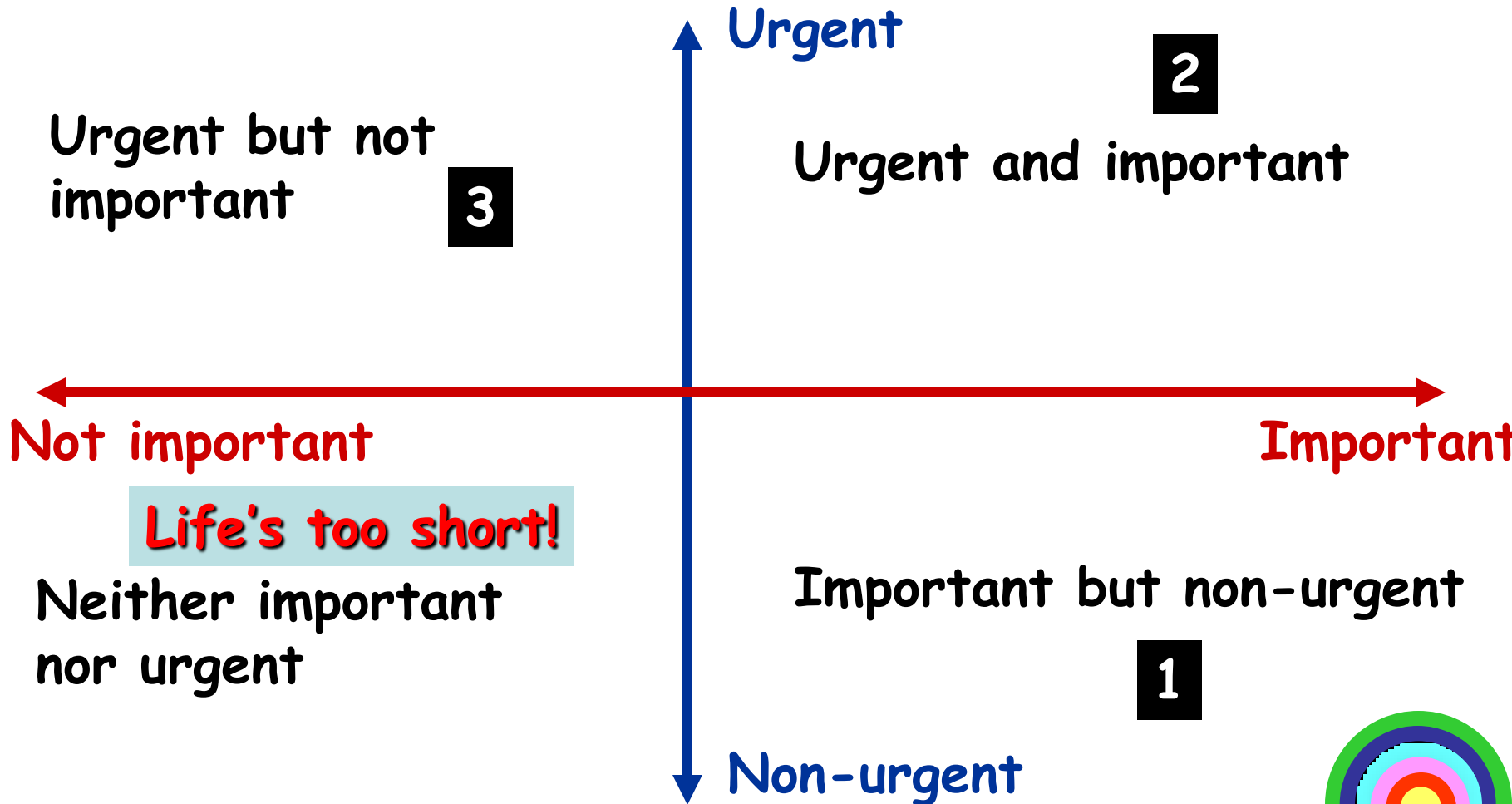


Making time ...

