

Prosper. Unlocking postdoc
career potential



Postdoc career planning and the Entrepreneurial Mindset

A workbook for Postdocs

Created by



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WELCOME

Introduction to this Workbook

Welcome to this Workbook which is designed to introduce the concept of the entrepreneurial mindset and demonstrate its relevance to Postdoctoral researchers.

The Workbook includes learning materials that were presented during 3 online Workshops, delivered for the benefit of Postdocs at the University of Liverpool, in November & December 2021 and January 2022. These events were interactive and the participants co-created the findings and outcomes which have been integrated into this Workbook.

The Workbook can be used as a reminder to the Workshop participants. However, you don't need to have attended the Workshop to use this Workbook.

The Workbook includes a comparison between the entrepreneurial mindset and the 12 domains of the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) developed by Vitae, a non-profit programme, part of the Careers Research & Advisory Centre (CRAC) Ltd in collaboration with UK Higher Education Institutions.

Introduction to Prosper

Prosper is a new approach to career development that is led by the University of Liverpool, working alongside Lancaster University and the University of Manchester.

The ultimate goal of Prosper is to open up the huge talent pool that exists within the Postdoctoral research community, to the benefit of Postdocs themselves, Principal Investigators, employers and the wider UK economy.

Unlocking Postdocs' expertise and experience is seen as vital as the UK moves into a successful post COVID-19 world. More than ever, there's a need to support Postdocs in a way that hasn't been done before. The unique ability to achieve this lies in Prosper's 3 pillars: co-creation with employers, democratisation of access and recognition of the pivotal role of Principal Investigators in Postdoc career development.

Prosper is funded by the UK Research and Innovation's (UKRI) Research England Development (RED) fund.

Access the Prosper webpage

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/researcher/prosper/>

Introduction to Paul Coyle

Paul Coyle designed and delivered the mindset Workshop and is the author of this Workbook. He is the Director of the Entrepreneurial Mindset Network which he founded in 2017.

Paul is known as an international expert in the entrepreneurial mindset, leadership and organisational transformation. He is an alumnus of the Saïd Business School at the University of Oxford and a member of the Oxford Entrepreneurs Network.

He has written papers for research journals, authored reports of national projects and reviews, been interviewed for specialist publications and written numerous organisational strategies, policies and internal reports.

From 1995-2013, Paul enjoyed a successful career in Higher Education, including a decade working at executive level. From 2013-2017, he worked as a self-employed innovation consultant supporting Higher Education Institutions around the globe to become more entrepreneurial.

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Introduction to the Entrepreneurial Mindset Network

The Entrepreneurial Mindset Network is an international organisation, with members in 96 countries across the 5 continents of Africa, America, Asia, Australia and Europe.

The Network's Vision is of a world in which everyone benefits from the mindset, not just entrepreneurs. The mindset is judged to be relevant to people in all walks of life, including employees in the private, public and not for profit sectors.

The Mission of the Network is to empower people to bring about positive change in their own lives, their organisation and in the world.

Membership of the Network is free and offers exclusive benefits including access to a regular online eZINE and invites to interactive xCHANGE webinars.

Members of the Network work for many types of organisations, including startups and corporates, and in a diverse range of industries e.g. business, education and healthcare.

Access the Entrepreneurial Mindset Network's website

<https://www.entrepreneurial-mindset.network>

“My vision is a world in which everyone benefits from the entrepreneurial mindset, not just entrepreneurs.”

Paul Coyle



MINDSET

Can anyone have an entrepreneurial mindset?

When we first think about the entrepreneurial mindset, of course we think about entrepreneurs. You might think I am not an entrepreneur, and I have no plans to become one, so therefore the mindset isn't relevant to me - but you would be wrong. Everyone can benefit from having an entrepreneurial mindset

It is true that the mindset can help you if you want to plan, start and scale up a business. However, it would be wrong to assume that only people who run a business can benefit from having an entrepreneurial mindset.

