
How to Improve Your Chances of Getting a Paper Accepted

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Context: It's Getting Harder

- ◆ Pressure on you to publish at top venues
- ◆ Conference submission rates are rising
- ◆ Some effects
 - more work for PCs, lower acceptance rates, lower author satisfaction, ...
- ◆ Some community responses
 - increasing PC size, culling early, adjusting publication styles (e.g., first-class posters), coordinating events, adding new events, ...

Why are Submissions Increasing?

- ◆ We only have conjectures
 - increasing numbers of faculty
 - increasing numbers of grad students
 - increasing pressure to publish
 - increasing numbers of rejections
 - increasing numbers of double submissions

- opening of China
- lowering of Iron Curtin
- industrialization of Asia and Middle East

Observations/Perceptions: Quality

- ◆ Growth mainly at or below traditional acceptance cutoff

- ◆ Placement of acceptance bar somewhat arbitrary
 - hard to find natural “knees”
 - example: SODA
 - » linear increase in scores in top 90%



Observations/Perceptions: Innovation

- ◆ Conferences adopting risk reduction strategy
 - maintaining or even lowering acceptance rates
 - papers in established areas/themes have better chance of being accepted
 - » but maybe that is okay?
- ◆ Conferences with lowering acceptance rates receiving more polished papers on narrower topics



Improving Your Chances

- ◆ Do good work
- ◆ Chose your problems carefully
- ◆ Find a single point and develop it fully
- ◆ Work vertically, not horizontally
- ◆ Avoid “idea” papers
- ◆ Find a role model
- ◆ Know the literature
- ◆ Know your audience
- ◆ Write defensively
- ◆ Develop your community
- ◆ Avoid temptation of LPU
- ◆ Don’t submit just for feedback; your credibility is the “throwaway”
- ◆ Polish, polish, polish

What to do Before Submission

- ◆ Maturity is measured by evaluation, not effort
 - A prototype is *not* an evaluation
 - An example is *not* an evaluation
 - A case study is *not* an experiment
- ◆ Writing is part of the research
- ◆ Don't trust your students to do the writing
- ◆ Get early feedback

What to do After Submission

- ◆ Assume rejection
- ◆ Improve the work
- ◆ Improve the paper

What to do with a Rejection

- ◆ Stay calm
- ◆ Ignore the tone
- ◆ Concentrate on substance
- ◆ If reviewer did not get it, it is *your* fault
- ◆ Resist temptation to play roulette with PCs

- ◆ Don't give up

What to do with an Acceptance

- ◆ Be happy!
- ◆ Think about the flow into a journal publication