

SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCES

Processes & presenting

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Research Forum 11 May 2017

Conference

- Overwhelming rush of presentations, conversations, meet-ups
- Important forum
- Prime opportunities for researchers to
 - Exchange views
 - Communicate with each other
- Solidify current professional relationships
- Avenue to establish contact with people who will use your evidence
- Great way to build your social and professional network
- Opportunity to improve your communication skills
- Important part of entering academic society
- Postgrad students encouraged to present work at ONE major conference (PhD)

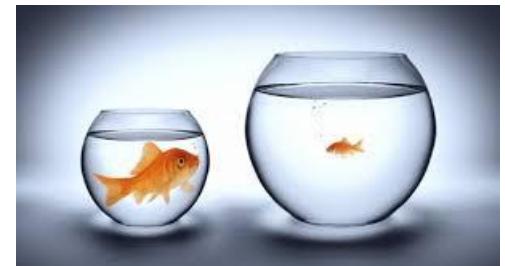


Information avalanches

Identifying conferences with value

- Attend national society annual conference
 - get to know national leaders
 - easier networking
- Make sure conference you are eyeing is best place for you to present
- National Societies usually belong to international society/union
 - PhD students to attend ‘Mother’ society’s conference
- Local international congress: ideal opportunity any postgrad
- Specialized conferences: young researchers (value for money)
- Multidisciplinary conferences: more established researcher
 - discipline specific sessions or single day

More intimate = more visible
Too big = not detected



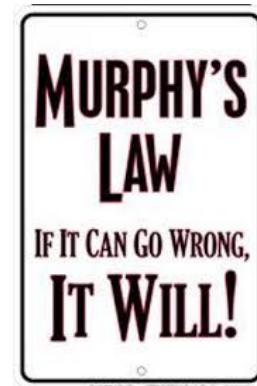
‘Unrejectable’ abstract

- Competition to get conference abstract accepted is rarely as fierce as competition for getting an article accepted
- Should be enticing [descriptive + inviting]
- Selling your ideas to organizers and delegates
- Compared to journal abstract it is a stand alone
- Follow abstract formatting guidelines/use template
- Submit on time, before deadline
- If have co-authors get their permission before submit



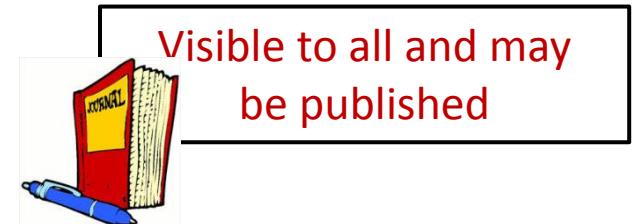
'Unrejectable' abstract

- Pick a good title: short attention-catching
- Don't go over word limit – not too short
- Do not write in future tense/say will be discussed
 - Off-putting
 - Doesn't make it clear that presenter knows what they are talking about
 - May not get work done
 - No conclusion [Paramount!]
- Include only completed work
- Poor abstract unlikely to be accepted
 - Rejected
 - Sent back to edit
- If need to select sub-discipline see that it is correct/appropriate
- Do not include diagrams nor references

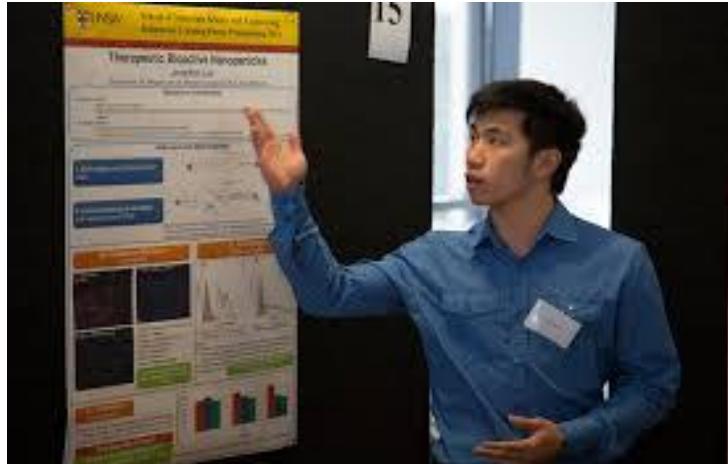


'Unrejectable' abstract

- Think through
 - What kind of presentations is conference most likely to attract?
 - How can you make yours different?
 - What are the fashionable areas in your field currently?
 - Are you working in one of these areas?
 - If so how can you make different from others doing the same?
- Draft abstract early
- Supervisor will offer constructive criticism
- Write well
 - Edit for grammar, punctuation, typos
 - Do not use abbreviations
 - Plain English
 - Words accessible both non-specialists and specialists (cross-disciplinary)



Presentation or poster?



