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## **Featured researcher: Jeanie Benson** Learning to listen well

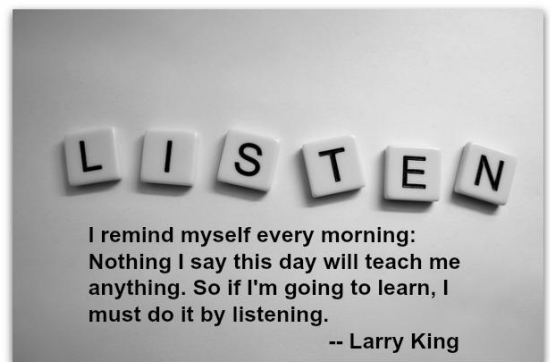
At the early stages of my research career, the page was an empty sheet that I worked hard to fill up with my thoughts and ideas. Like a lot of researchers, I believed it was my words that were going to make a difference to the world. If I could just think of the right things to say and the right way to say them, then I would be a research star. It has taken the completion of a PhD, the publication of several research outputs, and a variety of public presentations to realise that it has not been my words that have touched the lives of others, or inspired further research, or informed promising young scholars. It has and always was the voice, words and thoughts of the many others that have guided the best part of my research and helped me to achieve some recognition in the educational, media and communication management fields.

Managers and fellow staff members often tell us that we need to further our careers with research. Whether we approach our research to gain qualifications, or for

publication, or even simply to improve the quality of our teaching, we know we have to show some evidence of research. Conducting research then becomes a very great pressure and it eats at the heart of our teaching lives and can even overflow and disturb us in our home lives, and this was certainly the case for me. My mind boiled and boiled under the pressure of the research, and the competition from fellow postgraduates and staff members. My quest became to find the most impressive words to fill the greatest number of pages. Then one day, as I was listening to a recording of one of my pilot group interviews, I heard myself talking excitedly to my participant. My participant, a very patient Malaysian friend, was listening to me

talk about my study and my plans! That was the first moment I realised that I needed to stop and to listen, so that I could find out what was important to my participants. Listening became a process that I have understood more deeply over time. It is this process and the steps to listening success that I want to share with you here.

**Step one.** Listen to your participants or experts that are telling you their story or their concerns. They are not your concerns. Find out what is important to them personally, what they hope to achieve from their time with you. All of us are busy. Your participant or expert needs you to understand that their time and attention are a gift. Ask them questions, be with them, be interested.



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*“Put your thoughts and aims aside for a moment. Their time is also valuable.”*

The word  
LISTEN  
contains  
the same letters  
as the word  
SILENT.

**Step two.** Listen to your participants or experts more than once. That is why recording is important. Video recordings may give more information than sound recordings, but remember you seldom get an “unbiased” recording due to camera angle decisions and the way that various devices intrude on the conversation. You don’t want to create anxiety for your participant or expert either. Any of us can have an off day where we worry about our camera appearance. An old-fashioned voice recording from a discretely placed cellphone or dictaphone can be simpler and more considerate.

**Step three.** Listen to your participant’s or expert’s contribution in context with other participant or expert contribution. Your participant or expert has gifted you with their experience, and it is up to you to make sure that you treat this gift with the professional critique that they have entrusted with you. Do your reading about the themes you discover as you listen to the participants. Be prepared to encounter new ideas by other researchers and theorists. Whether empirical or market-driven, research must be carefully considered.

**Step four.** Listen to your peers, your fellow researchers, your supervisors, your friend who reads your writing.

Most people do not listen with the intent to *understand*.  
Most people listen with the intent to *reply*.

~ Stephen R. Covey

Put your thoughts and aims aside for a moment. Their time is also valuable. Would a busy and honest person want you to waste their input and thoughts by reacting against their critique before you have considered it? We are all adults and responsible contributing members of our faculties. Perhaps even experts in certain areas. Unless we can put ourselves in the critics’ shoes, however, and listen to what our brave editors have to tell us, we have failed in our task of listening to our first audience.

