

# **‘Shaping’ an academic career**

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# 'Outside' factors

- PhD
  - Local funding on the day I got an psychologist post
- Post doc ambitions
  - £10 million centre at the point I finished my PhD
- Centre leadership
  - Massive movement of senior staff



# **‘Shapers’ of success**

- Delivery
- Branding
- Writing
- Originality versus simplicity
- Added value and juggling
- Relationships

# Delivery

- Don't gain much if you do
- Lose reputation if you don't
- 'Safe pair of hands'



# Added value

- Not what you do in your main job
- What you achieve on top
  - Unfunded work amongst best cited

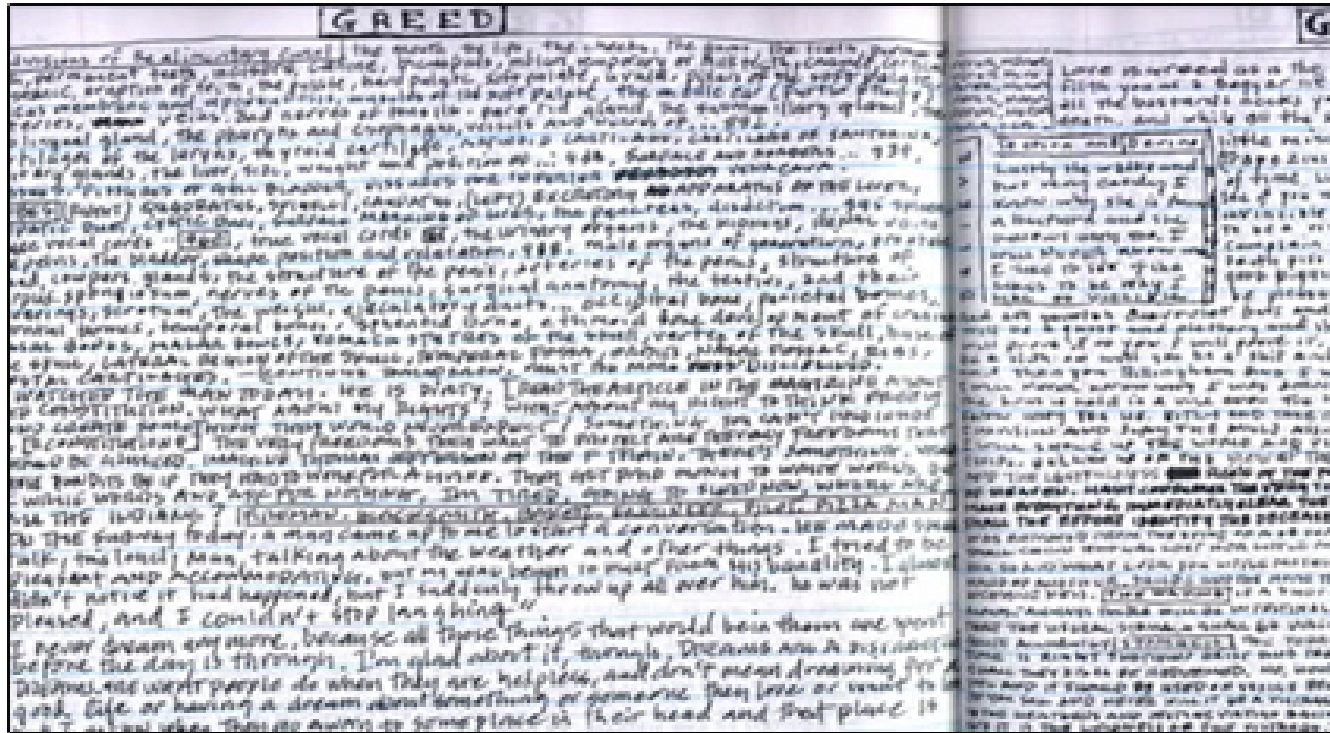


# Branding

- ‘Name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers’
- What do you do?