- Depend on
 - how far you are with your research project
not have that much information – poster
 - study completed - oral
 - interest in topic (organizers decide)

Oral presentation

- Attendance based on the title of your abstract
- Well done oral presentation should:
 - Communicate importance of your research
 - Clearly state your finding and analysis of those findings
 - Prompt others in the academic community to ask questions
 - give you valuable feedback that could further, and strengthen your research



Make impression
Invited again

Poster

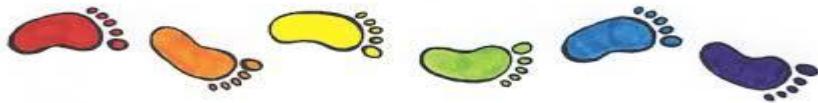
- Summarize research concisely and attractively
- Stand at poster display in time slot
- Participants view and interact
- During poster presentation slot
 - Stress key points
 - Highlight essence of work
- Handouts successful idea
 - Only if published/submitted
- If you are upset and decide not to go – let organizers know and withdraw



= Showcase work

What makes a good poster?

- Title is short and draws attention
- Important info readable from 10 feet away



- Text clear and to point
- Use bullets/numbering/headlines to make easy reading
- Consistent and clean layout
- Good graphics (use Graphics department)

People don't like to stand on top of you - rather walk past

How do people read a poster?

- Read the title
- Read the conclusions (if readable and interesting continue)
- Glance at the graphs (easily and quickly understood?)
- Read the symbols (is experimental manipulation effective?)

If all this works, then proceed to

- Actually read the poster



BAD

FROM ACTORS TO AGENT-ORIENTED PROGRAMMING IN simpAL

1

THE FREE WHICH IS OVER...
ALSO FOR ABSTRACTIONS!

- fundamental issue of software frameworks
- concurrency, interaction, distribution
- need of effective programming abstractions that "help building concurrent programs just as C/C++ help building large component-based programs" in everyday programming

ACTORS (& OOPC)
ARE BACK TO RESCUE!

- Back to 2000/2005:
actors + objects + concurrency (Prolog, Agora, Vinesque, etc.)
- what model in the mainstream case?
- e.g. State Actors, Firing, HTML5 Web Workers, DART
- shared and bound lifetimes
- autonomous control flow, asynchronous message passing, event loop

"HOUSTON, WE HAVE A PROBLEM..."
ABSTRACTION GAP

- autonomy + actors may prevent reuse makes programming KARAS & EXCUSES + PRACTICE for large programs in particular
- several open issues & challenges
- enabling asynchronous communication & reactive behavior
- supporting complex active behavior, cooperative tasks, work with streams
- execution, reuse while keeping modularity, composition

2

SOLUTIONS?

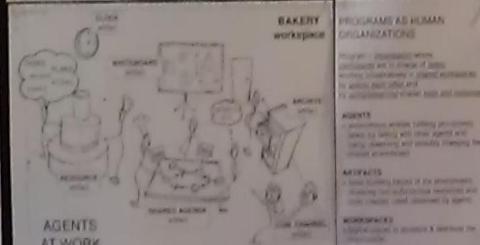
- microservices and actor programming
- macroscopic to focus specific problems
- reuse the basic models
- see, e.g., business synchronization, ...

OR

- tackle the problem at the conceptual level
- THINK ABOUT: A NEW ABSTRACTION LAYER EXTENDING ACTORS (as in us)
- reduce the gap between design & programming
- abstracting simplicity how to think and develop (as well as design and code)
- concurrent / distributed / reactive programs

AGENT-ORIENTED
IN
PROGRAMMING simpAL

- rich set of programming abstractions inspired by agents and multi-agent systems
- orthogonal to the data abstraction layer - based on GOF
- simpAL is a statically typed language extending GOF Java syntax with agent-oriented abstractions

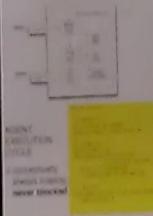


AGENTS
AT WORK

AGENTS VS ACTORS

- From actor **reactivity** to agent **pro-activity**
 - agents act because of **tasks** to do
 - tasks as pure description of work to do
- Encapsulating behaviors in **plans**
 - plan = how to do a job
 - integrating autonomous and reactive behavior
 - dynamic plan library
- Communicative + environment actions
 - async message passing
 - actions & percepts using observing artifacts