The final step which in ideal circumstances should always be the first step: Listen to the concerns and thoughts of your family. Research often requires some sacrifice and cost to our family, but this sacrifice and cost do not need to be selfish and thoughtless. I had to learn

this lesson backwards. But now I have learned to create each new project with the blessing of my family. A family that is listened to can support you each step of the way, can warn you of impending crises and, when it comes time to celebrate, will be your most fervent and warmest supporters.

Good listening has improved my writing, and it fills the page so much more accurately. Listening helps me write good and true research that may well become outdated, but will always stand the test of research ethics and build communities with my participants or experts, students, colleagues and academics alike. I base my success now not on how many good words I write or how many articles I can publish, but how well I have listened and how carefully I can present the information entrusted to me.

## AIS research awards

There are two research award categories: Established Researcher and Emerging Researcher. Our congratulations go to the following members of AIS staff.

The Established Researcher award goes to Rubaiyet Khan. Rubaiyet was the joint author of the second edition of a book entitled *Bangladesh Studies* (first edition 2011). He was the joint editor of, and contributed four chapters to, the collection



*Technology, Sustainability and Managing Development in Developing Countries*. Two conference presentations and one technical report completed his outputs for the year.

The Emerging Researcher award goes to Anna Addison. Under the mentorship of Dr Semisi Taumoepeau, Anna has written studies on the place of tourism, culture



and heritage in the educational curricula of Tonga and Samoa.

An honourable mention goes to Dr Nick Towner, who won the Established Research award last year. He had five articles this year on sustainable surfing tourism development in international journals: the *Journal of Sport and Tourism*; the *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*; *Ocean and Coastal Management*; and the *European Journal of Tourism Research*. Other articles investigated the development of birdwatching (the *Journal of Pacific Studies*) and a star rating system for Tongan tourism accommodation (the *Asia-Pacific Journal of Innovation in Hospitality and Tourism*). He also gave six presentations at conferences in Australia, the USA and New Zealand.

## Awards for presentations

Two members of staff recently gave presentations at conferences, and received awards for the quality of their work.

Erwin Losekoot, Academic Head of Tourism and Hospitality Management, gave a presentation "A New Zealand airport customer experience model" at the 25<sup>th</sup> Council for Hospitality Management Education conference at Ulster University Business

School, Belfast. It was awarded the best theme conference paper.



Alistair Hookings of the Information Technology programme gave a presentation "Experiential learning for improving student engagement in a project management course" (jointly authored by former members of the IT programme) at the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual CITRENZ (Computer and Information Technology Research and Education New Zealand) Conference, in Wellington. It gained him a "highly commended" acknowledgement.





## This type of copying is good

This article explains the importance of, and methods for, keeping backup copies of work.

### Storage media

If you are “of an age”, you may have a recollection of all the devices that have been used for storing computer data (and programs). These started with floppy disks (or “diskettes”). The original ones were 8 inches (200 mm) in diameter, available from the late 1960s. They held up to a whopping 1.2 MB! However, because 8 inches was simply physically too large and 1.2 MB was more than microcomputers at the time needed, they were superseded by 5¼ inch and 3½ inch disks (mini diskette, mini disk, or minifloppy) in the 1980s and 1990s. These could be single-sided or double-sided, and single-density or double-density. So, they ranged in capacity from 360 kB to 1.44 MB. Mechanically incompatible higher-density floppy disks, like the Iomega Zip disk, were introduced in 1994 with 100 MB, but never really caught on. Floppy disks were superseded in the late 1990s by (writable and then rewritable) CDs (700 MB) and later DVDs (4.7 GB). These in turn were superseded by USB drives (thumb drives, flash

drives) in the 2000s. The first commercially available USB drive, by IBM, was launched in December 2000 and had a storage capacity of 8 MB. The capacity of USB drives has steadily increased, and now 1TB drives are available. Compared to floppy disks and CDs/DVDs, USB drives are smaller, faster, have much larger capacity, have no moving parts, are immune to electromagnetic interference (unlike floppy disks), and are unharmed by surface scratches (unlike CDs). These same characteristics are true of external hard drives, which may have capacities ranging from 500 GB to 8 TB.



