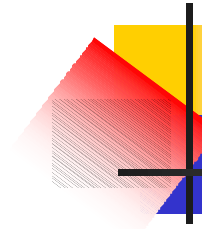


The third deadly sin: platitudinous ponderosity



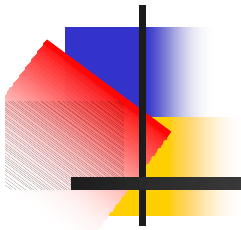
««A detached fragment of the terrestrial lithosphere, whether of igneous, sedimentary, or metamorphic origin, and whether acquiring its approximation to sphericity through hydraulic action or other attrition, when continuously maintained in motion by reason of the instrumentality of gravitational forces constantly acting to lower its center of gravity, thus resulting in a rotational movement around its temporary axis and with its velocity accelerated by any increase in the angle of declivity, is, because of abrasive action produced by the incessant but irregular contact between its periphery and the contiguous terrain, effectively prevented from acculumating on its external surface any appreciable modicum of the cryptogamous vegetation normally progagated in umbrageous situations under the optimum conditions of undeviating atmospheric humidity, solar radiation, quiescence, and comparative sequestration from erosive agencies.>>

Or more simpy said

«***A rolling stone gathers no moss.***»

Grantsmanship: beyond science

Obtenir une subvention : au-delà de la science



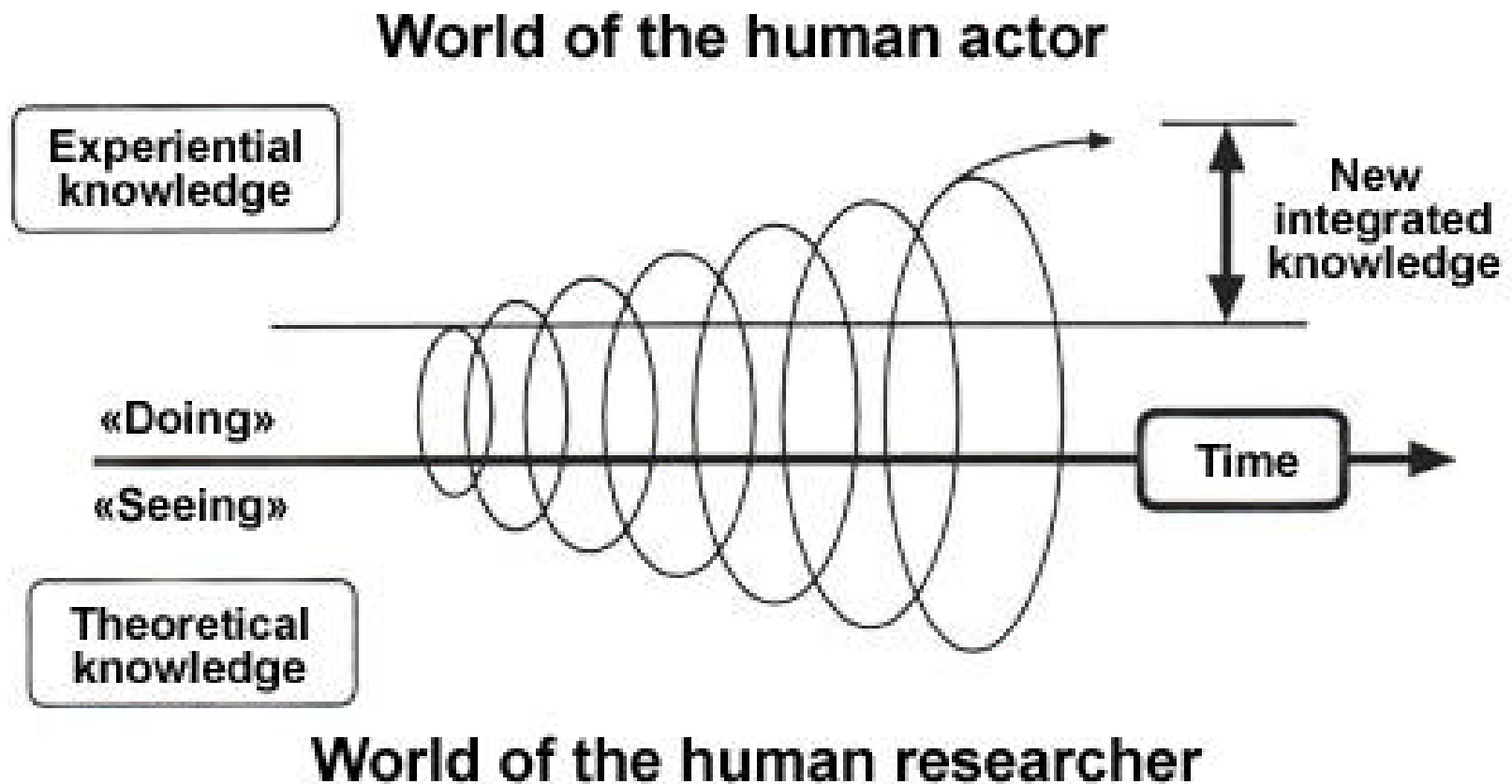
Jean Yves Savoie

IPPH - IHSPR - PHR Summer Institute

June 2003

Preamble : Knowledge Construction and Exchange

■ Spiral model





The Reality

- Research needs funding
- Funds come through grants
- Grants are not given, they are won in competitions
- The competition is fierce
 - (IRSC 2002, 436/1561 = 28%)
- And...

You should be a winner



It's all about Grantmanship

- You are going to spend quite a bit of time in writing applications
- You have the scientific know how
- Good documentation on «How»
- You have tutors, colleagues...
- Learn how to do it right through theory and practice
 - **Invest time to save time**



Some basics

- A grant application is a communication exercise
- «Good writing will not save bad ideas, but bad writing can kill good ones» (Kraicer)
- Humans have to evaluate your proposal
 - Get them excited and make their job easy



