From Doctoral Program to Faculty: Proactively Managing Your Journey

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Assess Your Aspirations Relative to the Expectations of Schools

- **What types of schools would you like to be at?**
- **What does a successful record looks like at these schools, at their peer institutions, at their aspirant-peer institutions?**
- **What activities earn promotion versus a pat on the back?**

Calibrate Research Expectations: Aspects to Consider

- Quality of journals in which work is published
- Research productivity
- Evidence of intellectual leadership
- Substantive scholarly contributions
- Grants—complements, substitutes
- Past trajectory — rush to tenure?
- Future trajectory
- Cohort comparison

Mitigate Type III Errors

MIS Quarterly

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

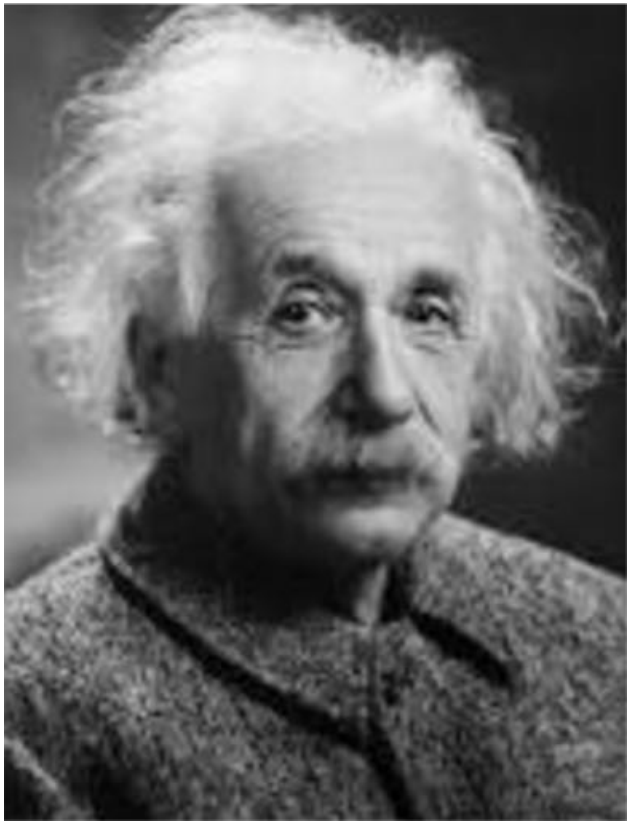
Avoiding Type III Errors: Formulating IS Research Problems that Matter

When Do Type III Errors Happen

A researcher answers the wrong question using the right methods

Mitroff, I. I., and Silvers, A. 2009. Dirty Rotten Strategies: How We Trick Ourselves and Others into Solving the Wrong Problems Precisely, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press

Formulate the Problem So the Answer to the Question Will Matter



Albert Einstein

"The formulation of a problem is often more essential than its solution, which may be merely a matter of mathematical or experimental skill"