In short, storage devices have got progressively smaller in size, larger in capacity, more reliable in performance and cheaper in cost. However, the bottom line with all storage devices is that they will all eventually fail, even occasionally hard drives.

### Need for backup

We are all familiar with the student’s excuse “The dog ate my homework!”



Similar, we have probably all had students ask for an extension to an assignment deadline because: “My computer crashed!” “No problem. Just use your backup copy.” “I didn’t make one!”

As researchers, we are no better than our students if we do not make backup copies of important data (background material, questionnaire data, previous draft versions, graphics, etc). To do this, you need to:

- Label files clearly
- Make backup copies regularly
- Make at least one backup copy
- Keep your copies in different places

This article only deals with suitable methods for backing up research material. For larger set-ups, more sophisticated (and expensive) options are available.



8 inch, 5¼ inch and 3½ inch floppy disks



CD, DVD

### Label files clearly

Have you ever had the experience of working on a document, only to realise that you have been working on an old version, and that you already had a newer version, with updates? To avoid this:

- Give your file a clear filename, eg "Chapter 1 Introduction"
- Somehow label which version of the file this is. One way is to label the first draft "mk1" or "version 1". Then , whenever you make any changes (even just adding a comma), label it "mk2", and so on.
- It is also a good idea to put a date in the filename. That way, it is immediately clear how old the version is.

### Make backup copies regularly

How regularly? That depends on how important your documents are, how often you make changes to them, etc.

### Make at least one backup copy

Frankly, the more, the merrier, within reason. Imagine you are going to give a presentation at a conference. You could always save copies of your PowerPoints in different media. While USB drives are perhaps the most popular nowadays, it is no use if two USB drives, both of which contain your PowerPoints, both get wet (some USBs are waterproof; some aren't). CDs and DVDs are waterproof, so that would be an alternative. A clever alternative that we always tell our Applied Management students to do is to email your PowerPoints to yourself. That way, if all else fails,

hopefully the presentation computer can access the email account and download the attached PowerPoints, and you can proceed with the presentation.

A final alternative is to use cloud storage. There are several free cloud services available as an always-online backup location, including Google Drive, Microsoft SkyDrive, Apple iCloud, and DropBox. These services all come with a reasonable capacity for free, and can be upgraded with more capacity for a fee.

In fact, AIS already provides some automatic backup. Firstly, whatever is in your "My Documents" folder is automatically saved in an AIS network server. This means that, if your hard disk crashes, data can be retrieved from that server. Unfortunately, that server cannot be accessed outside AIS. Secondly, data can be saved on Microsoft OneDrive, which is already on your office computers with 1 TB of storage. This can be accessed outside AIS, but needs to be set up by the IT Helpdesk.

Automatic backup is also possible with free downloadable software such as AceBackup ([www.acebackup.com](http://www.acebackup.com)), which backs up the files you choose, as regularly as you choose, to wherever you choose.

### Keep your copies in different places

There is little point in keeping a backup copy of your laptop documents on your iPad, if they both get stolen at the same time. Similarly, there is no point

in having two USB copies of your work, if you keep them together, and leave them both behind.

### Conclusion

The dog may be able to eat your homework, but it can't eat your digital data. While a half-page piece of writing may be easy enough to re-create, if you have lost a whole chapter of a book you are writing or the data of an experiment you have conducted, you have lost a lot.

Some writers recommend a 3-2-1 backup strategy: 3 copies of your data, 2 onsite (eg one in your office, and one at home), and 1 offsite (eg cloud).

If your data is just Word/PowerPoint/Excel files, it may not amount to many GBs, and a simple \$10 USB drive may be adequate. If, however, you have lots of saved graphics, videos, music, etc, then something with more substantial capacity is required. How much is your data worth (to you)?

All storage devices fail eventually. We all accidentally delete files sometimes. We all misplace USB drives sometimes. The important question is whether you are prepared for when that happens.



"We back up our data on sticky notes because sticky notes never crash."