Entrepreneurs enjoy success in life because of their behaviours i.e. the way they think and act. Anyone can learn to develop these behaviours, put them into practice and use them to achieve their goals in life and in their career. As well as entrepreneurship, the mindset supports employment in the public, private and not for profit sectors.

In Higher Education, the mindset is useful to students, academics, and researchers from every academic discipline and to professional support staff, managers and leaders at all levels of a Higher Education Institution.

What are the 7 essential entrepreneurial behaviours?

This Workbook aims to help you to identify and adopt the behaviours that make entrepreneurs successful. First we provide a practical definition of the mindset which can be applied in a variety of work sectors and be adapted to a wide range of different personal circumstances. The definition uses a mnemonic of the word MINDSET.

The mnemonic was devised through a systematic analysis of published research and reflections on professional practice. It offers an easy to understand, common sense and practical definition.

Each letter of the word MINDSET corresponds to 1 of 7 essential entrepreneurial behaviours e.g. **M** stands for **Meet** real needs.

The Workbook will introduce you to each of the 7 essential entrepreneurial behaviours and offer short exercises to help you to understand the mindset. You are encouraged to think about how you can begin to use the mindset in your everyday life and current role, and to consider how it can help you to take a proactive approach to reviewing and planning your career, including your career options within or beyond Higher Education.

Interview with Fiona McBride

In this short interview, Fiona McBride explains her role in the Prosper Team and her thoughts on the entrepreneurial mindset.

What is your role in the Prosper Team?

I am part of the Prosper team based at the University of Liverpool. My role as a research staff developer is unique and engaging because of its constant focus on meeting the needs of the diverse range of people with whom *Prosper* works.

What is Prosper trying to achieve?

Prosper is a new approach to career development which provides resources designed to help Postdocs to thrive in multiple career pathways.

Our development resources include case studies from former Postdocs and employers, self-reflection and diagnostic tools and more, and these are all available on the Prosper Portal.

Access the Proposer Portal

<https://prosper.liverpool.ac.uk/>

Why do Postdocs need to have an entrepreneurial mindset?

I think, for the most part, Postdocs do have an entrepreneurial mindset but perhaps don't realise it. Having an entrepreneurial mindset (and having clarity on what this entails) will help Postdocs to spot opportunities to use and develop their skills, both in their current role and beyond.

I think by being clear that they have a mindset which is open to change, by innovating in their day-to-day roles, assessing and taking risks, and ultimately producing results, Postdocs can enhance their confidence.

What did you get out of the mindset Workshop?

I got a much clearer understanding of what an entrepreneur is (and is not). I also gained an appreciation that an entrepreneurial mindset is something useful to have whatever your role, you don't have to be setting up your own business (or even wish to) for it to be beneficial to you.

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“Having an entrepreneurial mindset as a Postdoc (and having clarity on what this entails) will help Postdocs to spot opportunities to use and develop their skills, both in their current role and beyond.”

Fiona McBride



MINDSET

Meet real needs

Behaving like a successful entrepreneur

In this Workbook we are going to explore 7 essential entrepreneurial behaviours. The first behaviour is [M] Meet real needs.

Successful entrepreneurs are the ones who meet a real need. They provide a product or service that people want to use and are also prepared to pay for.

Conversely, the unsuccessful entrepreneurs are the ones who believed they had a really great idea, who invested time and money in developing that idea, then launched their business, either physically or online, and only at that late stage discovered that people were not interested in what they were offering.

We can draw some useful lessons from the experiences of successful and unsuccessful entrepreneurs. We can ask ourselves "Am I meeting a real need?" In addition, we can ask ourselves what evidence we are using to answer that question.

How well do you know people and do you really understand their needs? How could you gather feedback from people so that you could be confident that you really understand how you can help them?

Do you meet real needs?

This essential entrepreneurial behaviour is relevant to Postdocs, the research they are undertake and their career planning.

Throughout this Workbook, we will offer you short exercises to help you to think about your own entrepreneurial behaviours.