Types of Value that the Answer to the Research Question Can Create

H.A. Simon
Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences, 1978

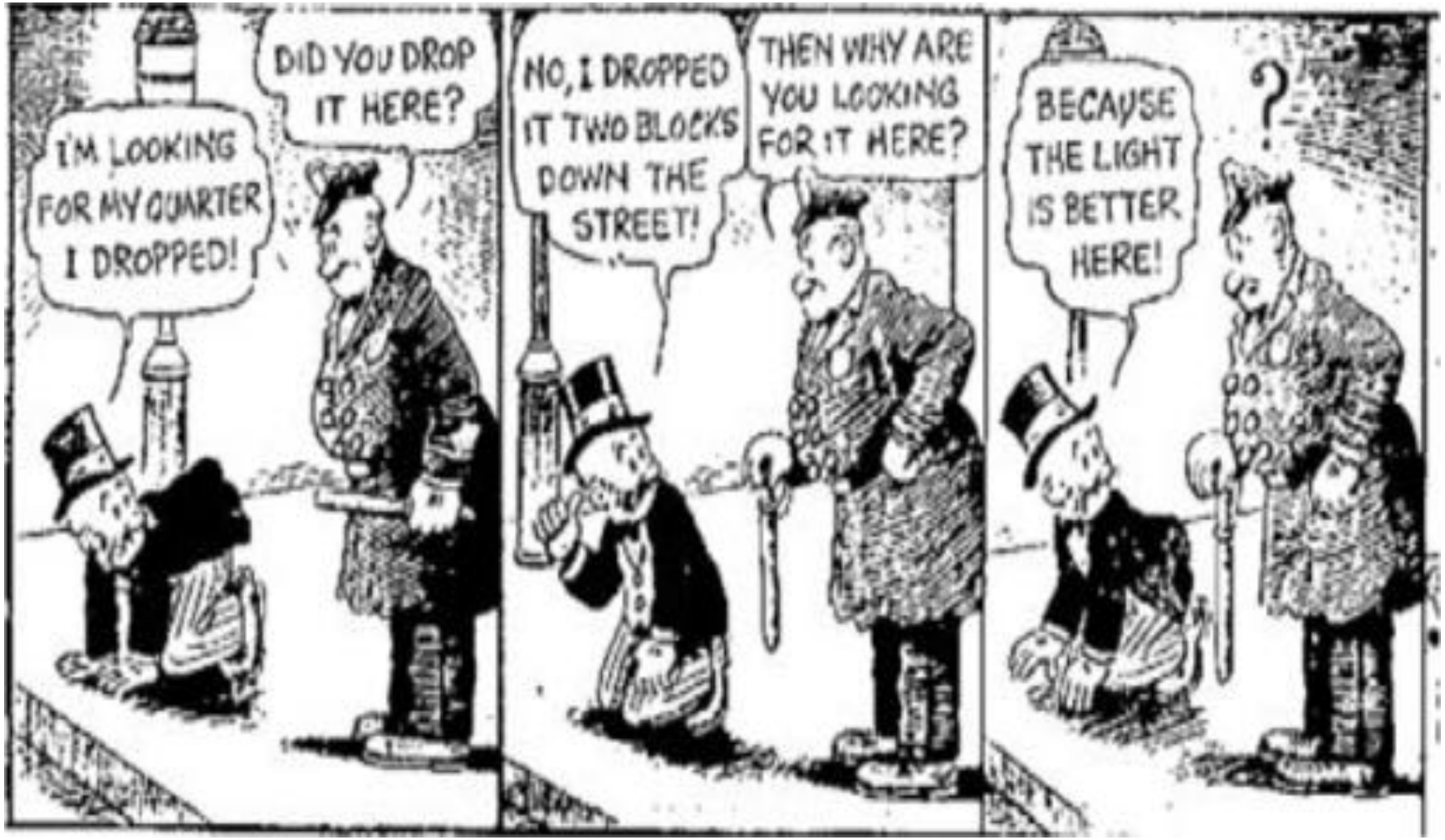
1. **Scholarly**, advancing the area under study in fundamental ways that influence future progress

2. **Practical utility**, changing the state of affairs in the world

3. **Aesthetics**, arising from *powerful simplicity*

Simon, H. A. 1991. "Random Thoughts on Methods of Research," Unpublished Manuscript, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA.

