I’ve focused on print resources and some of the more obscure or older but still useful resources to complement your web search for useful information on careers and career guidance.

* consider the starred articles as essential reading early in your career (or now, if they’re new to you). Sample the remainder as time, interest and need—or need of diversion—dictate.

A. Getting Started - Choice of problem and direction


Two interesting perspectives on the vexing issue of choice of a lab are given in: Holden, C. ‘Eight attributes of highly successful postdocs’, and Vogel, G. ‘A day in the life of a topflight lab’ (Bob Langer’s lab at MIT), both in the 3 Sept 1999 issue of Science.


series in-print: the ‘Caveman/Sticky Wicket’ series in Journal of Cell Science is very entertaining, very funny and (usually!) anonymous. What redeems this often-biting series is the skillful use of humor to address important topics in science and science or graduate training. Alas, even the Brits seem to be losing their sense of humor, as this series has been appearing with distressingly decreasing frequency!

series on-line: Science Magazine’s ‘Science Careers’ site has many interesting articles and series covering a wide range of career advice and having an excellent collection of on-line resources.

HHMI short course: The HHMI funds a series of ‘Future Faculty Fellows’ boot camps at many institutions including the UW. Sign up if at all possible both for the resources and opportunity to compare notes with other trainees and faculty. For those without access, see the following listing, an attempt by the HHMI to capture a portion of this in useful-free!-form.

B. Getting Stuff Done - I

Burroughs Wellcome/HHMI (2006) Making the Right Moves: A Practical Guide to Scientific Management for Postdocs and New Faculty. 2nd Edition (a 250 pp guide that can be requested free from HHMI or downloaded and printed from the HHMI website where you'll find additional resources: http://www.hhmi.org/grants/office/graduate/labmanagement.html. Includes excerpts from the Barker books noted below as well. Very useful advice and free to boot!).

American Society for Cell Biology (2004) Career Advice for Life Scientists II. This 125pp book is also free (search the title or see the ASCB website) and a great complement to the HHMI book above.

Barker, Kathy (2002,2005) At the Helm and At the Bench: Laboratory Navigator. Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press. (two useful guides, one now in 2nd edition, by Kathy Barker of ISB on setting up and running your lab. At the Helm is the more useful of the two for senior students, post-docs and new faculty).

Bliss, E.C. (1976) Getting Things Done. Bantam Books, New York. (73 short chapters with a few amusing little drawing on how to tackle daily life. Got me to throw out all the other time management books I bought, but was procrastinating about reading!).


C. Getting Stuff Done II - Design and conduct of experiments


National Academy Press (1995 +) *On Being a Scientist: Responsible Conduct in Research*, 2nd and subsequent editions. (Responsible conduct of research, and dealing with the ethical dilemmas posed by science, are part of all of our lives. This short booklet has case studies and a good bibliography. You’ll receive additional training as part of your graduate career).

### D. Essential Skills - Reading, writing and the presentation of science

Warren, K., ed. (1981) *Coping with the Biomedical Literature*, Praeger, New York (useful compilation, with the most useful-and least dated-those of how to approach ‘the literature’).

Fawcett, P.J. (1978) Personal filing systems revisited. Ear Nose & Throat J. 57:82-89. (an unlikely place for a small gem to appear - timeless principles still applicable in our computer-supported or - dependent Age of Information).


Medawar, P. (1982/1990) *Pluto’s Republic* and *The Threat and the Glory*, Oxford U.P. and Harper Collins. (Medawar and Thomas (see below) were two of the most engaging and elegant stylists writing science in any century. Both are models of high intelligence, clarity and enthusiasm in presenting science and medicine to the public).

Thomas, L. (1974/79) *Lives of a Cell* and *The Medusa and the Snail*. Viking Press. (see note above. The first of these books was collected from a very unusual (for the time) column Thomas wrote for the New England Journal of Medicine entitled ‘Notes of a Biology Watcher’).

Williams, R. (~1990 on) *The PC (or Mac) is not a Typewriter* series. Peachpit Press, Berkeley. (very useful series of books that provide a painless introduction to typography and a guide on how to better use any word processor/graphics program to produce words/figures that look good on the page and are a pleasure to read. Word processing programs have had the paradoxical effect of institutionalizing lots of typographical mistakes and errors. Use these books to spot and correct the more egregious, or to achieve special effects. Little ‘how-tos’ that make the difference!)

