

Doing Exemplary Research:
What I Have Learned From
Others Who Do Exemplary
Research (and What Insight Hasn't
Worked So Well For Me)

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Outline

- Common wisdom
 - Work on projects that are potential home runs
 - Do research without flaws
 - Choose co-authors you admire
 - Work hard. Really hard
 - Expectations Management: “Shoot for the stars,” “Aim for the sky”

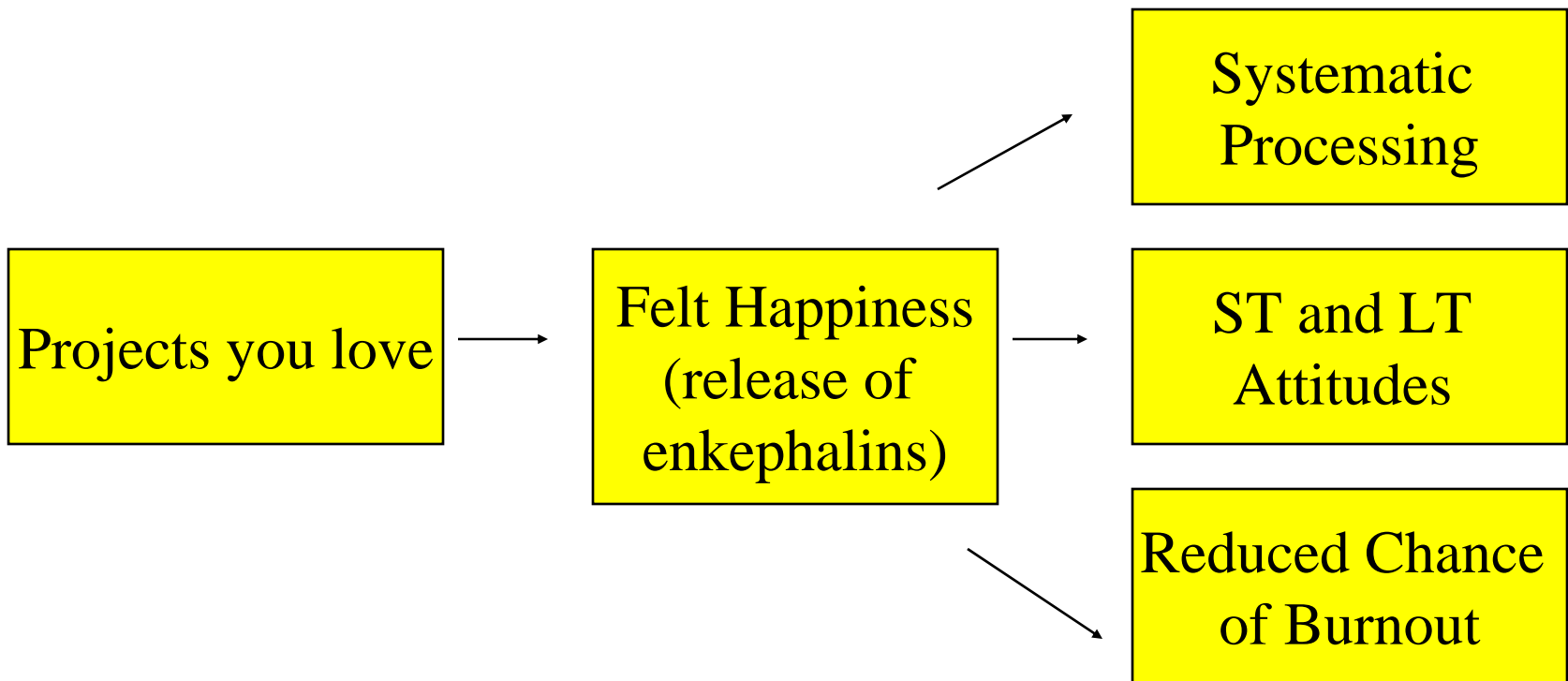
Outline

- Alternatively:
 - Work on projects that aren't really needed
 - Do research with flaws
 - Choose co-authors you like
 - Take time off, enjoy life
 - Lower your expectations