FROM EVENT LOOPS
TO CONTROL LOOPS



3

A simpAL TASTE

TASK DEFINITION

PLANS

MANAGING TASKS AS FIRST-CLASS ENTITIES

WORKSPACES

ASYNCHRONOUS PROGRAMMING

WORKSHOPS

4

ONGOING & FUTURE WORK

- Cooperative tasks
- generalization of current (individual) tasks
- Sub-typing
- unifying rules, setting usage-inference
- Mechanisms for code review of the agent-level interface / communication
- Formalization of a core part of simpAL: agent-oriented type system
- Performance analysis & optimization: agent control loop overhead
- comparison with exist. technologies
- Improving simpAL platform
 - complete, conformant, recursive, IDE
 - Libraries of artifacts (blueprints)
 - wrapping GUI (Qt, Gnome, ...)
 - Front-end app with simual

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- A. Rossi, "simpAL: a generic agent-oriented programming system for distributed systems", Ph.D. thesis, University of Trento, Italy, 2012.
- A. Rossi, "A generic agent-oriented programming system for distributed systems", In: Proceedings of the 2012 ACM SIGART International Conference on Agents and Multiagent Systems, ICALP, pp. 1-10, 2012.
- A. Rossi, "A generic agent-oriented programming system for distributed systems", In: Proceedings of the 2012 ACM SIGART International Conference on Agents and Multiagent Systems, ICALP, pp. 1-10, 2012.
- A. Rossi, "A generic agent-oriented programming system for distributed systems", In: Proceedings of the 2012 ACM SIGART International Conference on Agents and Multiagent Systems, ICALP, pp. 1-10, 2012.

LINKS

- simpAL web site: <http://www.cs.univie.ac.at/~rossi/simpal/>
- For more info & to join the project:
 - Alessandro Rossi, a.rossi@univie.ac.at
 - Andrea Santini, a.santini@univie.ac.at
 - University of Vienna, Austria



GOOD



A Family-Researcher Partnership: Working together to spread awareness on the 'F-words' in Childhood Disability

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The 'F-words' in Childhood Disability: Function, Family, Fitness, Fun, Friends, Future

Background

- In 2012, CanChild researchers published a paper called, "The 'F-words' in childhood disability: I swear this is how we should think!"
- Building on the WHO's International Classification of Functioning (ICF) framework, the article featured key strengths-based ICF themes – Function, Family, Fitness, Fun, Friends, and Future.



Objective

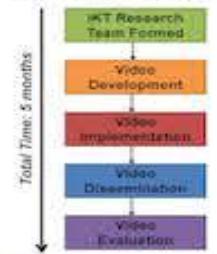
- The objective of this integrated Knowledge Translation (iKT) project was to work with families to spread awareness on the 'F-words' ideas through an online awareness video.



Methods

- Families and researchers worked together through the entire project – developing, implementing, disseminating, and evaluating the video. The video, posted on the CanChild website, used written descriptions, parents' reflections, pictures, music, and graphic effects to captivate the audience.
- The video was evaluated by tracking the number of views and through an online survey that collected feedback on viewers' perceptions of the video and the 'F-words' concepts.

The iKT Process/Timeline

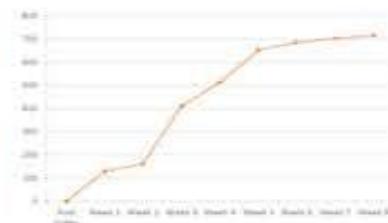


Results

Weekly Dissemination Strategies

Week	Research Team Implemented – Dissemination Strategies
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Video posted on CanChild website Presentations and flyers on video distributed at two conferences
Week 2	No specific strategies implemented
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-mails sent to physician colleagues, McMaster SRS graduate students, CanChild network, family and friends Video shown during Developmental Learner Training Session at McMaster University Posted at Danijela's son's school and shared with teachers
Week 4 – 8	No specific strategies implemented

Spread of Awareness



Online Survey Responses - Evaluation of Video and 'F-words' Concepts:

- After two months, there were 715 views of the video and 137 survey responses. These findings are based on the 137 survey responses.

Viewer Demographics

In what country, do you currently reside?

89% of viewers lived in Canada

From what perspective are you viewing this video?

Viewership Perspective	Percentage
Physician	27%
Researchers	26%
Students	20%
Parents	19%
Patients	16%
Friends of someone with a disability	11%
Family Member	10%
Other Health Care Worker	8%
Others with a disability	7%

Perceptions of 'F-words' Concepts

Have you previously heard of the 'F-words' in childhood disability?



What are your initial thoughts of the 'F-words'?



Perceptions of Video

What did you like or dislike about this video?

	Like	Dislike
Length	71	4
Content	54	5
Pictures	56	6
Parent Quotes	51	2
Music	36	18
Graphics	27	5
All of the Above	57	2
Other	7	40

Will you share this video with others? 89% said Yes!

