Resources for Graduate Students on Writing, Presenting, and Other Tips

Biochemistry graduate students are required to write papers and present findings regarding their research throughout their academic career. This can be an imposing skill to master for some. The resources below have been recommended by faculty and students as helpful aids during the preparation of these requirements and life skills.

WRITING

_The Elements of Style_ (William Strunk, Jr. and E.B. White) – This short book has been the writing bible for generations of writers. It is available from Amazon.com or online at [https://www.bartleby.com/141/](https://www.bartleby.com/141/).


Stanford University Hume Center for Writing and Speaking – Offers individualized tutoring, workshops, and “Dissertation Boot Camps.” [https://undergrad.stanford.edu/tutoring-support/hume-center-writing/graduate-students](https://undergrad.stanford.edu/tutoring-support/hume-center-writing/graduate-students)

_How I Write_ – Series of conversations with faculty and other advanced writers to explore the nuts and bolts, pleasures and pains, of all types of writing. [https://stanford.edu/group/howiwrite/videos.html](https://stanford.edu/group/howiwrite/videos.html)

PRESENTING


_Do's and Don'ts for Poster Presentations_ (Dr. Steven Block) – [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0006-3495(96)79549-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0006-3495(96)79549-8)

Stanford Oral Communications Program – For graduate students looking to improve their communication skills. [https://undergrad.stanford.edu/programs/oral-communication-program](https://undergrad.stanford.edu/programs/oral-communication-program)

OTHER LIFE/SCIENTIFIC TIPS

_Rules from the Petsko Ringe Labs_ – (next page).

_Networking on the Network: A Guide to Professional Skills for Ph.D. Students_ (Phil Agre) – Detailed guide to networking, specially geared towards scientists, with advice on how to maintain relationships, build a professional identity, and integrate into the scientific community. [https://vlsicad.ucsd.edu/Research/Advice/network.html](https://vlsicad.ucsd.edu/Research/Advice/network.html)
Rules from the Petsko/Ringe labs for consideration

1) If you think you know the answer, you will get that answer, even if it's the wrong answer. (More succinctly: The desired result tends to be observed)

2) Never confuse an assumption with a fact.

3) One good experiment is worth 1,000 expert opinions.

4) The strong shall take from the weak, but the smart shall take from the strong.

5) Take nothing on faith. Things are frequently not what they seem to be or what people tell you they are. Check everything.

6) Excellence is the result of preparation, planning, imagination and tenacity. Neglect any one of these and the result is mediocrity.

7) It's often not that hard to handle a crisis, because usually your course of action is obvious. It's how you deal with day-to-day living that really proves what you're made of.

8) Adversity doesn't build character - it reveals it.

9) You are what you do.

10) Luck is the residue of design.

11) The odds of success are never improved by excessive caution.

12) Never let your sense of morality prevent you from doing what's right.

13) When you fully understand the simpler alternative, it will usually turn out to be as complicated as the complex alternative. Occam’s razor is usually a poor reason for making a selection, especially in biology.

14) Only a fool is never afraid, but never let fear make the decisions for you. Do right, and risk the consequences.

15) It's nice to be first, but it's better to be right.

16) Create an environment where people can learn and have fun learning and the work will take care of itself. The results are just the report card.

17) Be your own toughest referee. Whenever you get a result that you expected or that you think you understand, always ask: "How might nature be trying to fool me?"

18) Be generous to your coworkers, your colleagues, and your collaborators. Give more credit rather than less, and err on the side of inclusiveness. It won't cost you a thing, and it will gain you a lot.

19) Underpromise and overdeliver.

20) Fame is a bubble, popularity an accident, and money takes wings. The one thing that endures is character.