## Conferences

11 – 13 October 2016

Hospitality NZ's Annual Conference and Future Leaders Day Events  
SKYCITY, Auckland  
[www.hospitalitynz.org.nz/events/annual-conference.html](http://www.hospitalitynz.org.nz/events/annual-conference.html)

17 – 19 November 2016

Association for Language Testing and Assessment of Australia and New Zealand (ALTAANZ) conference  
University of Auckland  
[www.altaanz.org/altaanz-conference-auckland-2016.html](http://www.altaanz.org/altaanz-conference-auckland-2016.html)

19 November 2016

ALANZ Symposium 2016  
*Applied Linguistics: Questions for Our Field, Questions for Our Time*  
Massey University, Palmerston North

24 – 26 November 2016

6th International Conference on Languages, Literature and Linguistics (ICLLL 2016)  
Sydney  
[www.iclll.org](http://www.iclll.org)

28 – 29 November 2016

World Business, Finance and Management Conference  
Rendezvous Grand Hotel, Auckland  
[www.newzealandconfo.com](http://www.newzealandconfo.com)

29 November – 1 December 2016

New Zealand Tourism and Hospitality Research Conference (NZTHRC) and the 3rd Halal Marketing and Tourism Research Symposium  
University of Canterbury  
[conferenceteam.co.nz/NZTHRC2016](http://conferenceteam.co.nz/NZTHRC2016)

5 – 7 December 2016

Australian and New Zealand Marketing Academy (ANZMAC) conference  
'Marketing in a post-disciplinary era'  
University of Canterbury  
[www.anzmac.org/conference](http://www.anzmac.org/conference)

5 – 9 December 2016

Australian Statistical Conference 2016  
*Big data; Mining, Analysing, Teaching*  
Hotel Realm, Canberra  
[asc2016.com.au](http://asc2016.com.au)

6 – 8 December 2016

International Conference on Educational Technologies 2016  
RMIT, Melbourne, Australia  
[www.icedutech-conf.org](http://www.icedutech-conf.org)

6 – 9 December 2016

Australian and New Zealand Academy of management (ANZAM) conference  
'Under new management: Innovating for sustainable and just futures'  
Queensland University of Technology (QUT) Business school, Brisbane  
[anzam2016.com](http://anzam2016.com)

29 – 30 December 2016

International conference on entrepreneurship (ICE-16)  
Shangri-La Hotel, Sydney  
[iierd.org](http://iierd.org)

4 - 5 January, 2017

133<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Social Science and Economics (ICSSE)  
International Institute of Engineers and Researchers (IIER)  
Park Regis, North Quay, Brisbane  
[theiier.org/Conference2017/Australia/1/ICSSE](http://theiier.org/Conference2017/Australia/1/ICSSE)

7 – 10 February 2017

27<sup>th</sup> annual Council for Australasian Tourism and Hospitality Education (CAUTHE) conference  
University of Otago  
[cauthe.org/services/conferences](http://cauthe.org/services/conferences)

25 – 26 March 2017

4th International conference on trends in multidisciplinary business & economic research  
(TMBER -2017)  
Novotel Hotel Sydney  
[globalilluminators.org/conferences/tmber-2017-sydney](http://globalilluminators.org/conferences/tmber-2017-sydney)

15 -16 April 2017

Sydney Conference on Interdisciplinary Business & Economics Research (SIBR 2017)

“Advancing Knowledge from Interdisciplinary Perspectives”

Vibe Hotel, Sydney

[sibresearch.org/sibr-sydney-conference-call.html](http://sibresearch.org/sibr-sydney-conference-call.html)

26 – 28 April 2017

Asia Pacific Language for Specific Purposes & Professional Communication Association Conference

Victoria University of Wellington

[www.eiseverywhere.com/ehome/aplspcc2017/440834](http://www.eiseverywhere.com/ehome/aplspcc2017/440834)

1 – 4 July 2017

International Conference on Information Technology and Applications (ICITA 2017)

Hilton Hotel Sydney

[www.icita.org/2017](http://www.icita.org/2017)

19 – 20 July 2017

New Zealand Hotel Industry conference  
The Langham, Auckland

[www.cmnzl.co.nz/nzhic-2016](http://www.cmnzl.co.nz/nzhic-2016)

## AIS to jointly host whale-watching conference

AIS is a collaborative partner in the conference ‘Whales in a Changing Ocean’ to be held in Tonga. Other partners are the Government of Tonga, the Vava'u Environment Protection Association (VEPA), and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment programme (SPREP). SPREP's members are American Samoa, Australia, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, France, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, United Kingdom, United States of America, Vanuatu and Wallis and Futuna.