First, The Streetlight Effect

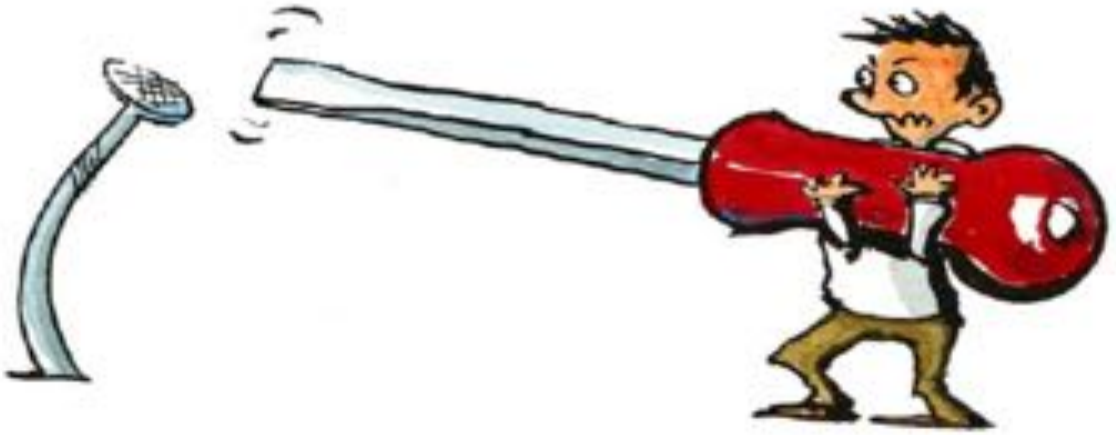


CAUTION

Maintain focus on important problems, not easy-to-access datasets

The Streetlight Effect: Exacerbated By Have-Hammer-Will-Travel

The Law of the Hammer



If the only tool you have is a hammer,
everything looks like a nail.

Abraham Maslow - The Psychology of Science - 1966

Second, Gravity in My Kitchen

- **Reifying well-established theories or models in a new context**
- **Straight-up applications from another discipline: ”Have theory [or method] will travel” (Weber 1992)**

“Novelty is an essential component of contributions to science. No prizes are awarded for being second to discover a scientific law” (Simon 1991).

Third, Chasing Novel Digital Contexts

But, how does the novelty challenge accreted knowledge at the level of the archetypal problem?

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Seeing the Forest for the Trees

MIS Quarterly Vol. 41 No. 4 pp. iii-vii/December 2017

Fourth, Gap-Spotting and Gap-Patching— But Does the Gap Matter

Fifth, Risk of Siloed Views (and Identity) in an Era of Cross-Paradigm Combinative Practices

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Beyond Outdated Labels: The Blending of IS Research Traditions

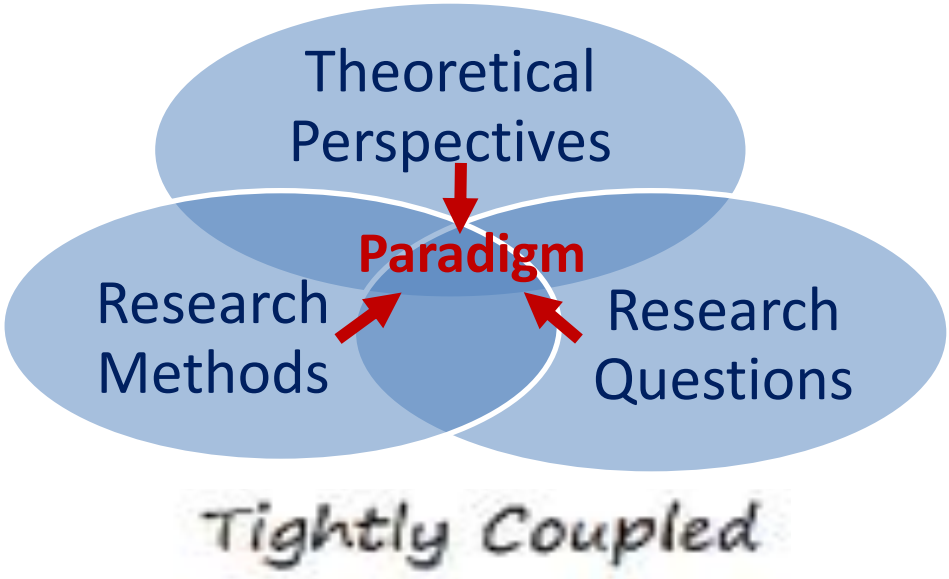
MIS Quarterly Vol. 42 No. 1 pp. iii-vi/March 2018