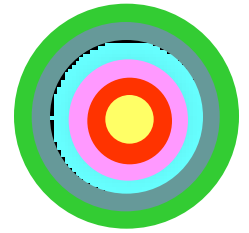
- ❖ We are all busy people – too busy!
- ❖ Yet ‘if you want a job done well, give it to a busy person’.
- ❖ How do prolific writers manage to do it?
- ❖ By using the odd 5-minutes which keep turning up, rather than waiting for the solid 2-hours which never occur.



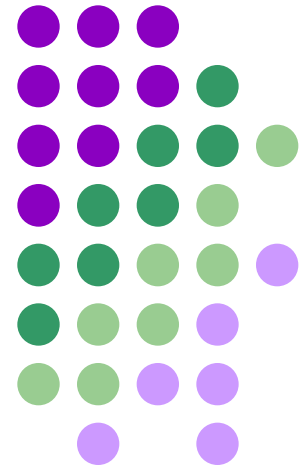
Urgent versus important



Organising your writing



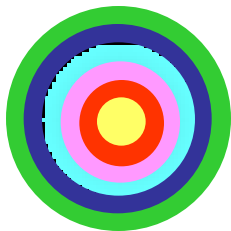
Some questions to help identify possible writing-avoidance tactics!



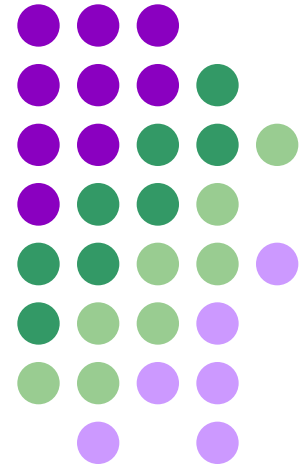
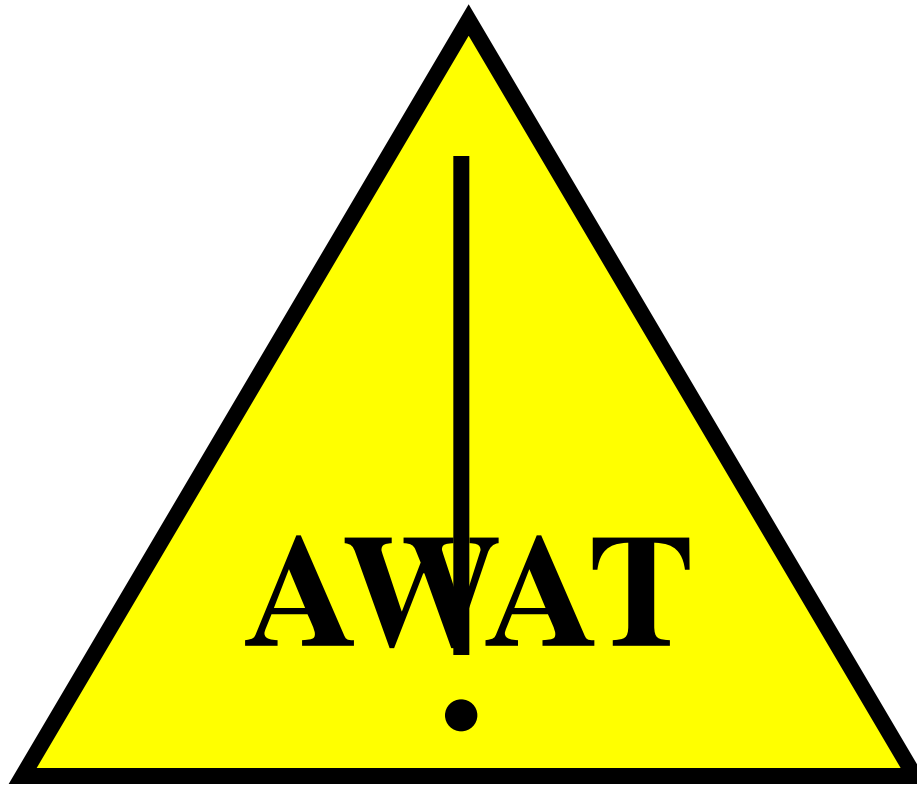
Organising your writing...

Jot down your immediate gut responses to the following questions..

