Effective Reviewing

Some Tips and Tricks

Computing Science and Mathematics
University of Stirling

Evaluating Other Work (Research Viewpoint)

- Maintain an open mind
- Find *reliable* sources (preferably not the Web):
  - Look for top journals and conferences
  - Ask your supervisor or the Library for starting points
- Follow up citations in each paper:
  - Work backward in time for the context
  - Work forward in time for new developments

Evaluating Other Work (Development Viewpoint)

- Focus on the problem to be solved
  - This can change
- Find other solutions:
  - Evaluate what works and what does not
- Examples can be useful for evaluation:
  - Complete solutions rarely exist off-the-shelf
  - Benefit from learning what does not work

Evaluating Other Work (Documentation Viewpoint)

- Document thoroughly what you discover:
  - Information can filtered, annotated and abbreviated in due course

Evaluating Your Own Work (Research Viewpoint)

- Start with (dis)provable hypotheses:
  - The easiest hypotheses have yes/no answers
  - E.g. 'The system can analyse 1000 web pages/sec'
- The best experiments give competing ideas every possible advantage

Evaluating Your Own Work (Development Viewpoint)

- Regularly review your work:
  - Should technique 2 have been used in place of 1?
  - What 'better' solutions could be used for data structures, schemas, files, algorithms, etc.?
- It is easier to improve functionality that is fairly complete than partial solutions

Citation Format

- Citation formats:
  - See report templates for examples of citation style
  - Be consistent and complete
- Examples:

~~4. Android. http://developer.android.com/guide/developing/device.html~~

4. Google Inc. Using hardware devices. http://developer.android.com/guide/developing/device.html , consulted Sep 2013.

~~12. M. Fayed and H. Mouftah. Localised Alpha-shape Computations for Boundary Recognition in Sensor Networks, 2009.~~

12. Marwan M. Fayed and Hussein T. Mouftah. Localised alpha-shape computations for boundary recognition in sensor networks. *Ad Hoc Networks,* 7(6):1259–1269, Elsevier, August 2009.