The Traditional Labels

- **Tight coupling**:
  - Types of research questions
  - Informing theoretical perspectives and reference disciplines
  - Research methods

- Field mapped into few paradigms: ***behavioral, design science, economics, organizational***

- Labels reflected domain of contribution (plus approaches, given clear separations)



Breaking the Mold of Traditional Labels

Forces Propelling Diversity in Research

- Complexity/scope of IS phenomena
- Availability of new types of data
- Diversity of research teams
- Training of scholars

Blending of Traditions: Era of Loose-Coupling

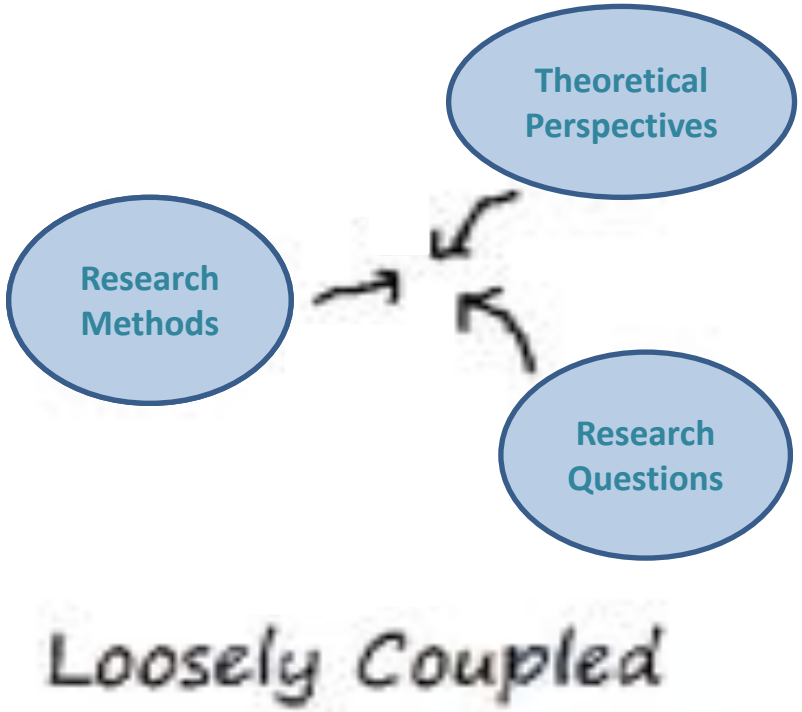


Table 1. Cross-Paradigm Combinative Practices in IS Research			
		Non-Paradigmatic Practices	
		Theoretical Perspective	**Method**
Paradigmatic Practices	**Theoretical Perspective**	**Cross-Paradigm Theoretical Combination** ***Example***: Behavioral and economics theories on influence mechanisms combined to understand how a platform's design affects the propagation of social influence in online networks	**Paradigmatic Theory-Non-Paradigmatic Method Combination** ***Example***: Behavioral/economics IS theoretical perspectives combined with computational methods such as topic modeling, text mining, and image recognition to develop measures of constructs
	Method	**Paradigmatic Method-Non-Paradigmatic Theory Combination** ***Example*:** IS design science research combined with behavioral theoretical perspectives on IS use to inform, evaluate, and refine artifact design; insights can also be used to revise the informing theoretical perspectives.	**Cross-Paradigm Methods Combination** ***Example***: Econometric analysis of archival data for causal identification combined with primary data collected using surveys or interviews to illuminate the underlying mechanisms; Grounded theory method to discover concepts and relationships combined with computational approaches applied to large corpus of text to discover topics and relationships.

