


Workshop
Taking Charge of Your Career

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Who am I?

- Neuroscience PhD 1999
- On the research track
- Career development
- PostdocTraining



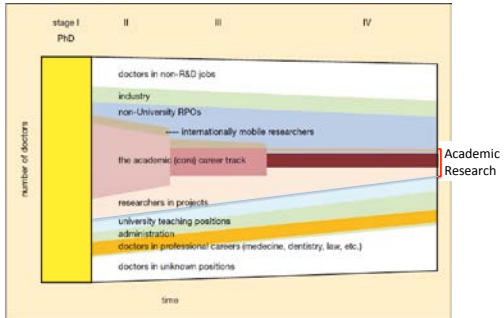
“This year I am a happier person and a more successful researcher”
 Irene, 3rd year postdoc

Workshop Details

- Interactive workshop
- Peer mentoring / networking
- Meet your neighbour
- Moving around
- Parking lot
- Action items

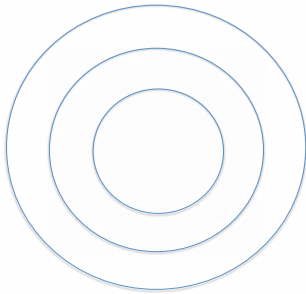
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Where do PhDs go?




Source: European Science Foundation, example Finland

Circles of Influence



The Afternoon

12:30 - 12:40 **Introduction and overview of the day**
 12:40 - 14:10 **Workshop 1 – How to plan your career for success**
 14:10 - 14:20 Leg stretch
 14:20 - 15:20 **Workshop 2 - Aim: How to manage time for higher productivity**
 15:20 - 15:50 Coffee Break
 15:50 - 17:00 **Workshop 3 – How to use your network for professional gain**
 17:00 - Mingle with wine and cheese



Part 1:

What do you really want to do – and why?

Tailor Your Career to Your Strengths

- The old ‘apprentice’ system of academia
- What if you do things differently?
 - Different styles
 - Different interests
 - Different value, talents and motives
- Finding the career path and approach that suits your strengths
- Wrong alignment: risk of burn-out and performing below your abilities

Your Career Anchors

- Developed by Edgar Schein, social psychologist
- Widely used in career training
- Characterized 8 ‘personality types’ with particular competencies, values and motives

Career Anchors

Technical / Functional Competence	Managerial Competence
Autonomy / Independence	Security / Stability
Entrepreneurial Creativity	Service / Dedication to a Cause
Pure Challenge	Lifestyle

- Becomes identifiable after several years at work
- Excellent way to describe your motives and drivers for your career
- If in doubt about anchor – imagine you were faced with a career choice, could you give up the elements in this anchor?

Exercise: Identify Your Predominant Career Anchor

- What & How (p.3)
 - Read through descriptions and score importance for you between 0-5 (5 = highest importance)
 - Consider all elements of each anchor. If one element is less important this should be reflected in your score for the anchor
 - When scoring, think of your perfect career, not necessarily the job you are in at the moment
 - If you have 2 or more highest scoring anchor, rank them to pick your predominant anchor
- Why
 - Guidance for how you will design your career path

Interpretation: Career Anchors

- Your anchor represents competence, motives and values that you would not give up when face with a career decision
- Anchors should be viewed as guidelines to identify priorities, not absolute career types
- The goal is self-insight, not fitting into a category

Anchors and What You would Not Give Up

Technical / Functional Competence	Content knowledge
Managerial Competence	Managerial responsibility
Autonomy / Independence	Define your work in your own way
Security / Stability	Sense you have stabilized your career
Entrepreneurial Creativity	Create your own enterprise
Service / Dedication to a Cause	Achieve something of value for the greater good
Pure Challenge	Find solutions to difficult problems
Lifestyle	Work-life balance



Part 2

Your Career Plan

“Planning is bringing the future into the present so you can do something about it.”

Alan Lakein

Why planning?

- **Misconception:** you can't plan an Academic career
- "like strategizing a lightning strike"

- Why we are not taught to plan
- No guarantees
- How to maximize your chances of being 'hit'




Photo: Nate Kay

The Career Destination Finder (p.5)

- **Helps you make your career goals more specific**
- **Makes sure you are in the right position for opportunities**
- **Helps you identify your non-negotiables**

Common Questions / Comments:

- "But I don't know where I want to be in 10 years time"
- "I know what I want but I'm just not getting there due to failed grant / job applications"

Define the Specifics of Your Career Destination

Not necessary to fill out starting from top

- Institute/company
 - The more specific you are the more likely it will happen (shortlist of employers)
- Location
 - Essential for creating / maintaining networks
- Position and/or salary level
 - Promotions, what kind of job, financial goals