Another side

- Give yourself a chance:
 - A good start may lead to good results
 - A failed start leads nowhere
- Ethical/moral responsibility
 - To your staff, students, colleagues
 - To your partners
 - To the granting agency
- Good planning always help



The What and to Whom

- Define what you want to do (or respond to):
 - A post doc
 - A research project
 - A new program, a centre...
 - Upgrade your equipment, facilities...
- Match it to a **specific program** of a specific **funding agency** and remember...
 - The agency does not need you, you need it**



Know the Agency

- Learn about its mission, priorities, type a research funded, its criteria...
 - Ex. the KT/KE element may be critical
 - Ex. the link to PH is essential
- Talk to someone who has been funded
- Read in details the programs, RFA, RFP, the evaluation procedures and criteria...
 - «The System helps those who know the System»
(Rasey)



The envelope

- Follow the guidelines
- When everything else fails read the instructions
- Follow them exactly; no tricks
- Attractive, easy to read presentation
- Do it right the first time:
 - Complete, no extra, «no typing error»,...



The mindset

- This is going to take time and energy
- Start early
- Decide the scope/objective/research question of the proposal
 - **In multidisciplinary research this decision has to be made with the co-applicants (partners) or else they have to adhere totally to it.**
- Then start



The title

- The first impression
- Who is going to read/use it?
 - May be used to select peer review committee
 - Only peers (multidisciplinary)? Funding partners?
 - Should be understandable by a lay reader
 - Not too specific if you think of a renewal



The research summary

- Probably the most important piece
- Should be written last
- An integration not an addition or a selection of paragraphs
- Who is going to use it:
 - Put the work into context (social and scientific relevance); short, straight to the point
 - Summarize your proposal
 - Someone may use only the summary
 - Written in lay language
 - Stimulating



Summary, abstract, capsule...?