This major regional conference will be a focus for countries in the region to discuss the status and trends of whales, what emerging techniques and measures are available to secure or enhance their conservation, and how to maximise the economic return available to Pacific island communities from the development and application of best-practice guidelines for whale-watching. Contributions are welcome from researchers, academics, film-makers, artists, writers, operators, regulators and others, as well as the scientists whose contributions will be at the centre of the conference.

The conference was originally going to be held 14 - 17 February 2017. However, great interest was expressed by delegates at the International Union for Conservation of Nature's World Conservation Congress held 1 - 10 September 2016 in Honolulu, Hawaii, attended by President Barack Obama. So the date has been changed to either the last week of March or first week of April 2017. The venue is the Tanoa International Dateline Hotel, Nuku'alofa, Tonga. The registration fee is US\$100.00. Go to the website [www.sprep.org/yearofthewhale](http://www.sprep.org/yearofthewhale) for more details, when they are available (or ask our Tourism staff).





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See us at:

[www.ais.ac.nz](http://www.ais.ac.nz)

We're also on Facebook!

## Research outputs by AIS staff

- Abdelhamid N.**, Abdel Jabbar A., Thabtah F., (2016), Associative classification common research challenges, *Proceedings of the 45<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Parallel Processing Workshops (ICPPW 2016)* (pp. 432-437), IEEEExplore, Philadelphia, USA, 16 – 19 August.
- Kelly, R.** (2016). How does an interpretive phenomenological approach help us to better understand the significance of hospitality within a hospital setting? Presentation at the “Making an impact: Creating constructive conversations” conference. School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, University of Surrey, Guildford, UK, 19 – 22 July.
- Subramaniam, G., Khadri, N.A.M., Maniam, B., and **Ali, E.** (2016). The glass ceiling phenomenon: Does it really affect women’s career advancement in Malaysia?. *Journal of Organizational Culture Communications and Conflict*, 20, pp. 81-89.
- Thabtah F., & **Abdelhamid N.**, (2016) Ranking and grouping website’s features to combat phishing. *Proceedings of the 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Computer Science and Information Technology (CSIT 2016)* (pp. 189-193), IEEEExplore, Amman, Jordan, 13 – 14 July.
- Theresa, Z.** (2016). Postgraduate education in hospitality: Leading the field or misleading the field. Presentation at *Connect@Postgraduate Research Symposium*. AUT, Auckland, New Zealand, 18 August.
- Towner, N.** (2016). The effectiveness of destination websites in promoting linkages between visitors and the community in Tonga. *The Journal of Pacific Studies*, 36(2), 89-106.

## About Auckland Institute of Studies ...

Auckland Institute of Studies is a unique tertiary institution with a distinctive international focus. Since its inception, this developing institute has attracted students and staff from countries around the world and has now developed a number of close relationships with leading educational institutions internationally.

### Our programmes

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Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration  
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Diploma in International Business (Level 6)  
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Diploma in Information Technology (Level 6)  
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Diploma in Hospitality Operations Management (Level 6)  
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The AIS research newsletter (ISSN 2357-2426) aims to establish and foster collegial partnerships in common research interests, through high quality research outputs and sharing research ideas and resources. Correspondence about the newsletter should be sent to Christine Edwards at the above address, or email [christinee@ais.ac.nz](mailto:christinee@ais.ac.nz). The editor is Dr Adam Brown ([adamb@ais.ac.nz](mailto:adamb@ais.ac.nz)).