1. Where will you (or do you) do your writing?
2. When (time of day) do you do your writing?
3. How long does it take you to actually put pen to paper, or fingers to keyboard?
4. Who knows about your writing plans?
5. Jot down (in hours or minutes) what you think is a sensible minimum element of time which could be used to make some progress with your writing for publication.
6. How many times, per week, does this time element become available to you?

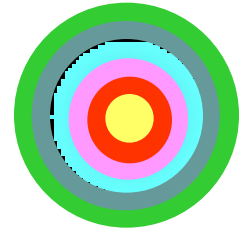


Danger!

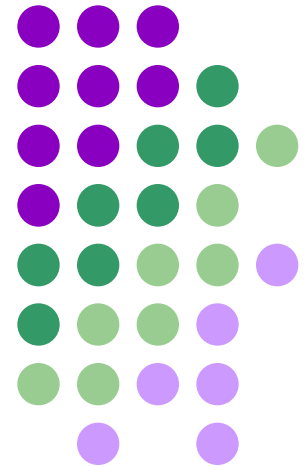


Advanced writing avoidance tactic

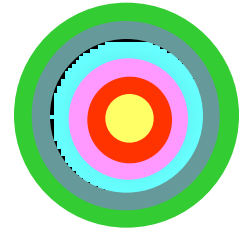
Getting Started



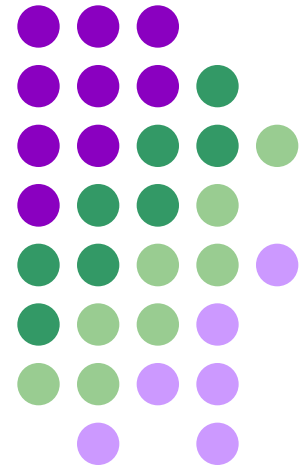
And getting feedback on your ideas



Finishing books or articles

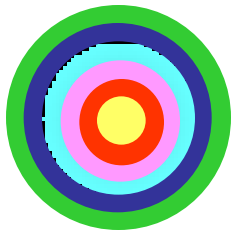


**It is never finished, merely
abandoned at the least
damaging point.**

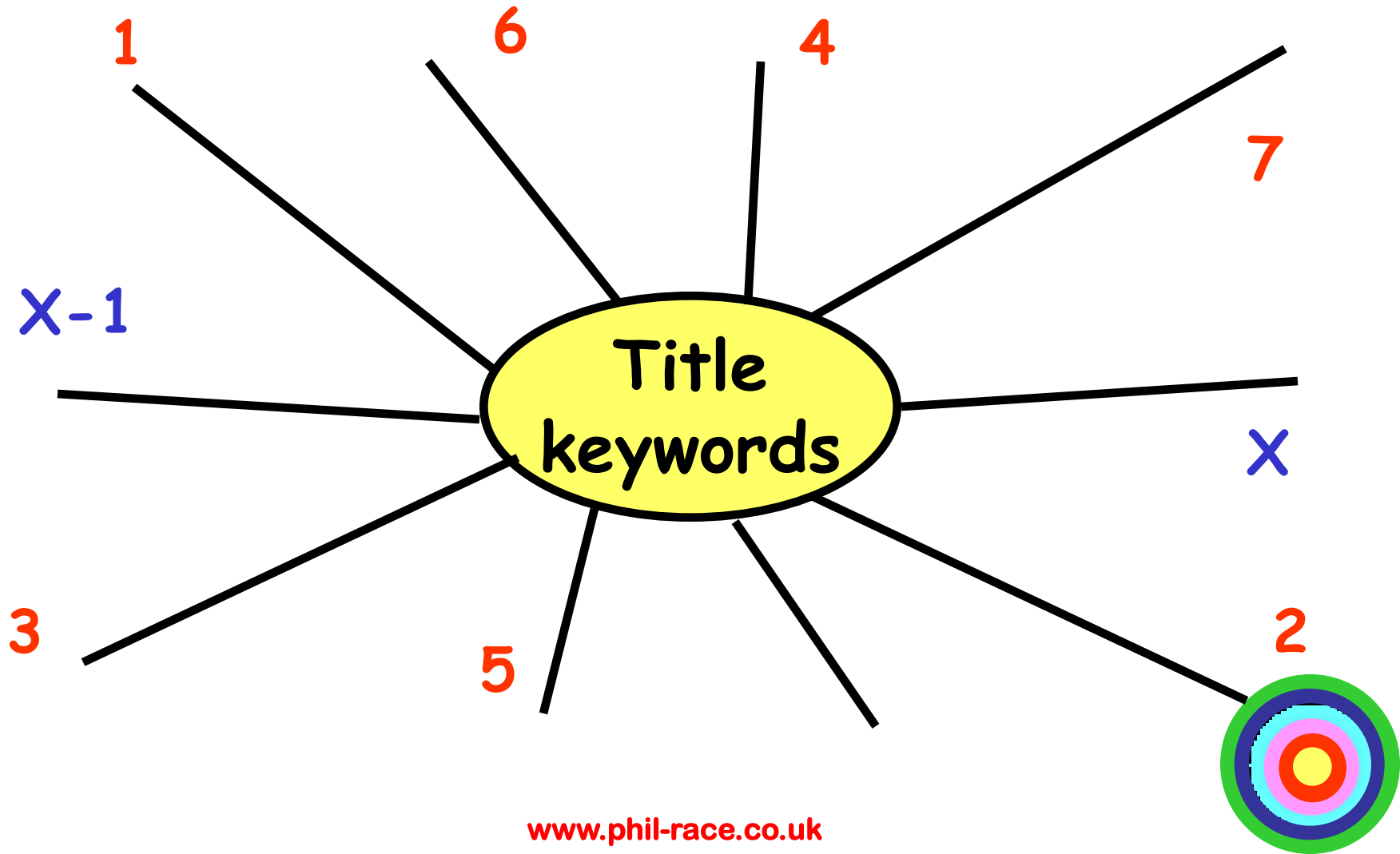


Getting started: lay an egg...

- ❖ Draw an egg in the middle of a blank sheet of paper.
- ❖ Write in the egg keywords of the topic or draft title that you're going to be writing about.
- ❖ Start brainstorming ideas and questions.



Getting started: lay an egg...



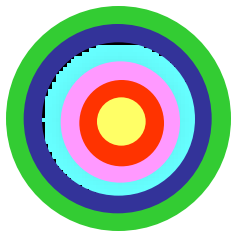
WIRMI and WIIFM?

❖ WIRMI

‘What I really mean is....’

❖ WIIFM?

‘What’s in it for me?’ i.e. the reader, editor, publisher, target audience...



Statements exercise...

- ◆ This is to help you think about how students feel when doing exams...
- ◆ And how to design exams...