Differentiate Between Research Strategy & Publication Strategy

Publication Strategy

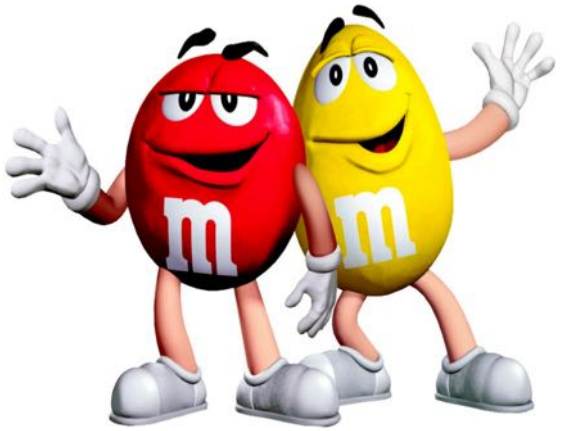
Research Strategy

- **Which conversations to participate in?**
- **Who are the important conversants?**
- **What are they talking about now?**
- **What are their beliefs & assumptions?**
- **What can I add to the conversation?**

Source: Anne Sigismund Huff, *Writing for Publication*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2002

Design M&M Moments for Research!

- **Structured activities tend to drive out unstructured ones**
- **Accomplishment energizes, but research is long-drawn**
- **Chunk and regularly schedule research activities**
- **Create time for intensive immersion opportunities**

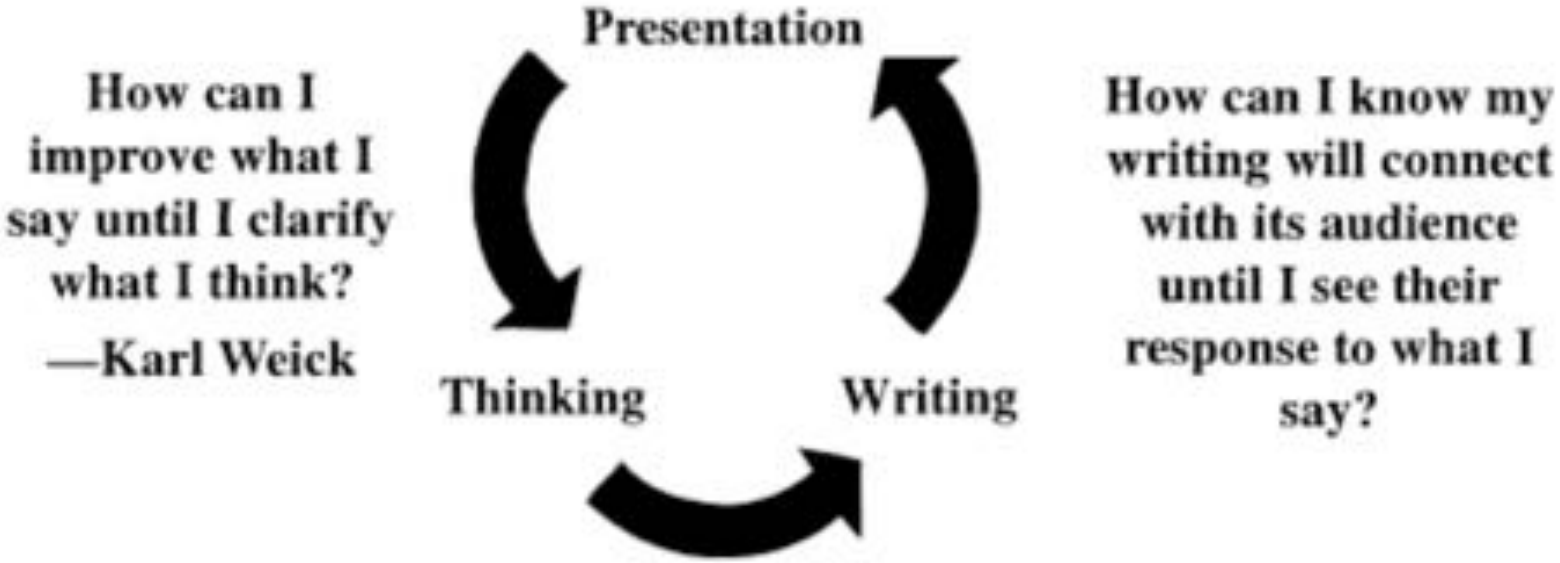


Seek and Leverage Feedback

- **Ability to elicit and process feedback a key success factor**
- **Two ineffective strategies:**
  - **Flipping back with tweaks**
  - **Going into black hole for months**

