

Preface

More than a decade ago, I had an idea for a book that I eventually wrote and titled *Psychology 101½: The Unspoken Rules for Success in Academia*. In a nutshell, my concern was that young career scientists in psychology often did not learn in graduate school or through postdoctoral experience the important knowledge they would need to make a success of their careers; I certainly didn't. They usually did learn the formal, explicit knowledge of the field. What was missing was the informal, implicit, and often unspoken (or tacit) knowledge upon which careers are built—how one can organize oneself and one's resources to succeed in a challenging and competitive field.

I have written this book primarily for graduate students, postdocs, and early-career scientists, but I suspect that even some later career scientists may find something to learn. I believe the book may be of use for first-year proseminars and also for courses on professional issues that are taught in some psychology departments and in other departments that embrace psychological science. Each lesson is presented in a way so as to make four basic points, although the format is varied to preserve the interest of the text: (a) the lesson, (b) how and where I learned it, (c) why it is important, and (d) one or more concrete examples of it. All of the concrete examples are real and from my career or those of other people I have known personally.

So why a second edition of a book that has done well?

First, I am now older and, I believe, perhaps a wee bit wiser. When I wrote the first edition, my entire career had been spent at Yale (with the

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exception of 3 years of graduate school at Stanford). I now have had the privilege of serving for some time as well at Tufts University, Oklahoma State University, and Cornell University, and my knowledge of university settings is broader than it was then and, perhaps, even a bit deeper. I also have since been president of the American Psychological Association (APA), the Eastern Psychological Association, and the Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences, and as a result, I have learned a great deal about the field of psychology that I just didn't know back at the turn of the 21st century.

Second, the field of psychology has changed enormously in the 12 years since APA published the first edition. Many journals have gone either fully or partially electronic; grants have become scarcer; funding has become more directed toward specific topics; teaching has become more multimodal; scientists have come to be rated on new quantitative scales (e.g., H —the number of publications H one has that have been cited H times); journals have come to be rated for “impact”; and new forms of promoting ideas, such as blogs, have become available. Moreover, as the number of aspiring academics has increased, the field has become just a lot more competitive. I came to believe that the first edition of the book no longer fully reflected current realities.

Third, the lessons in the first edition were presented in a more or less random order, making it harder for readers fully to profit from the book. In this edition, I have ordered the lessons into five parts: Identity and Integrity (Part I), Interpersonal Relationships (Part II), Institutions and Academia (Part III), Problems and Tasks (Part IV), and Job and Career (Part V).

Fourth, and perhaps most important, I realized that something fundamental was missing in the first edition: pedagogy. I thought the greatest challenge was simply in knowing the unspoken rules for success in academia. But I came to realize, over the course of time, that even harder than knowing the rules is reflecting on these rules and knowing how to apply them. One may think one is doing what needs to be done at the same time that no one else thinks so. As a result, in this edition, I present for each lesson (except 101½) two kinds of supportive pedagogy in the form of questions:

- *Think For Yourself*: These questions ask the reader to think about the issue discussed in the lesson and to reflect in the abstract on an

aspect of it. They ensure that the reader has understood the basic content of the lesson.

- *Put It Into Practice:* These questions ask the reader to apply an aspect of the lesson to his or her own career. They ensure that the reader sees how the particular lesson applies to his or her personal experiences of career development.

In using this book, keep three things in mind. First, there is no recipe for success that works for everyone. Learning the lessons in this book will help you get where you want to go, but it will not get you there. You have to get yourself there. Second, do not let yourself become discouraged by the large number of ways in which you need improvement. I have been in the field for 40 years, and I still have innumerable ways in which I can improve. Self-improvement is a lifelong course, not a quick fix. Finally, look at the 101½ lessons in this book not as obstacles but as opportunities: They provide you with shortcuts to attaining your goals, whatever those goals may be.

I hope that, whoever you are, your career and your life will be changed for the better by reading this book. Let me know. I'd be delighted to hear from you via e-mail (robert.sternberg@cornell.edu).