Work on Projects That Are Not Really Needed

- Work on projects that you love

Work on Projects That Are Not Really Needed



- Driven by affect, minimal cognition needed (Zajonc, 1980)

Do Research with Flaws

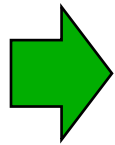
- All studies have flaws
 - Being aware of the flaws and addressing them are considerably more important
- How to be aware of flaws and address them
 - When to seek critical thinking
 - Consider reward systems: Before submission

The Paper Life Cycle

Intrigue in paper

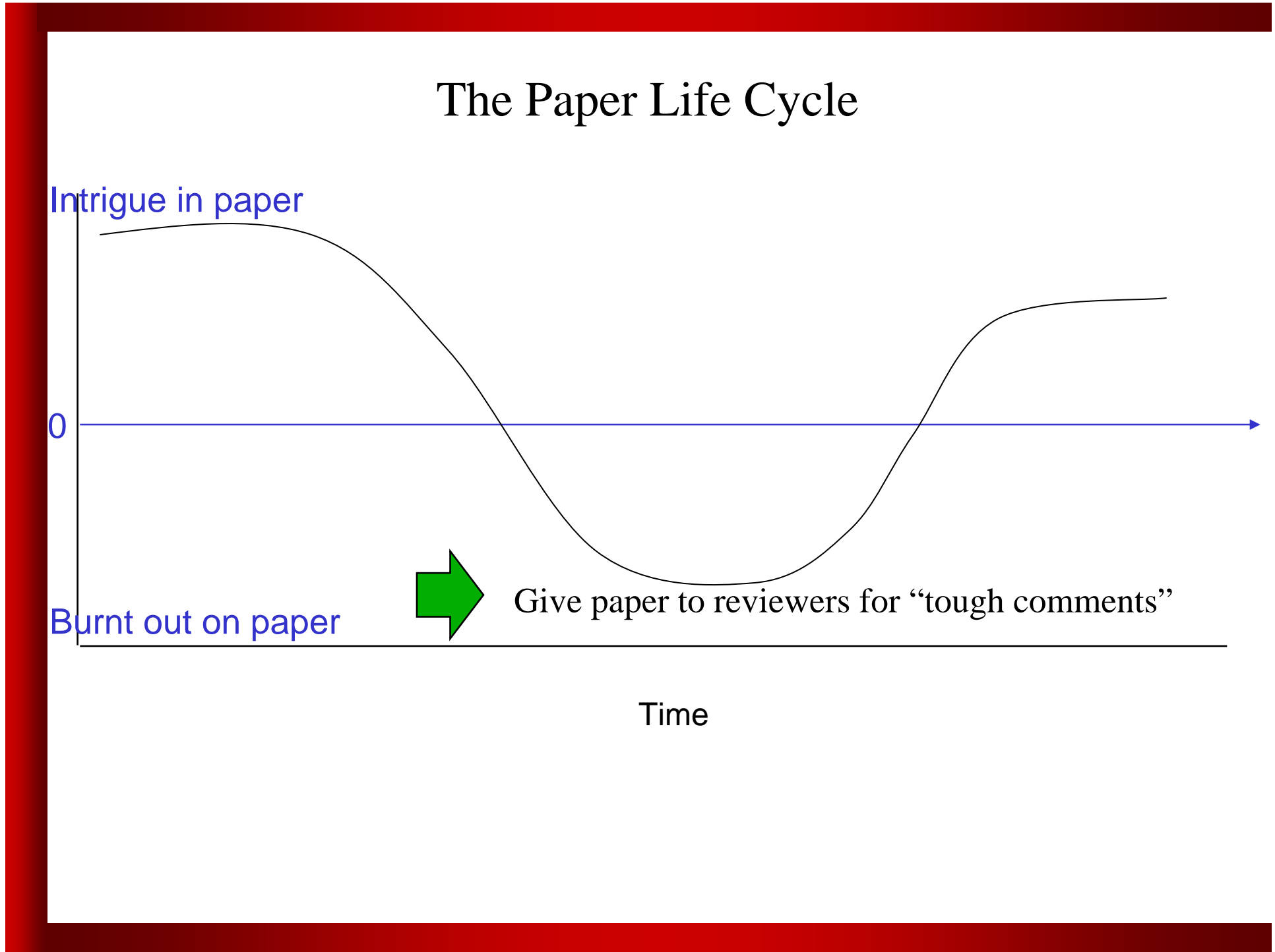
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Burnt out on paper