- **Generate feedback at different stages by using a combination of methods — key ideas, brief write-ups, presentations, specific sections, draft**

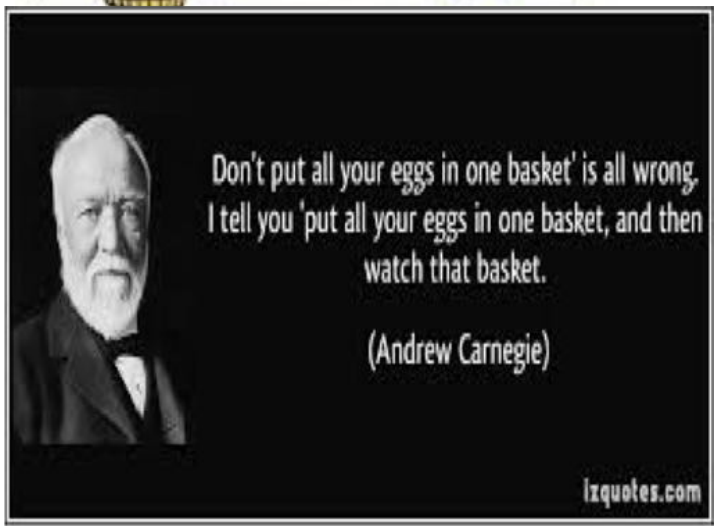
Pursue a Virtuous Presenting-Writing-Thinking Cycle



Source: Anne Sigismund Huff, *Writing for Publication*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2002

Manage Your Portfolio

- **Starting projects is easy — what is the opportunity cost?**
- **Allocate attention to selective new projects while moving work-in-process forward**
- **Long review cycles, confounded with long revision cycles**
- **Assess your risk tolerance and the riskiness of current/potential projects**



Develop Collaborations Purposefully

- **Who:** Complementarity, affect, commitment

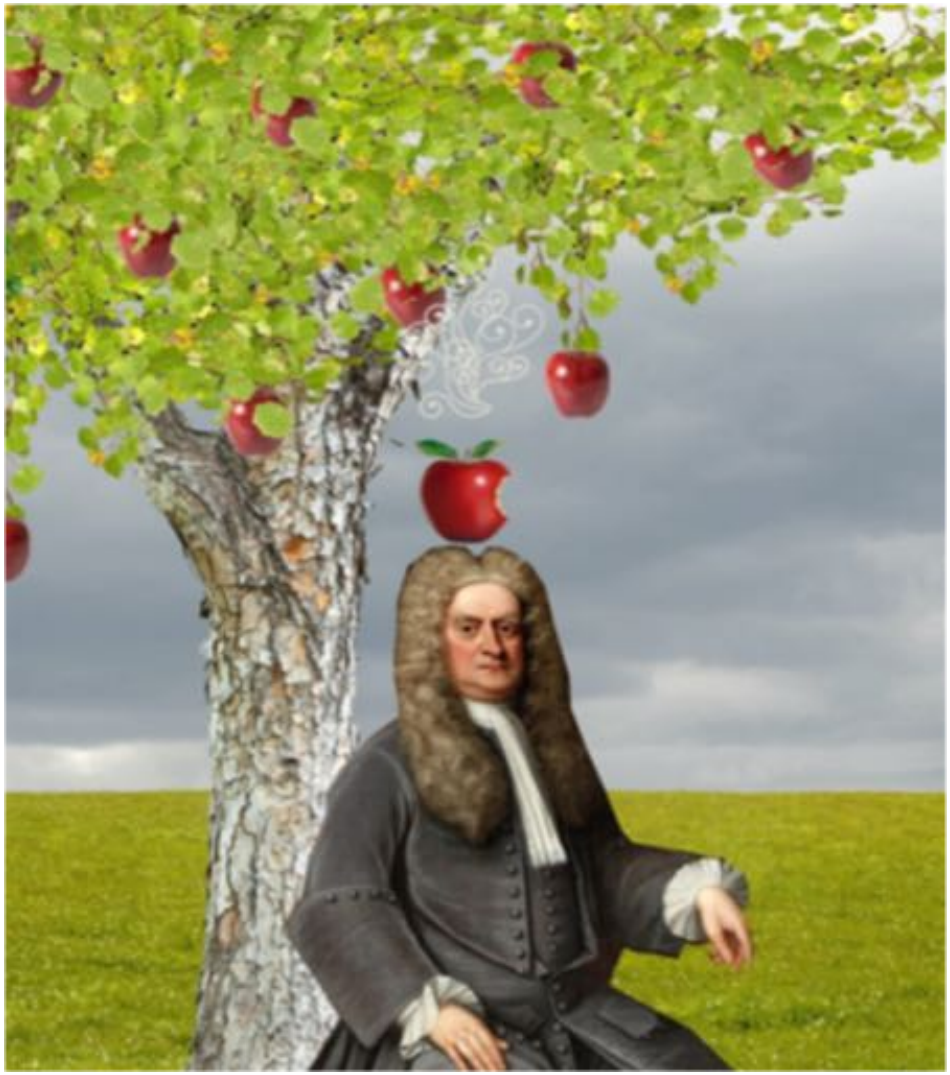
- **How:**
  - Expectations & roles
  - Deliverables & timelines
  - Schedule review meetings
  - Senior collaborators can add significant value —be proactive, use their time effectively

