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# Dr. Excellent: The Systemic and Personal Conditions for Being an Academic Star in Communication Studies

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**Abstract:** Pursuing excellence is a legitimate ambition of many scholars worldwide. However, between wishful thinking and real facts lies a great leap that can only be bridged using a myriad of resources. We label these the *excellence repertoire*. Based on 25 interviews with successful communication scholars, we show the key role of accumulating social, economic, and institutional capital in shaping the *excellence repertoire*. The study argues that the *fetishization* of productivity might jeopardize the traditional *ethos* of science, in a context where research excellence may be disconnected from the quality of education.

**Keywords:** research excellence, field theory, communication sciences, publish or perish, productivity, academic stars