Give paper to reviewers for "tough comments"

Time



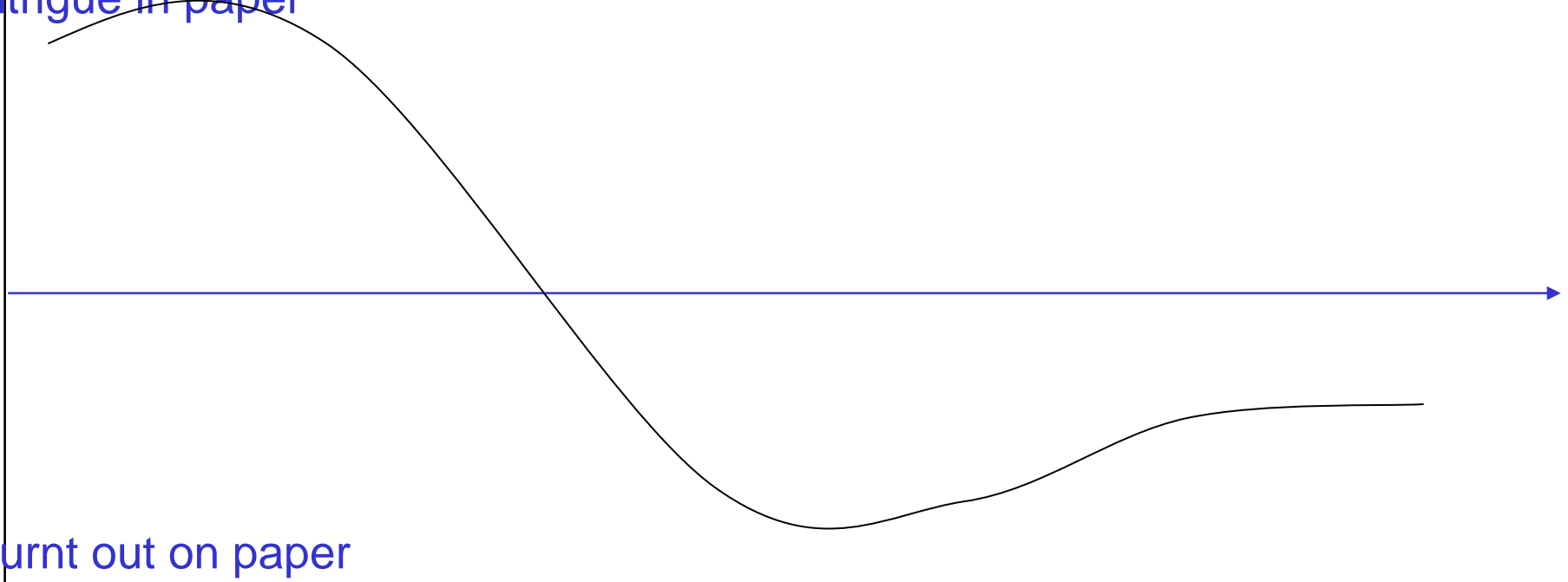
What Is Likely to Happen

Intrigue in paper

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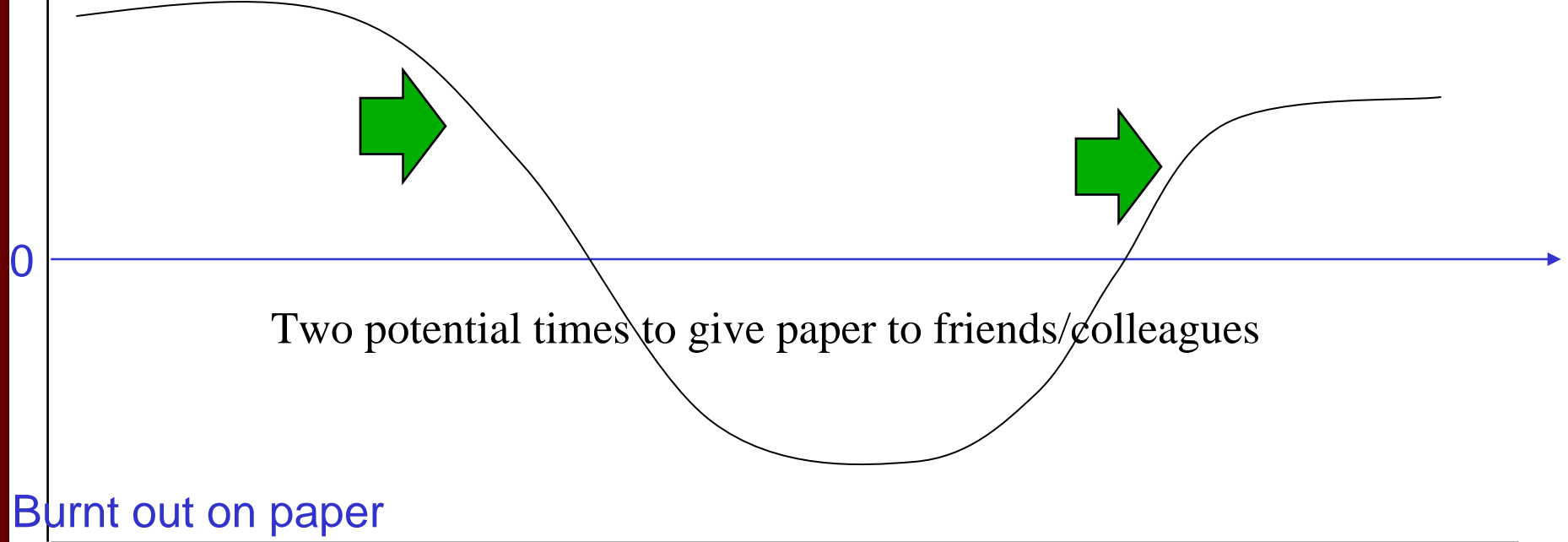
Burnt out on paper

Time



Instead, Give Paper Away Early or Late

Intrigue in paper



Reward Systems

“Ever reward yourself?” yes = 79%, no = 21%

n = 14 (average years out = 5, skewed female)

One Reward System

- Sending out a paper to journal – catalogue purchase
- 1st revision request: hedonic luxury item
e.g., fragrance
- 2nd revision request: utilitarian, though not strictly required item
e.g., shoes/new shirt purchase
- 3rd revision request: something small or service oriented
e.g., going out for dinner with friends
- Final acceptance: something durable but nice
e.g., wall decoration

Choosing Co-authors

- Choose someone you like

Choose Co-authors You Like

Choose (or say yes to) someone:

- (1) you like (71%)
- (2) with same goals (43%)
- (3) complementary skill set (43%)
- (4) tolerant/can argue with (36%)
- (5) you respect (29%)
- (6) positive energy (14%)
- (7) open communication (14%)