Role of Individual Preparedness

In the fields of observation chance favors only those minds which are prepared.

~ Louis Pasteur

The Prepared Mind:
Lone Genius, Suddenly Struck By Inspiration



Eureka moment of sudden clarity!

Johnson, S. 2010. Where Good Ideas Come From: The Natural History of Innovation, New York: *Riverhead* Books, Penguin Group.

The Connected Mind: The Utility of Liquid Networks

- **Networked, collaborative**
- **Triggers, not search and retrieval**
- **Exaptation, not mutation**

Johnson, S. 2010. Where Good Ideas Come From: The Natural History of Innovation, New York: *Riverhead* Books, Penguin Group.

Teach Well—And, Teach Smart

- Structure syllabus, assignments, office hours, etc. to achieve objectives with efficiency
- Do not reinvent the wheel — reusability, buddy groups for sharing experiences and resources
- Caution on excessive news preps
- Avoid in-flight meltdowns—risk with new technologies, unclear expectations
- Do not get into confrontations with students, even if a student is confrontational

Develop Your Teaching Narrative

- **Develop a rich story: progression of teaching effectiveness, improvement initiatives, pedagogical and curricular innovations**

- **Do not wait until tenure time to re-construct the narrative — write it, even if in rough form, as you move along**

Service

- Internal
  - Be a team player—not a shirker, engage judiciously
  - Use as opportunity to understand diverse perspectives and personalities, and to grow
  - People get to know you
- External
  - Review for journals/conferences, with quality and timeliness—great for learning, networking, reputation development