Bailey, N.T.J. (1995) *Statistical Methods in Biology, 3rd Ed.* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. 255pp. (Everyone needs a ‘statistical crutch’ - this is mine, and you need to find yours. Good introductions to simple concepts and their application, with a Summary on what approach or test to choose as a function of distribution, sample size and type of comparison. Needs to be used with software, and a biostatistician you can trust and work with).

Swinscow, TDV (200) *Statistics at Square One.* 9th Ed. Revised by MJ Campbell. BMJ Press. (very useful introductory text that first appeared as an articles series in the BMJ. Now available in print or on-line at the BMJ website: http://www.bmj.com/collections/statsbk/).

Tufte, E.D. (1983/2001) *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information.* 1st/2nd Editions. Graphics Press, Cheshire, CT. 197pp. (Stunning! Most useful work on graphical excellence in theory and practice. After reading this you'll never look at a multicolor, overproduced 3D Powerpoint slide again without weeping at the lost opportunity to accurately and economically convey information! See also Tufte’s 3 sequels, the most recent of which *Beautiful Information* includes his take-no-prisoners shred of Powerpoint. All 4 books equally useful and enjoyable as well as stunningly produced - Tufte also teaches a course that includes all of the books in the registration fee).

Gladwell, M. (2002) The social life of paper. New Yorker 25 March issue. (The real skinny on paper, and why it’s so useful: paper is a remarkably efficient and versatile, low cost, low tech but ‘high-touch’ crutch to support the life of the mind. This article starts with air traffic controllers, who use small scraps of paper to track and clear even very busy flight schedules. Available free at the author’s website: www.gladwell.com).

### E. Style in Science/The Wellsprings of Creativity

Holton, G. (1978) Fermi’s group and the recapture of Italy's place in physics, Chapter 5 in *The Scientific Imagination: Case Studies.* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. 382pp. (Fermi was the last great physicist to be equally adept and accomplished as a theoretician and experimentalist. A good account of Fermi’s work habits are given in Platt, J.R. (1962) *The Excitement of Science*, Houghton-Mifflin, Boston, Chs. 7 and 8).


Fisher, D. (2003). The Henry Kunkel Legacy: through the eyes of his last graduate student. *Lupus* 12:172-174. (another dynasty, this one in a family and based at Rockefeller. David’s article captures the essence of Henry as a mentor: the creative spark for your science must come from you; smart people will always see an interesting angle on any solid result; and the way to build a big, interesting and potentially important story is with that first small, solid experimental result. So get started!).

Austin, J.H. (1977) *Chase, Chance and Creativity: The Lucky Art of Novelty.* Columbia University Press, 237pp. (Austin was the long-time Chair of Neurology at Colorado, more recently famous for his excursions into cognitive neuroscience (see also his ‘Zen and the Brain’ MIT Press, 1999, 834pp. and sequels). This earlier work is a much more accessible look at the episodes from the author’s career, and how a combination of opportunity and insight were leveraged to good advantage. Certainly not the weightiest of works on creativity, but enjoyable. Recently reprinted).
Tharp, T. (2003) *The Creative Habit: Learn It and Use It for Life*. Simon and Schuster, 243pp. (very interesting statement on creativity and the conditions that foster creative thinking from one of the giants of 20th century American modern dance. This book aims to be a practical guide, and is made all the more interesting by where its coming from and by focusing on what promotes creativity across a wide range of disciplines).

F. The Larger World, and a few just for fun...


Feynman, R.P. (1985) *Surely You're Joking, Mr. Feynman!: Adventures of a Curious Character*. W.W. Norton, New York. 350pp. (Feynman’s autobiography in the form of a collection of great stories he told his drumming buddy and fellow physicist Ralph Leighton. A gentle reminder that life and science are supposed to be fun).


Lazebnik, Y. (2002) Can a biologist fix a radio? - Or, what I learned while studying apoptosis. *Cancer Cell* 2:179-182. (amusing meditation on the coming tide of systems thinking as applied to biology. As is often the case, the most useful commentary is again here delivered with a small dose of humor).
G. The University of Washington Research Funding Service: The UW’s Research Funding Service (RFS), located in the Health Sciences Library, is a remarkable local resource for students and investigators. The RFS provides an excellent series of handouts and seminars on the very practical issue of locating support for your research, and can help you locate funding sources specific to your situation or nationality. A portion of what the RFS provides can be found at their website: http://healthlinks.washington.edu/rfs/

Help us with the 2010 Edition! We're especially interested in your resources on computation and systems issues as applied to biomedical research and training. Send your additions, corrections and suggestions. Any we use will be fully credited!

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