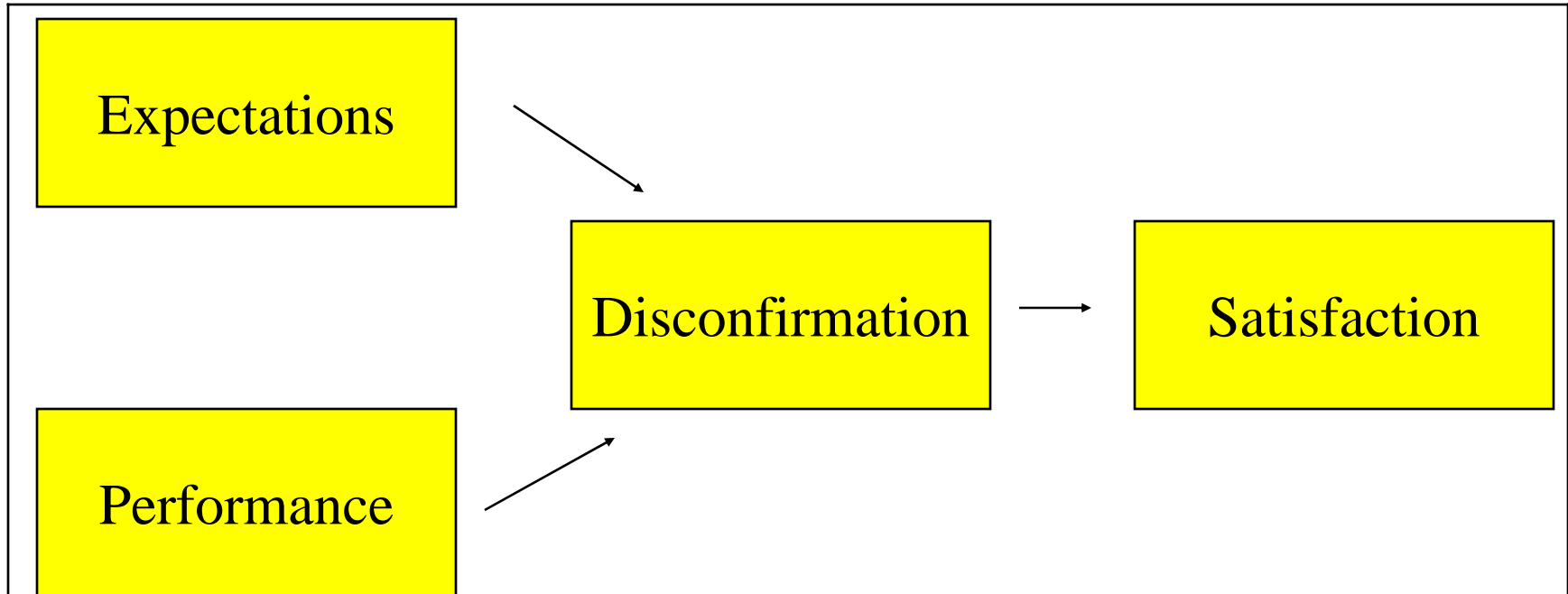
maximizing synergy and complementarity

n = 14 (average years out = 5, skewed female)

Choose Co-authors You Like

- Appreciate their strengths
 - Co-authors or spouses?
 - 140% total
- Basic needs:
 - Creativity (designing studies)
 - Execution (willingness to get things done)
 - Writing (can be a bad writer, but a good rewriter)
 - Flaw finding (designing new studies, thinking of new analyses)
 - Rewriting (positioning, integration of literatures)
 - Egocentric fighter OR cheerleader (get thru review process)
 - Copy editor (detailed eye)

Lower Your Expectations



- Expectancy disconfirmation (Oliver 1980)

Lower Your Expectations

Revise paper
Write lecture
Create new design

Significant
Disconfirmation

Dejected or
anxious emotions

Wrote lecture
Helped colleague
Emailed

- Expectations typically too high.

Lower Your Expectations

- Distinguish between realistic and idealistic expectations
- Enjoy negative affect
 - Pos & neg affect are not inversely correlated (Diener 1999)
 - More salient (Fiske 1980)
 - Felt with greater intensity (Debraix & Pham 1991)
 - => motivational

Take Time Off, Enjoy Life

- After you do three hours of work.

Take Time Off, Enjoy Life

- $n = 14$ (average years out = 5, skewed female)

“How many hours of deep thinking do you get done each day?”




mean = 1.82, sd = 1.03


Take Time Off, Enjoy Life

- $n = 14$ (average years out = 5, skewed female)

“How many hours of deep thinking do you get done each day?”

 mean = 1.82, sd = 1.03

“How many hours of deep thinking do you think you’ll get done each day?”

 mean = 5.63, sd = 3.21

Take Time Off, Enjoy Life

- Typical day:
 - Deep thinking
 - Practical thinking
 - Shallow thinking
 - Creative thinking
 - No thinking

Take Time Off, Enjoy Life

- Typical day:
 - Deep thinking (first drafts, revisions)
 - Practical thinking (other projects, recruiting)
 - Shallow thinking (running SAS, teaching prep)
 - Creative thinking (running, haircut, café)
 - No thinking (email)