Define the Specifics of Your Career Destination

- Group size
 - How do you want to work?
- Promotion Opportunities
 - Important or not?
- Working Conditions
 - Contract conditions / promotion opportunities / training etc.
- Output / Track Record (be specific, find out goal posts)

Define the Specifics of Your Career Destination

- Mentoring / teaching (teaching load?)
- Administration (optimise or minimize?)
- Public Impact (Important? How do you want to contribute?)
- Research / Work Environment (what are your requirements: infrastructure, colleagues, reputation)
- Niche of Expertise (your research niche or other)

Define the Specifics of Your Career Destination

- Your Life – plans and non-negotiables
- “Why should I consider non-career related aspects for my career destinations?”
 - Family
 - Financial (milestones?)
 - Recreational
 - Self
 - Health and wellbeing
 - Community / Environment

Exercise: Identify Your Career Destinations

- What & How (p. 5)
 - Fill in all aspects you know / want in the career destination finder
 - Mark areas where you have to do more research
 - Indicate areas not of importance to you
 - Discuss your results with your neighbour
 - Decide on career destination that is best developed for next exercise
- Why
 - Know your broad direction, good to follow gut feeling

Part 3

Getting to Your Career Destination – Goals that Work

My goal is simple. It is a complete understanding of the universe, why it is as it is and why it exists at all.

Stephen Hawking

S.M.A.R.T.E.R. Goals

- Specific
- Measurable
- Action-oriented
- Reasoned and realistic
- Time-bound
- Exciting and Enjoyable
- Resourced

S.M.A.R.T.E.R. Goals

Specific

- What kind of goal is it?
 - Big picture
 - Milestone goals
 - Mini-goals

Measurable

- Easy measures
- Rating
- Reward

S.M.A.R.T.E.R. Goals

Reasoned and Realistic

- Realistic in relation to your motivation, aims, abilities and talents


Time-bound

- Always work backwards for setting your timing!
- Develop new habits
- Learn new skill (find out how long it takes)

S.M.A.R.T.E.R. Goals

Exciting and enjoyable

- Essential to you
- Essential to others
- Nice-to-have



A big, hairy, audacious goal

Resourced

- Financial backing
- Time
- Support
- Sufficient information

Exercise: How to Plan out Your Career Destination

- What & How (p. 6-7)
 1. Create a mind map of your most developed destination and the milestone to reach it
 2. Pick 1 milestone goal and run through SMARTER process
- Why
 - This planning and goal setting process is the key to help you take charge of your career destination


Do You Really Want to Do This?

- Am I really committed to undertaking the actions I have prepared?
- Am I committed to the timeframe?
- Am I convinced that this is really what I want?
- Am I excited about the outcomes?
- Am I prepared / able to allocate the resources required to meet each goal?
- Am I confident I can reach each goal?
- Am I actually going to do it?

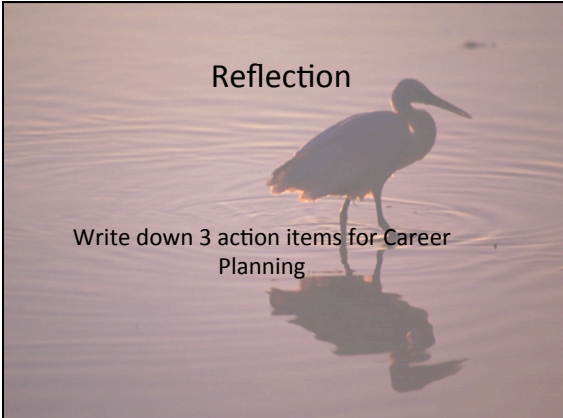
Important: If answer is NO to any of these questions revisit mind-map and readjust goal

Planning Process Excellent For

- Career planning
- Project planning (for grants etc.)
- Personal goals
- And don't forget to think big!



