Lecture 13
Conference Papers

How to Get Your Conference Paper Rejected

Even when the research is good...

- Distract the referee with misspellings, bad grammar and poor layout.

- Don't give any examples.

- Don't reveal your problem or solution anywhere in the abstract or introduction.

- Require the referee to read two other papers to understand this one.

Getting Your Paper Rejected, Continued

- Fail to cite relevant work of the program committee.
- Send in a paper that is all text, no figures or tables.
- Make the paper 50% longer than the stated page limit.
- Include absolutely every bit of data you gathered.
- Forget to state your contributions.
- Send your submission to the wrong person.

Conference Papers

Process

1. "Call for Papers" issued, usually at least six months before the paper due date.

   - topics of interest

   - length and form
   - where to submit, # of copies
   - schedule, including

2. Author prepares and submits paper.

3. Papers received by chair and assigned to PC members.

Conference Process 2

4. PC member reads assigned papers and prepares reviews or ratings for PC chair.

5. PC meets, argues, selects papers for conference.

   Not always "best" results. PC concern is having a good program

6. PC chair sends authors accept or reject. If accept, usually get reviews and formatting instructions.

Conference Process 3

7. Author prepares revision according to format and sends to proceedings editor, usually w/copyright release.

8. Editor assembles papers, sends to publisher for printing.
    Note: No re-review.

9. Proceedings distributed at conference.
    Note: No-one checks that

10. Sponsoring organization makes proceedings available for sale.

Variations

Small vs. Large Program Committee (PC)

Small PC, everyone assigned all papers, paper length usually shorter (<10 pages).

Large PC, 3 or 4 readers for each paper, longer papers (up to 20 pages).

Workshops

Original submissions as "pre-prints" at conference.

Sometimes no assignment of copyright.

Sometimes final version collected for a proceedings after the workshop.

Variations 2

Long and Short Papers
Sometimes a short paper format for work in progress or experience reports.

Might have same or different lengths in proceedings.

Abstracts only
Papers accepted on the basis of 1-page abstracts.

Submissions might be restricted to organization members

Pledge to present—might be a requirement that you agree to present paper at conf.
Could mean a profit-oriented conference.

Variations 3

Best papers might be recommended for special issue of a journal.
   Papers usually appear in longer form.

Might get direct contact from PC chair or PC member—

Conference tracks
   Have to choose a track to submit to.
   Track chairs will usually route paper to correct track,

Blind review: must remove all signs of authorship

Choosing a Conference: The 3 R's

1. Relevance
- Prior proceedings and PC composition often say more than list of topics in Call for Papers.
- Does your paper refer to papers from the conference?

2. Reputation
- Ask someone in the field which are the highly regarded conferences.
- In CS, often sponsored by a professional organization and held on a regular basis.
- Do you see citations to papers from the conference?

Choosing a Conference 2

3. Reach—Will a lot of people see it?

- High attendance
- Are proceedings published by a sponsoring organization or publishing house?
- Are proceedings automatically sent to some group?
- Does it attract industrial attendees?

Deciding to Submit

Is the work ready?

Problem, Solution, <u>Defense</u>

Do you have anything to back up your results:

Preliminary results okay.

Conferences will sometimes take idea papers, but usually on basis of author's reputation.

Is the work timely?

Conferences are interested in the latest developments.

Work you did 4 years ago and are just getting around to submitting will not get a good reception.

Rejection

What if you get rejected unjustly?

Probably little you can do about it—don't whine to PC chair,

Okay to resubmit a rejected paper

no more than one resubmission without revising

Is the paper more suited to a journal?

Writing a Conference Paper

Remember, the reviewer is reading many papers in a short time period—

Legitimate to reject a paper if it is sloppy, ambiguous or hard to read, even if the results are good.

Make sure your contribution is stated clearly in the abstract and in the first 2 paragraphs of the Introduction.

Violating the spirit of the page limit will irritate the reviewer.

Writing a Conference Paper 2

It should be a different paper for a small PC than for a large PC.

Don't expect to say everything you know on a topic. Keep it focused.

Don't overlook work by PC members.

"Beyond the scope of this paper" is a red flag.

Extended Abstract vs. Full Paper

For an extended abstract, you will likely have to omit material.

Trick is to convince reviewer that you can fill in gaps.

Consider omitting or summarizing parts that take a long time to read
- Proofs
- Programs
- Tables of data
- Long definitions
- Language grammars

Don't sacrifice diagrams in order to cram more words in.

Extended Abstract 2

Don't write a prospectus for "the full paper."