Engagement in the Profession

- Development
- Advice
- Collaborations
- Relationships
- Support

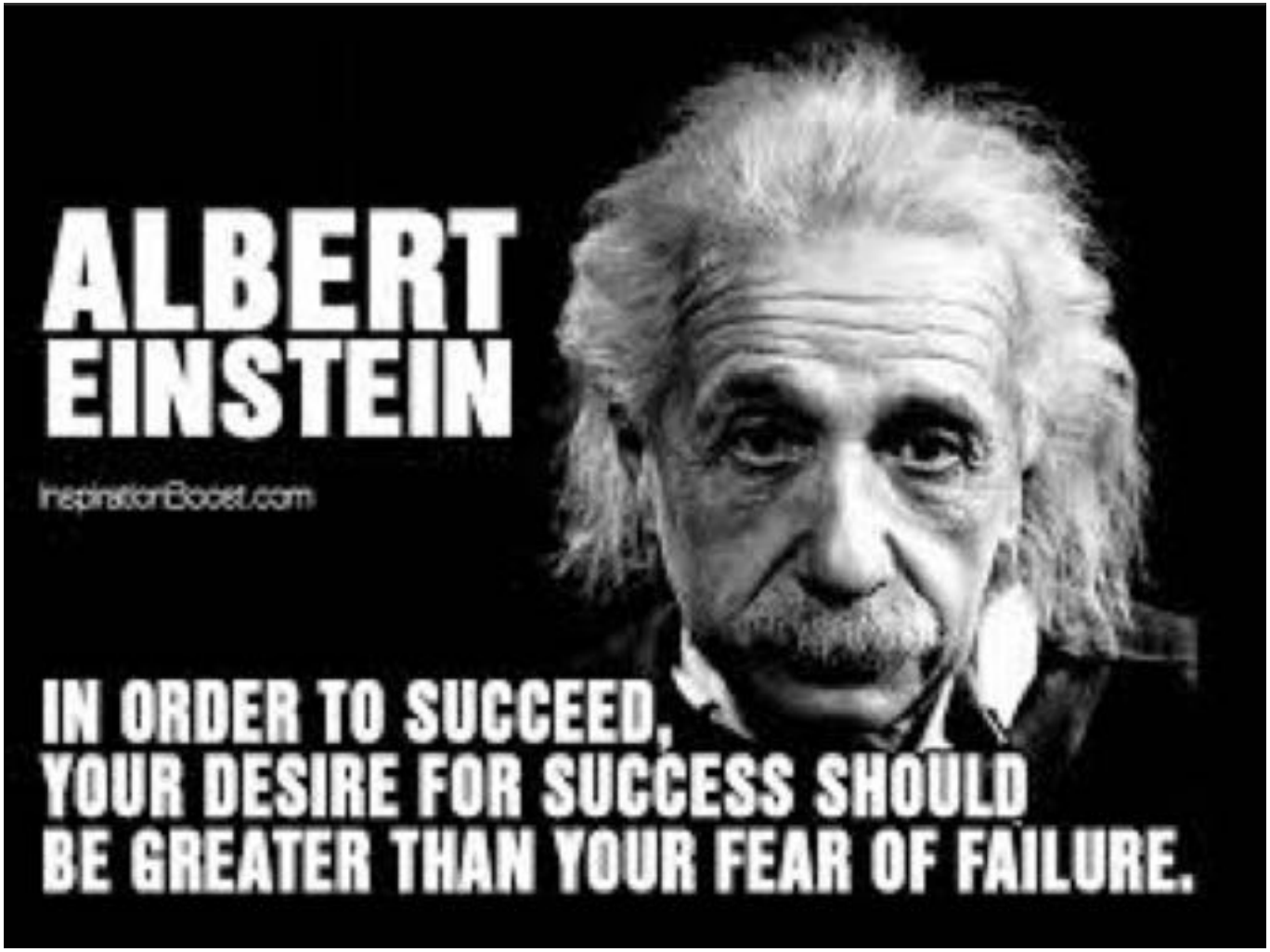
Prepare for the Job Market: Think Marathon, Not a 100-Meter Dash

- **Develop an effective application package—showcase capabilities and achievements, hard and soft skills, potential to create value**
- **Practice extensively for conference/Skype interviews, with your mentors and with others**
- **Practice extensively for campus visit presentation, with your mentors and with others**
- **Learn about the schools and plan how to connect meaningfully with them — value is contextual!**

Journey Forward With Purpose, Strategy for Growth, and Effort!

- **Define your purpose as an academic and the areas you seek to excel in, and enjoy the journey!**
- **Differentiate between hard and soft currencies, and between internal and external markets**
- **Strive to create complementarities between teaching, research, and service**

And, Finally…..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