Reflection



Write down 3 action items for Career Planning



Workshop 2:

How to manage time for higher productivity

“How do you eat an elephant?
One bite at a time”

Exercise: *Identify Your Productivity / Time Management Challenges*

- **What & How**
 - Write down your 3 biggest challenges you have with time management and productivity
 - Discuss your results with your neighbour
 - Group collects most common challenges
- **Why**
 - Identify common challenges and evaluate the following strategies to help solve them

Time Management Strategies

- **Time:**
 - Everyone gets exactly 24h per day, no more, no less (Dodd and Sundheim, 2005)
- **Work smarter, rather than harder**
- **Pick the tools and strategies that work best for you**

Working smarter rather than harder

- **Concepts**
 - Goals
 - Prioritise and Plan
 - Work with your strengths and weaknesses
- **Time management tools**
 - Time logs
 - Optimize work flow (David Allen)
 - Make a manual (Screenflow / Camtasia)
 - How to supercharge your writing

Check where all your time is going

- **Create a time log – 1 week, 3x, log regularly (every time you change activity)**
- **Analyse:**
 - Types of work
 - Sweet spots / your natural rhythms
 - Time bandits
- **Re-order**
 - Can you batch activities?
 - Creative time is gold
 - Manage disruptions

Goals

- **Put goals in writing - always**
- **Use SMARTER goals**
 - Specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, time-bound, exciting and resourced
- **Goal too big? Cut it down**
 - Example ‘ write paper’
 - Ideally you want mini goals to be done in one session

Planning

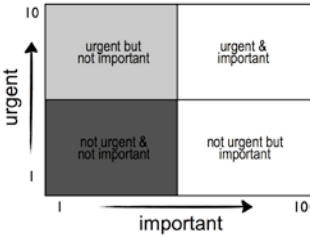
- Plan your day the night before
 - saves time by reducing warm-up period
 - removes stress (out of your head onto paper)
- Plan backwards
 - Example paper submission to help fellowship application
 - Pick goals, identify all mini-goals, place on appropriate timeline
- How do you plan when there is no plan?

Lack of Self-Discipline?

- Ask yourself - why am I procrastinating?
 - Goal too big
 - Some things take more energy than others – chose your time wisely
- Set a timer
- Motivation myth: you have to be motivated to act
 - Truth: act first, motivation will build

Prioritizing

- Important vs. urgent



Making lists

- 3 things on your list you have to do today – one of them has to advance your career.
 - Aim: to do the most important items on your list, not the largest number of items
- 3 lists (Jim Harris, productivity coach)
 - Stop-doing list
 - Continue-doing list
 - Start-doing list

What to do with 'stuff'



From Flickr: "My desktop, I really need to clean it (at least one side)..."

Dealing with emails / papers and stuff

- Turning 'stuff' into actions
- Decision tree (David Allen)
 - Example email
 - Do I need to do something about it?
 - No: trash or file as reference
 - Yes:
 - » Can I do it in 2 minutes?
 - Yes: do it
 - No: move email into to-do folder and schedule time to do it

How to get things done (David Allen)

- ‘Overwhelm’ often caused by trying to keep too many things in your head

The art of stress-free productivity

- Great for parallel projects
 - Tickler files – making sure it’s there, but not in your head
 - Time to think and plan
 - Optimising your workflow (e.g by task)

How to deal with interruptions

- Interruptions – you are the expert, so you get asked to help a lot!
- Set times, sign on door
- Create a manual – the fast way:
 - Camtasia (Pc/Mac) or Screenflow (Mac)
 - Teaching software (technical, adobe etc.) / lab procedures / admin tasks

Productive writing habits
(Maria Gardiner & Hugh Kearns, Thinkwell)

Unhelpful ideas about writing: 3 myths

1. Myth: I need to be ready to write “I just need to read one more paper” Truth: you need to start writing
2. Myth: I need to be in the mood to write. Truth: action creates motivation, not the other way round
3. Myth: I’ll get it all clear in my head. Truth: Writing is a creative process, it clarifies your thinking

Writing is your No 1 priority

- Cut down writing goals
- Snack writing, not Binge writing
- Regular sessions – 2 ‘Golden Hours’
- Schedule it, place it in your best time, then stick with it

“The art of writing is the art of applying the seat of the pants to the seat of the chair.” Mary Heaton Vorse

Questions about productivity and time management?

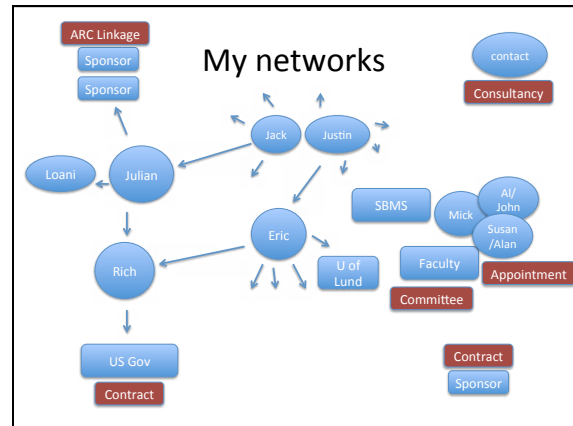
Reflection: *Identify which strategy will work with which of your challenges*