"Great video, will make me view childhood impairments in a different and more positive way." – Physician

"I loved that it will give parents permission to think what they have known all along." – Educator

"Very well done & informative video. Thanks for the great enlightening info!" – Family Member

Implications

- We were able to spread awareness to a wide audience in a short time.
- Engaging families throughout the project was a critical factor in the success of the video.
- Our hope is to continue building up the 'talk' on the 'F-words' and intrigue families to find out more information.
- The 'F-words' ideas hold great promise for supporting the adoption of a biopsychosocial approach in children's health care.

Next Steps

- This video was the first step to spreading awareness on the 'F-words'.
- Based on the feedback we received from the video, the research team will work together to make minor changes in order to enhance the video.
- By designing a multi-faceted iKT intervention we hope to address the knowledge needs of families raising children with disabilities and to promote the uptake of the 'F-words' concepts in children's health care.

Caution

- Be wary of research thieves
- Spend time going through posters
- Reproduce work faster
- To be safe see to it that work is submitted for publication or recently published



Accepted Article

There is ample evidence suggesting a bidirectional connection between healthy performance and cognitive processes, such as problem solving. Current research suggests that positive mood can facilitate the problem-solving process, but is it negative affect that slows down the process? In addition, Canadon, ten Brinke and Mouloua (2014) investigated participants' performance in a deductive reasoning task. Interestingly, Deductive reasoning problems involving both two groups (positive mood group, negative mood group) required a greater amount of time to solve the task than the single, while presenting a performance trend in which the negative mood group solved the task faster. Thus, it is likely that the positive mood group solved the task faster than the negative mood group. To illustrate a right shift of control bias for the positive mood, the authors also tested the participants' performance on a problem-solving task in which the participants had to identify the most effective treatment for a patient with a specific disease. Although the participants' overall performance was similar across all three conditions, the positive mood group solved the task faster than the negative mood group. This result provides further evidence of mood-enhanced effects on problem solving and speed how individuals under low-harm conditions solving problems is guided by mood-enhanced information.

Funding

- Limited



doesn't grow on



-



VS



-



VS



Funding

- Supervisor grants MRC/NRF /CANSA
 - R20,000 international conference
 - R5,000 national conference
 - Free-standing Master's and Doctoral Postdoc Scholarships/Fellowships within NRF Free-standing DST/NRF Innovation
Scarce Skills categories
 - NRF-TWAS (The World Academy of Science) R75,000
 - UP conference funding: supervisor applies, only PhD (R50,000)
 - NRF Knowledge, Interchange and Collaboration (KIC)
Twice year Jan – June and June - Dec
- 
- Travel grant amount varies

Funding

- Collaboration eg. SA-Romania: travel and accommodation
- Link visit to conference
- National society is usually linked to international society – if member of society may apply for travel awards
- International conferences call for volunteers – registration fees wavered
- Apply for Young Scientist scholarships – covers all costs



You are going to spend  and sacrifice a
valuable chunk of



It must thus be worthwhile



BE PREPARED

Once there, no time to stop and pause

Preparing for conference

- Review the agenda – select sessions that are appropriate
set up a schedule → **Focus your time**
- Get there early to orient yourself with venue location and
conference spaces
- Register early: not stuck while everyone is off to the races
- Stay for the entire conference
- Stay in the conference's designated hotel
- Attend functions but remember you are not “off duty”
- Take plenty of business cards
- Become active participant, ask questions
- Students:
 - attend young scientists sessions
 - ask organizers for student accommodation
 - spend time at poster sessions



The plan is nothing but
planning is everything!

Preparing for conference

- Select clothing carefully taking into account functions
- Dress smart
 - Look important are assumed to be important
 - Opportunities seem to seek out people who dress well
 - If dress well you send signals of respect
- Research people
 - Online profile search
 - Reach out to speakers BEFORE the event (email person, introduce yourself; use other media)
- Remind yourself not to spend time with co workers you see every day
- Schedule in attending AGM – sure to be noticed
- Load mobile app



After conference

- Rarely re-read notations so spend time to review notes and identify items to put into task management tool
- Follow up on business cards
 - write your intended action on the card
- Follow up with prospects
- Teach: give feedback what learnt



So after all this

You may feel



when the reality of the



has hit you

but remains a



Points to ponder over

- Visa applications: international students
- PG: list in outputs of dissertation/thesis
- Established scientists: invited speaker – impact NRF rating
- Case study (SACRA): potential employers
- Curriculum transformation: additional assessment method?
(partial fulfilment)