- Possibly can't please everyone with the same formulation (**peer review committee, partners, CIHR KT...**)
- Relative importance of the:
 - **Problem, the goal**
 - **Research question/methodology**
 - **Potential outcomes/ impact...**
- Use all the tools: **summary, abstracts, covering letter...or others**



Logical relationship

- Make sure you address «the big picture»: long term goals/objectives (the context)
- Present the objectives/hypothesis
 - Show the link with the goals
 - Demonstrate the link with more specific objectives and methodologies
 - Avoid vacuum/quantum steps
- Demonstrate the link with your past experience /research or the composition of the team
- Weighting the importance of each



The research question

- **Probably the most difficult part**
- **Purely descriptive work less favourably perceived: there must be a research question**
- **You are not going to save the world with one project: be realistic, focus**
- **Back up your question with a solid litt. review and show «what is known, what is not and why it is essential to find out»**
- **Demonstrate that you are able to answer the question and this is the easiest way to do it**
- **«Those at the cutting edge are more likely to get cut»**



Don't even trust your mother

- Everything that you say/propose must be supported by solid evidence
 - You will be judge on the quality/pertinence of that evidence and how you used it
- Be short and give reference for what is well established but develop seriously what is not
- «Jacks of all trade are not welcome», you are a specialist or your are not: «that's what friends are for» (multi/transdisciplinarity)
- These friends won't let you hijack the problem



Letter of support (partners, policy makers)

- Must address the issue: yours and theirs
- Should be supportive/committed
 - No «lip service»
 - Why is it important to them
 - To what extent do they support
 - How are they going to be facilitator
 - How are they going to use the results
- Be careful with what you promise



Integration vs addition

- In multi/transdisciplinary research (centres, groups, programmes):
 - A reason for each component
 - Each of these components are integrated in a whole in fonction of goals/objectives or methodological necessities
 - This integration is expected to bring a plus value to the sum of each.
 - The addition alone would not be sufficient
 - No name dropping
 - Keep it manageable



Budgeting

- Everyone becomes an expert
- Many tools to help you (see ref.)
- Give the obvious and thoroughly explain the less obvious
- Make it difficult for the PRC to easily cut pieces



Peer Review Committees

- *The black box, this inappropriate bunch of...that don't understand me...* (Frustrated new applicant)
- Select the most appropriate committee
- Propose names for external referees
- CIHR program for young researchers
- Talk to former members
- When your enemy becomes your best asset



No Conclusion

- *...un éternel recommencement*
- Mixture of very good science and communication capacity
- Your criticisms are welcome but your contribution even more so



Friendly references

Préparation et évaluation de demandes de subventions

Université de Montréal

Direction générale de la recherche

Bureau des subventions

http://www.bleus.umontreal.ca/guide_pratique.html

A web-friendly version of Fundamentals of Grantsmanship

Janet S. Rasey, Ph.D.

Research Funding Service University of Washington

Seattle, Washington 98195

<http://depts.washington.edu/gcs/prowri.html>

The Art of Grantsmanship

Jacob Kraicer

<http://www.hfsp.org/how/ArtOfGrants.htm>



Friendly References

A Guide for Proposal Writing

National Science Foundation

Directorate for Education and Human Resources

<http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/1998/nsf9891/nsf9891.htm#step1>

Writing from the Winner's Circle

A guide to preparing competitive grant proposals

David Stanley, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

<http://www.unl.edu/nepscor/newpages/noframes/pubs/winners/writing.html>

University of Idaho

Grantsmanship Services

Reference to many other Web sites

<http://www.uo.uidaho.edu/Grantsmanship/propWriteGuide.htm>



Friendly References

CIHR

With references (English only)

http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/publications/funding/usefullinks_grants_e.shtml

Tips on preparing applications

Research Grant Office

McGill University

<http://www.mcgill.ca/rgo/application/applying/tips/>

CRSNG

http://www.nserc.ca/programs/winprop_e.htm (English)

http://www.nserc.ca/programs/winprop_f.htm (Français)