- ◆ And how to help students to become better at doing exams...
- ◆ And other kinds of assessment.

Statements briefing...

- ◆ Please do this under exam conditions, no conferring, or even glancing at your neighbours.
- ◆ Your scores will be taken down and used against you in evidence.
- ◆ Are you feeling a bit tense just now?
- ◆ Please turn over now and simply do what is asked on the sheet.
- ◆ Add up your scores, and get ready to present them when asked.

Next steps...

- ◆ Discuss the exercise with other people, adjusting your scores accordingly.
- ◆ Report your new scores; you don't have to agree.

What happened in your group?

- ◆ Did someone lead?
- ◆ Why?
- ◆ How?
- ◆ What did you think, but not say?
- ◆ How did you handle differences?
- ◆ Were you satisfied with the outcome?

Some possibilities...

- ◆ There could have been a robbery.
- ◆ Or it may have been a routine courier cash collection.
- ◆ The owner and the businessman could have been two different people.
- ◆ The owner could have been a woman.

The right answer(s)?

- ◆ 4 true, 1 false, 13 don't know.
- ◆ 4 true, 2 false, 12 don't know.

The detail...

Number	True	False	D/K
1			X
2			X
3		X	
4			X
5			X
6	X		

The detail...

Number D/K	True	False	
7			X
8			X
9			X
10			X
11	X		
12			X

The detail...

Number D/K	True	False	
13			X
14	X		
15	X		
16			X
17			X
18			X, or
18		X	

Summary – if you missed some... All don't know except...

Number D/K	True	False	
3		X	
6	X		
11	X		
14	X		
15	X		
18		X	or X

Objectives of the exercise...

