

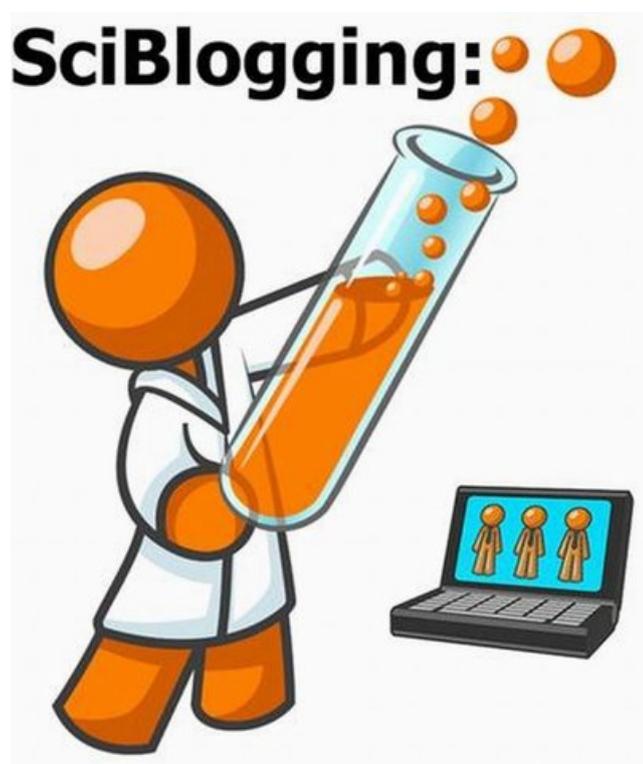
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Scientific blogging

by Nikola Milošević? - Saturday, April 19, 2014

<https://inspiratron.org/blog/2014/04/19/scientific-blogging/>

I have seen many advices on how important it is to blog if you want to become influential scientists. Even on my university (University of Manchester), faculties are organizing crash seminars on scientific blogging for researchers with introduction to Wordpress. However, I am quite familiar with Wordpress, since I was working on some of the most popular plugins out there, and also I did some major modifications on some themes and ,of course, I have Wordpress blog (this one). I have seen many scientist starting blogging based on this advise. So their first blog post is about getting on PhD and their research. That is not my case. I have this blog for several years. About blogging and social media advertisement I know a lot, however I have one major dilemma about scientific blogging: Can blogging jeopardize your research in terms of publications?



Dilemma

Dilemma seems simple, but it is making me trouble when I have to write about my research. In many paper you see something like: "Work should not be published or sent to other places." If you take this in account it means - no, you cannot blog about a research you will later want to publish in some scientific journal or in some conference proceedings. However, not everyone is taking this so seriously. So some argue that you may write some informal article about your current state of the research and even tell some interesting background story, which does not go to the publication. This could be interesting point of view. This probably means, that still, you will not write about what exactly you did and what are your results, but will speak about it more informally. Like speaking with a friend about what are you doing, what interesting happened while doing it.

Here I would like to ask fellow scientists who by accident end up on my blog and this post to tell me about their opinion about what part of research you may, and what part of research you should keep for paper and yourself? **Please write in comment** and by that also help other scientists who search for same answer as I did. Couple of days ago I was searching on Google answer to this question. I found many blog articles about how to blog for scientists, but I have not found any advice on what to blog.

Style and format

Style and format should not be problem in my case. But since many people could have trouble with that, I will write about my viewpoint. First of all, it is a blog. Even if it is about research, it is a blog. By saying so, it should not be too formal. Think about your audience. Probably your blog will be more open than any scientific journal and audience will be wider. Most critical thing is that your audience can understand you. So imagine your friend who is not from the field, your cousin of parents, and try to explain whatever you want to with language understandable for them. In this informal language do not go too far, so you probably should not swear, at least not a lot, or use street jargon. Be correct as much as possible and precise.

Basically these rules apply for any type of blogging including scientific one. However, in scientific communication there are some dilemmas

Dilemmas in science communication

Simplicity	vs	Complexity
Robust knowledge	vs	News
Robust knowledge	vs	Uncertainties
Risks	vs	Uncertainties
Logical	vs	Critical
Clarity	vs	Completeness
Helicopter-view	vs	Detail
Meaning	vs	Nuance
Process	vs	Facts
Talking	vs	Listening

balance is important

As image says at the end balance is important. But keep in mind that anything you write should be clear. No one wants to read detective story when reading about science. Ok, most of people want just facts, but thing with detective story can be used for keeping interest of reader... so maybe it can be used on blog. In paper it would not work... it will be rejected. So here I would like to say that you may keep a lot of yourself while writing a blog. These things have not to be included in paper, but on blog you may write about your feelings, map your thoughts, tell personal stories or write about some discussions.

Conclusion

Scientific blogging on start can be very confusion thing with many dilemmas. I would like to start discussion in the community to try to solve at least some of the dilemmas. My most important dilemma is what to write about not to jeopardize any future publication? While other dilemmas can be about style or form of writing a blog. So here is my appeal to community to contribute to solving this dilemma. Please, post your opinions or links to your opinions with some short explanations in comment.

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as well. Here is the list of them: