

## Foreword

---

The value of this book surfaces in sharp relief when I reflect on my beginnings as a scholar. I enrolled in an ‘ad hoc’ PhD programme – one of three students – two adults with business and teaching experience, and my young self. Our only formal instruction was a course in statistics and a seminar on pedagogy. Most productive interaction came in the form of papers written for faculty in different departments. Then came the dissertation, mine an agglomeration of inductive, semi-qualitative and semi-quantitative analyses. By working with some superb scholars I had caught the research bug and certainly graduated with many more conceptual resources than I began with. However, I was in no way prepared for the rigours of academic publication. My first submission was greeted with a desk reject beginning with the words, ‘Quite simply, I don’t know where to begin’.

Life would have been so much easier had I had the benefit of this terrific book. It provides concrete and actionable advice on all aspects of publishing in the field of entrepreneurship, and indeed other domains of management. It counsels young researchers on how to develop and formulate research questions, how to integrate them into the existing literature and to highlight their contribution, and how to build and argue sound hypotheses. It provides insight and guidance for conducting both quantitative and qualitative research. It even shows which journals might be most useful for scholars aiming to ‘up their game’. There is no question that the sound advice given here by Audretsch, Corbett, Fayolle, Honig, Wright and other stars in the field will focus readers on the essentials so vital in today’s highly competitive and ever more exacting publishing environment.

What I also like about this collection are its more unconventional and liberating offerings by scholars more removed from the North American orthodoxy. I identified personally with Per Davidsson’s reflections on how his early start, with little pressure to publish, allowed him to focus on the topics he cared most about – and enabled him to exploit the enthusiasm and relevance that brought him countless citations. Valuable lessons too are to be found in Jones and Neergaard’s insights on turning a dissertation monograph into publishable articles, Coviello’s guidelines

for working with qualitative methods, and Ahlstrom and Bruton's and Dimov's analyses of the challenges of researching other cultures. A constructive subtext that runs through this collection is that although conceptual and methodological rigour is critical to crafting a publishable contribution, it is not always necessary to 'contribute to theory' (Miller, 2007). Although that is a useful option for many scholars, there is also room for relevant contributions that bring to bear solid data to garner new insights into practical problems confronting entrepreneurs.

What is especially edifying about this collection is that it demonstrates that there is no one best way to do research and that a wide variety of points of view may be brought to bear. It reflects an openness to different approaches, topics, methods and cultures, and that very scope for selection allows people with very different interests and skills to pursue their research passion and remain motivated and persistent in the face of a potential avalanche of rejections.

I wish you all fruitful reading and best of luck in your careers. *Bon courage!*

Danny Miller  
Montreal, April 2013

## REFERENCE

Miller, D. (2007), 'Paradigm prison', *Strategic Organization*, 5 (2), 177–84.