- ◆ To remind you what it feels like answering someone else's questions under exam conditions.
- ◆ To show how easy it is to make assumptions.
- ◆ To demonstrate how most people prefer not to admit 'don't know'.

Objectives of the exercise...

- ◆ To show how quickly assumptions can be broken down when students have the chance to talk to each other.
- ◆ To show the dangers of long sentences...
- ◆ ...think about Statement 18...
- ◆ How many of you had this as 'true' first time round?

Objectives of the exercise...

- ◆ To show how crucial the wording of task instructions can be...
- ◆ How many of you marked with \checkmark s?
- ◆ Imagine the difference if the task briefing had been:
- ◆ "try to work out how many of the statements contain something which you don't know".

Good communication

Making all the channels work

Face-to-face one-to-one feedback activity

Please work in pairs, moving around the room, talking to different people using the script which follows...

The script:

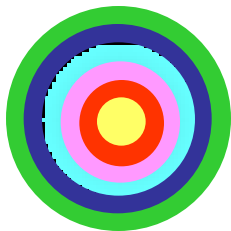
A 'Hello'.

B 'Hello'.

A 'You are late'.

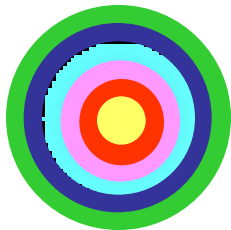
B 'I know'.

Try to do it completely differently each time.

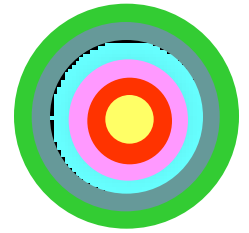


The power of face-to-face communication

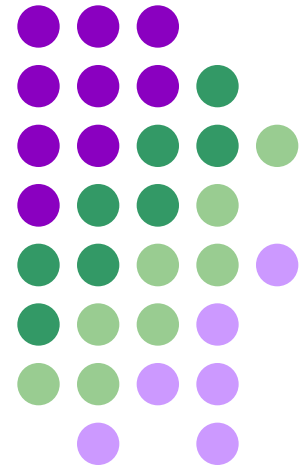
- ❖ When you're writing for publication, you've **not** got the normal range of communication at your disposal. You need to compensate for **not** having....
 - ❖ Tone of voice
 - ❖ Body language
 - ❖ Facial expression
 - ❖ Eye contact
 - ❖ The chance to repeat things
 - ❖ The chance to respond to puzzled looks
- ❖ Words on paper (or web-screen) need to do as well as possible to make up for the lack of the things in the list above.



Writing for Journals

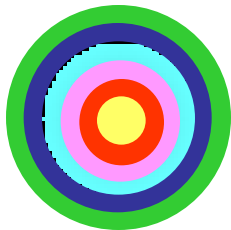


Think of a journal you might write for. How do you know if it's a good journal or not?



The journal editor's agenda...

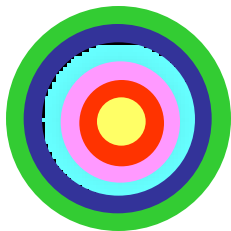
- ❖ Will it survive the 5-minute test?
- ❖ Is the purpose clear?
- ❖ Does the purpose match the journal's?
- ❖ Are the key points quick to spot?
- ❖ Do the key points link to the purpose?
- ❖ Does the author know why it's important?
- ❖ Is it readable?
- ❖ Does it follow the housestyle (to the letter!!)
- ❖ Will it create a lot of work for me?



What are the points that make a manuscript immediately appealing to you? Ten most important points chosen by editors:

- 1. Professional appearance: how it looks.**
- 2. New/novel treatment of the subject**
- 3. Very thorough.**
- 4. Author guidelines followed.**
- 5. Good writing clarity and style.**

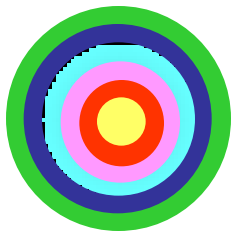
Noble: Studies in Higher Education
13 1 1989 *Publish or Perish:*
- what 23 Journal Editors have to say



What are the points that make a manuscript immediately appealing to you? Ten most important points chosen by editors:

6. **Relevance of subject.**
7. **Title of manuscript.**
8. **High-quality abstract.**
9. **Seminal piece of work/research.**
10. **A controversial subject.**

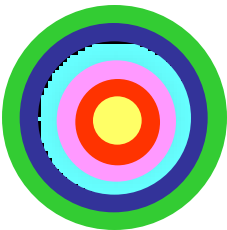
Publish or Perish: Noble (1989)



Ten most common reasons for immediately rejecting a manuscript...