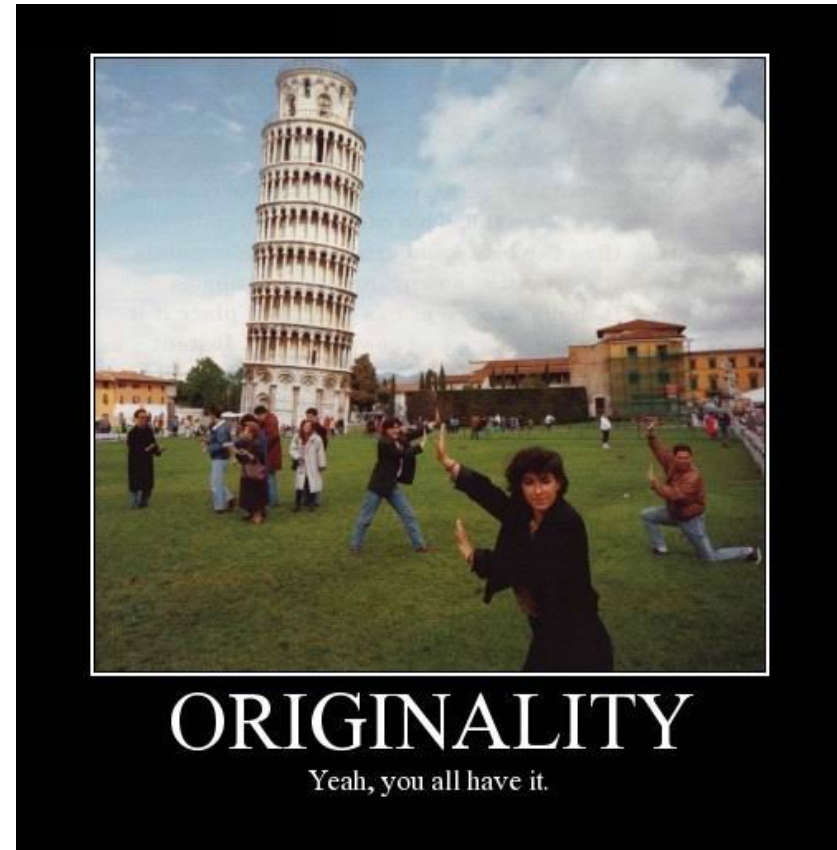


# Writing



# Originality

- In science the credit goes to the man who convinces the world, not to the man to whom the idea first occurred.
  - *Sir William Osler (1849-1919)*
- I haven't had an original thought in my career
  - *Colleague and NIHR Senior Investigator*





# Simplicity

- *Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler*
  - Albert Einstein
- Familiar refrain of ‘complexity’ in HSF
  - Not what people want
- ‘Elegance’

## **Simplicity**



# Spinning plates

- How many projects can you run at the same time?
- How many areas can you retain expertise in?
- What is the opportunity cost of new work?



# Managing relationships

- Managing 'up'
- Managing 'across'
- Managing 'down'

# Managing 'up'

- Look and learn
- Watching senior colleagues work:
  - Engagement with University
  - Negotiations with academics
  - Discussions with policy makers
  - Brainstorming ideas



# Managing 'up'

- 'Strategic non-compliance'
- Learning when to ignore senior colleagues



Trisha Greenhalgh @trishgreenhalgh · May 16

Email from PhD student: "With respect Trish, you don't really understand this topic".

Fair comment.

I love it when they get to this stage!



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# Managing 'across'

- Peer group critical
  - Productive collaborations
  - New ideas
  - 'Agility'



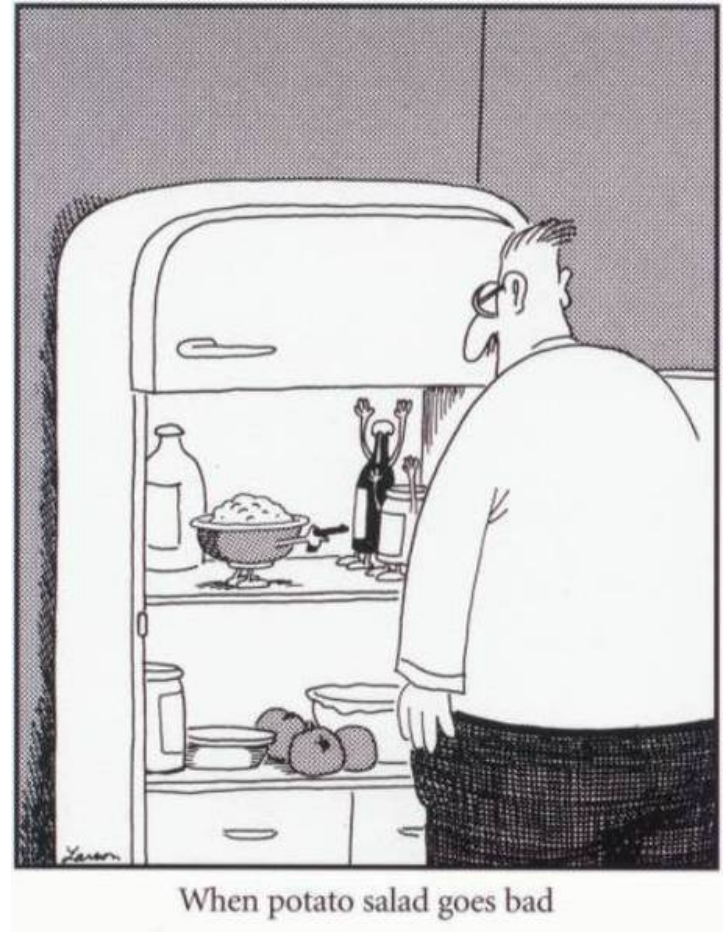
# Managing 'down'

- Getting the most out of staff
  - Staff selection
  - Motivation
  - Support



# Managing 'down'

- Goal setting
- Timelines
- Underperformance
- Breaking bad news





# Questions