- What & How
 - Review your notes
 - Pick the top 3 that affect your productivity the most
 - Discuss your results with your neighbour
- Why
 - Identify the strategies that will actually make a change



Workshop 3:

How to use your network for professional gain



Networking Truth 1

- Difference between a mentor and a network contact – there is none!
 - ‘godparent’ idea
 - mentoring team
 - peer mentoring



Networking Truth 2

- The ideal network shape
 - “If you want new ideas, don’t ask your friends” (‘small town syndrome’)
 - Weak, random ties are a good for new ideas and jobs

Networking Truth 3

- People do business / research with people they know, like and trust

➔ For exploring funding options or employment no-one else can do the networking for you

Exercise: Analyse your existing network

- What & How
 - Separate your existing network contacts in 3 groups
 - Technical
 - Career
 - peer
 - Use 1 sheet per career choice
- Why
 - Identify gaps / room for improvement in your current network

Start with a Strategy

- What kind of contacts would you like to create?
- Create measurable goal: e.g 1 new person per week
- Where are they?
 - Seminars, conferences, farewell parties, networking events, lunch room, girls' loos
- 'Work' alone or together
- Get involved: automatic networking

Networking essentials

- Your business card – asking and giving out cards
- University business card vs. your own design
- Post meeting
 - Internal: friendly face
 - External: Email or LinkedIn

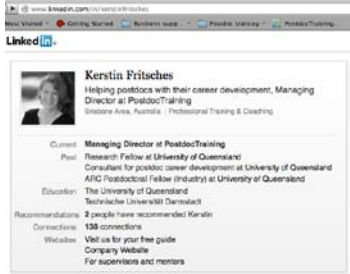
Your online presence

How people find you:

1. Lund University page – pros/cons
2. LinkedIn
 - Good customizing options
 - Used within and outside academia
 - Good for 'light touch' follow up
 - Stays with you when changing employers
3. Publication records Mendeley / Academia.edu / Research Gate / Google scholar citations
4. Your own website

LinkedIn Basics

- Free version usually sufficient
- Same photo for all your official online presence
- Description is how people find you
- Connections allow others to find you
- Customize your LinkedIn url (and add to email signature)
- Summary for many potential readers in mind: your online CV
- Add other websites
- Blogs, talks, reading list, references etc. – good customizing options



Creating a sustainable network


- Weak links are ok
- What can I do for my contacts? How can I help?
- Stay in touch options: Christmas, publications, good news
- Senior people want to help and give back

Exercise: Partner and group brainstorm – how to expand existing network

- What & How
 - With your neighbour discuss your gaps in your networks and exchange ideas of how to fill/improve them
 - Be specific: ideas for conference next month, how you would meet people at the next seminar etc.
 - Share results with group
- Why
 - Ideal question for group mentoring

Networking freaking you out?

- Which bit worries me?
 - Big room, lots of people: where do I start?
 - What I learned from my dog Sammy



Networking freaking you out?

- Which bit worries me? Part II
 - Food and drink
 - What do I say?
 - What do I say next?
 - How do I present myself?
 - Help, I got stuck with the most boring person in the room!

Networking for Introverts

- Introverts:
 - inner world of ideas
 - Need to recharge away from people
- Concentrate on one-on-one
- Take time to re-energize away from people

Learn about other personality types

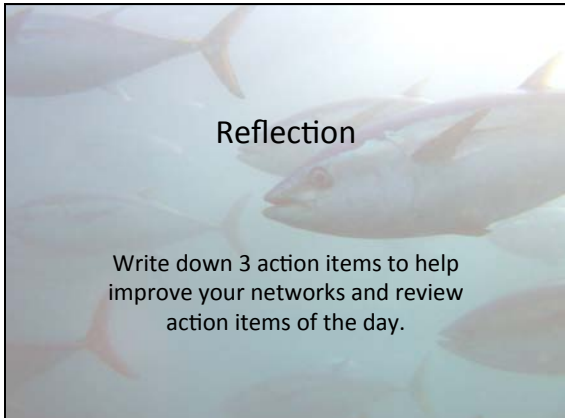


- Why
 - Postdocs need support!
 - Finding the best approach for me
 - “if I’d only known”
 - Helping postdocs with their careers
- What
 - Career coaching and mentoring focussed on early career researchers
 - Online / One-on-one mentoring / Workshops
- How
 - talk to me today or email me kerstin@postdoctraining.com



Thank You!

You can contact me at
kerstin@postdoctraining.com
www.postdoctraining.com



Reflection

Write down 3 action items to help improve your networks and review action items of the day.