1. Author guidelines not followed.
2. Not thorough.
3. Bad writing: clarity and style.
4. Subject of no interest to readers.
5. Poor statistics, tables, figures.

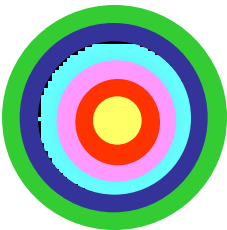
Publish or Perish: Noble (1989)



Ten most common reasons for immediately rejecting a manuscript...

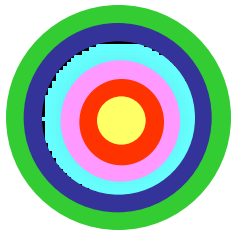
- 6 Old subject / manuscript.
- 7 Unprofessional appearance.
- 8 Title of manuscript.
- 9 Too simple - 'reporting'.
- 10 Written at the wrong level.

Publish or Perish: Noble (1989)



Referees and reviewers look for the following in manuscripts:

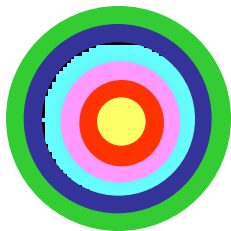
- ❖ **Clarity, coherence, well-written.**
- ❖ **Thoroughness.**
- ❖ **Research method.**
- ❖ **Appropriateness to the journal.**
- ❖ **A unique contribution.**
- ❖ **Advancement of knowledge.**
- ❖ **Importance of subject**
- ❖ **Generalisability and validity of results.**
- ❖ **Timeliness.**



Most common advice given by editors when rejecting...

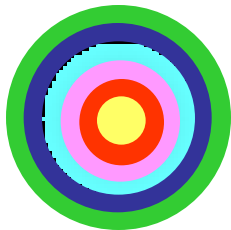
- ❖ Write clearly, logically and sequentially.
- ❖ Study and follow the author guidelines.
- ❖ Have the manuscript critiqued before submission.
- ❖ Think what readers want to know, not what you want to say.
- ❖ Be a stickler for detail.

Publish or Perish: Noble (1989)



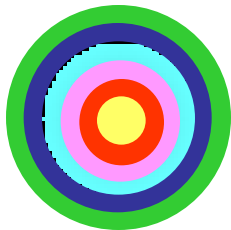
Getting the title right...

- ❖ Please jot down three possible titles for the piece you're thinking of writing...
 1. One 'normal' title;
 2. One 'off the wall' title;
 3. *One fairly normal one, but with a twist in it.*
- ❖ Now please read out each of the titles, and everyone else 'vote' for which one you prefer as a reader –
- ❖ Two hands – favourite
- ❖ One hand – second favourite
- ❖ No hands – least favourite



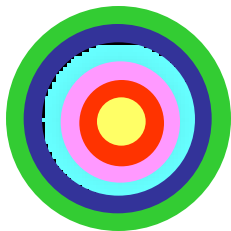
Now have a go at the first sentence in your Abstract

❖ **“This article**



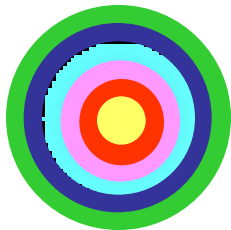
This article...

- ❖ Investigates the mainstreaming approach
- ❖ Investigates the challenges...
- ❖ Presents and tests a novel four-step...
- ❖ Evaluates the efficacy of
- ❖ Investigates the impact and feasibility of...
- ❖ Will characterise the key determinants of
- ❖ Argues that significant lessons can



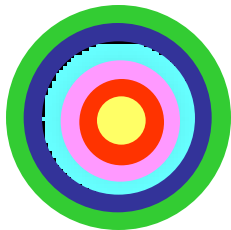
This article...

