Presenter disclosure information

Name: Yibin Wang
Title: How to Deal With Rejections As a New Investigator

• Financial disclosure:
  – I have received and continue to receive rejection from the following funding agencies and institutes: National Institute of Health, American Heart of Association, UCLA, MIT, Harvard, Stanford, Yale……..
  – I have received and continue to receive rejection from the following journals: Circulation Research, Circulation, Journal of Biological Chemistry, Nature, Nature Medicine, Nature Cell Biology, Cell, Molecular Cell, Cell Metabolism, PNAS, JMCC, AJP, ……..
  – All my previous rejections were received without monetary compensation

• Unlabelled/unapproved use disclosure:
  My approach is unlabeled and unapproved, use at your own risk!!!
How to Deal With Rejections

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Top 10 Approaches to Rejection
Sounds Familiar?

- Lack of mechanistic investigations
- This is not really new
- The data is not very convincing
- The PI has not been very productive
- Figure label is wrong
- Interpretation is over-simplified
- Missing critical control for the control of the control group
- Numerous grammatical errors
Sounds even more familiar?

- This is an interesting and POTENTIALLY important study but too preliminary at its current form
- PI is well trained but lacks specific skills to …
- The hypothesis is new and interesting, but unproven
- This is a solid study but relevance is unclear
# 10
Get Over the Blue!

[Image of a man-clown with a pile of paperwork and aLOC: 0.03%]

[Image of a woman adjusting a machine with text: REJECTION]

[Image of a stress reduction kit with text: Stress Reduction Kit, Bang Head Here, Directions: 1. Place kit on FIRM surface, 2. Follow directions in circle of kit, 3. Repeat step 2 as necessary, or until unconscious, 4. If unconscious, cease stress reduction activity.]
# 9
Read the critiques and don’t shoot the messengers!
Read again and Read three times
Read your Critique Objectively?

Having Second Opinions from Trusted Sources
Separating the Critiques into good vs. bad; true vs. false; reasonable vs. ridiculous
# 8

Identify Deficiencies

- Novelty
- Significance
- Conclusion
- Methods
- Quality of data
- Clarity and style of presentation
- Mis-match

Identifying Five Main Reasons for Rejection
• Novelty
• Significance
• Conclusion
• Methods
• Quality of data
• Clarity and style of presentation
• Mis-match

Fixable
Or
Hopeless
# 7
Work Out a Plan
Priority Goes To:

More Data
Better Arguments
Clarification
# 6

When and Whether to Resubmit

"DEAR CONTRIBUTOR"

"THANK YOU FOR SUBMITTING YOUR STORY TO OUR MAGAZINE"

"TO SAVE TIME, WE ARE ENCLOSING TWO REJECTION SLIPS..."

"...ONE FOR THIS STORY AND ONE FOR THE NEXT STORY YOU SEND US!"
When and Whether to Resubmit

New Data for Major Defects?
New Publication to Support Major Claims?
New Methods to Address Major Concerns?
Proof-reading?
# 5

When to Give-Up without Quitting
• Alternative Journals
• Different Agencies
• Different Funding Mechanisms
Sometimes and Often: You Are Right!

What if You Are Right and Reviewers are Wrong?
Never Insult Reviewers or Editors

Real quotes:
“The Reviewers clearly have major conflict of interest and are attempting to jeopardize my study to benefit their own”
“The critiques are so stupid and so wrong!”
“The reviewers clearly did not read my paper carefully”
Never Exaggerate Your Own Work

Real quotes:
“This is the single most significant discovery since…..”
“This finding will transform the field…”
“The conclusion will revolutionize the current practice in ……..”
“This is the most essential pathway for hypertrophy…..”
Reasoning, Articulation and Respect

50 Reasons Not To Change

- I'm not sure my boss would like it.
- It's too expensive.
- We didn't ask for the equipment.
- We don't have time.
- It's expensive.
- It's too risky.
- We can't change now.
- We can't afford it.
- We don't have the authority.
- We can't do it.
- It's too involved.
- It's not in my job description.
- It's not part of the plan.
- We have the resources.
- We need the time.
- We need the money.
- It's not a priority.
- We can do it.
- We don't have the time.
- It's not my job.
- We don't have the resources.
- It's not my responsibility.
- It's not my problem.
- It's not possible.
- It's not a problem.
- We have the time.
- We have the resources.
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# 3
How to Improve Your Odds?

Berry's World

"He didn’t publish, so he perished."
Some Universal Value In Science

- Importance
- Originality
- Relevance
- Clarity
- Truth
# 2
How to Minimize Rejection?

- Read Instructions
- Understand the Journal and Agency
- Understand the Review Process
- Connection with Reviewers/Editors
- Work Hard in Preparation
- Find Good Mentors
Embrace Failure with a Positive Attitude

It happens to everyone!
It is not personal!
Rejection is a Necessary Path to Success
Thank You!

[Image of a person with tears and the word 'rejection' repeated around their head]