An "extended abstract" is really just a short paper.

Don't expect the reviewer to go read some other source first.

Don't omit all the examples.

Easier to shorten than lengthen a draft.

Start Early

Try to get the paper done early enough to get a second opinion
> Offer to read papers for others so you have points on account.

Giving a short talk on the topic to friends is a good way to organize your ideas, and see what needs the most explanation.

Look at referee's instructions, rating sheet from previous years.

What Can Help Get Your Paper Accepted?

Exposure of results to PC members before paper is submitted

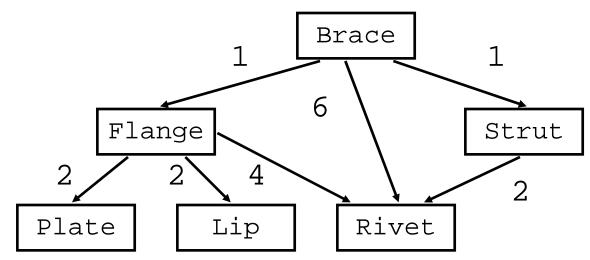But most will be too busy to comment on drafts.

Removal of "distractions"

misspellings, poor layout, tiny type, ambiguous sentences, waffle words

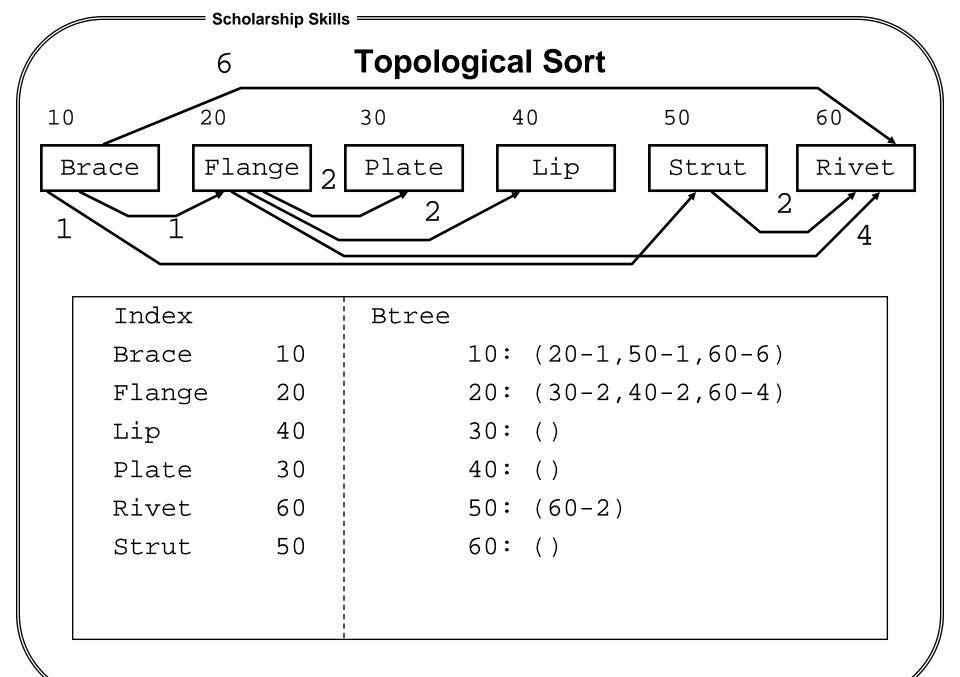Results on a platter (reviewer as defender)

Clear distinction from other work.

Good examples and figures.

A File Structure Supporting Traversal Recursion

P. A. Larson and V. Deshpande. *Proc. of the ACM SIGMOD Intl. Conf. on the Management of Data*, pages 243-252, Portland, OR, June 1989.

Traversal recursion: recursion that is bound to an underlying graph structure (hence finite)

For a large graph that must go on disk, how do you traverse it efficiently?

Topological Sort


```
    Index              Btree
    Brace      10          10: (20-1,50-1,60-6)
    Flange     20          20: (30-2,40-2,60-4)
    Lip        40          30: ()
    Plate      30          40: ()
    Rivet      60          50: (60-2)
    Strut      50          60: ()
```

Operations and Experiments

Paper describes
- <u>Building initial file structures</u>, including how to do the topological sort efficiently
- <u>Retrieval operations</u>, such as finding all successors of a node
- <u>Update operations</u>, such as inserting an edge

Gives some performance results ...
... but they compare the effect of different disk-page sizes, not this method to others.