- ❖ Shows that it is possible to
- ❖ Assesses the potential economic, social..
- ❖ Examines climate change impacts on..
- ❖ Presents a framework for designing...
- ❖ Evaluates the feasibility of
- ❖ Explores barriers and pathways..
- ❖ Calls for community based analysis...



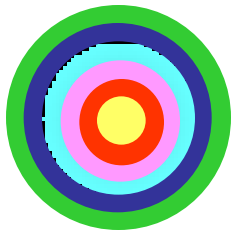
What was your first verb?

- ❖ Offers an illustration of...
- ❖ Focuses on...
- ❖ Challenges the paradigm of..
- ❖ Describes how...
- ❖ Describes the effects of...
- ❖ Reviews the recent advances in..
- ❖ Analyses the impact of...
- ❖ Successfully demonstrates the use of
- ❖ Presents a novel method of ...
- ❖ Reports, compares and correlates the phenomena of...
- ❖ Reports on the results of...
- ❖ Assesses the influence of...

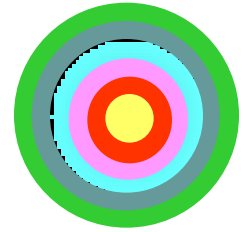


Haiku

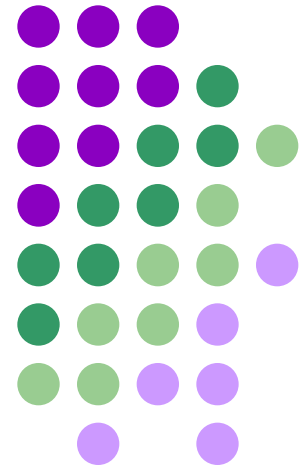
- ❖ Right rites for writing?
- ❖ Gain profile, playing wordsmith,
- ❖ Put a spring in it!



Creative Problem Solving

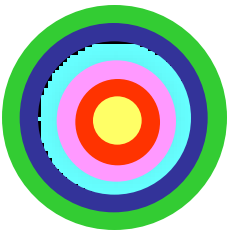


‘What can I do when....?’



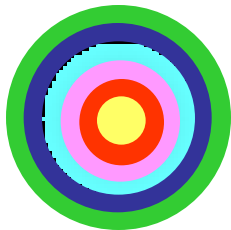
Problems we face when we write...

- ❖ In groups, please share some of the most common problems you experience when writing.
- ❖ Turn one or more of these problems into questions starting with:
What can I do when....?”
- ❖ Jot one or more of these down on post-its.



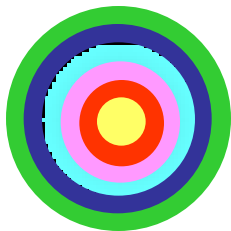
What can I do when?

1. I don't know who my audience is?
2. I have competing central topics?
3. I write too much?
4. I doubt my statements, because I feel I haven't read or researched enough?
5. I think I'm too provocative?



Brainstorm round

- ❖ One person from each *other* group in turn please say what you might do if confronted by the problem.
- ❖ But the same person can only speak **once**.
- ❖ Finally, the group who thought of the problem please select which course of action you feel most appropriate – or add your own solution.

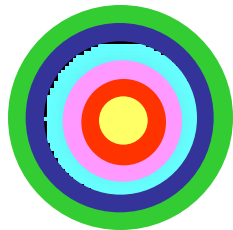


Back to our intended outcomes for today...

Do you now feel better able to:

(much better = two hands; somewhat better = one hand; no better = no hands)

1. Confront constructively any writing-avoidance tactics which may be holding you up?
2. Adapt your tone and style to write effectively for different target audiences?
3. Get started on the planning of a new piece of writing?
4. Increase your hit-rate with journal editors?
5. Make your writing more efficient and enjoyable?
6. Gain feedback on your ideas from a variety of sources?



Action planning statements

- ❖ One thing I'm going to do is...
- ❖ One idea I'm taking away is...
- ❖ I'm going to think more about...
- ❖ I have found out that ...
- ❖ I'd like to know ...
- ❖ In future, I'm not going to...

Thank you...

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