Exercise: Let's start with the following question: "Whose needs am I trying to meet?" Choose as many options as you like from the following list:

- My own
- My colleagues
- My family/friends
- My boss/organisation
- My town/city
- My region/country
- The world
- My academic discipline/research field

Spend a few moments considering each of the options. It's also worth making a few notes of your thoughts and responses. Which needs are most important to you? What evidence do you have that you really meet that need? What actions could you take to improve? Are there any needs which you are neglecting and are worthy of more of your attention?

Finding synergy between your needs and the need of others

During the Workshops that took place in 2021 and 2022, the participants also considered whose needs they were trying to meet in their roles as Postdoc researchers. Do you agree with any of their following responses?

Some people were clear how their current role met their own professional needs and supported their longer term career aspirations. Others judged that they were less certain about their career path and that they needed to spend more time considering their career options.

Some people were very clear about how their research activities aligned with the needs of their city and the region. People who were clear about these synergies reported feeling high levels of motivation.

For some, it was obvious how their research is contributing to the academic field and has a potential to have an impact on many people not just in their own country but also around the world.

There can be conflicts e.g. between your own needs and those of your colleagues, your boss or the organisation. Ideally, all the levels in the opposite list will be in harmony with each other.

Linda D'Amore

Linda D'Amore is a Post Doctoral Researcher and the Business Development Manager at the Centre for Genomic Research, in the Liverpool Shared Facility at the University of Liverpool. Linda will be leaving academia in mid 2022 to join the Third Wave Analytics team to implement their Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS)

Linda is a plant biotechnologist and molecular biologist. In her Post-doctoral research she collaborated with national and international companies for the development of instrumental & bioinformatic pipelines to accelerate commercial applications of synthetic biology and metagenomics approaches.

Linda is committed to helping people around her and meeting real needs in the world. She says "We are not an island but we are interconnected. We should understand how our actions and words will impact the community in which we live and also people who are geographically far from us. We should keep this perspective in mind when we are performing our jobs and accept the challenge of getting involved."

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"We should understand how our actions and words will impact the community in which we live."

Linda D'Amore



MINDSET

Innovate

Enablers of Innovation

Our second essential entrepreneurial behaviour is [I] Innovate. You can learn to innovate like an entrepreneur. Successful entrepreneurs use innovation to create a range of solutions that will meet real needs.

Innovation brings with it the idea of significant change or disruption, brought about by individuals, teams or organisations who find new ways to solve significant problems. Innovation is a process that can be studied, understood, practiced and used to generate new ideas, products and services.

An organisational culture where everybody agrees, where there is pressure to conform to organisational norms, will kill off creativity and innovation. Creativity thrives in an environment where there is a diversity of people and ideas. Difference can be a creative tension.

This is why organisations who want to be more innovative need to have strategies and policies that ensure diversity in the workforce, and that provide equal opportunities for people to be included, to participate, to have their voice heard, to make their contribution and to be rewarded.

How can you be more innovative?

Exercise: You can ask yourself 3 useful questions to help you to consider how you could be more innovative. For example:

Q1 Are you using innovation to help you to find better solutions that will meet real needs?

Q2 Do you involve a diverse range of people in your work and seek out alternative points of view?

Q3 Where is the challenge to your plans coming from? Who can you rely on to offer you critical feedback?

In the Workshops participants considered the following 4th question:

Q4 How can your organisation help you to be more innovative?

Before you read any further, consider Q4 for a moment or two and make a note of your answers.

When you are finished you can compare your answers with the ideas and suggestions shared by the Workshop participants which are shown in the next column.

How your organisation can help

The responses made by participants can be grouped into 5 themes:

1 Help Postdocs to meet new people

- More large social areas for staff.
- More diversity.
- Working with business experts to develop ideas.

2 Help cross-disciplinary conversations

- Opportunities to explore potential collaborations across disciplines.
- Make it easier for cross-disciplinary work e.g. a dashboard for ongoing projects.

3 Provide opportunities for feedback

- Create an internal system for providing/seeking feedback.
- Encourage the process of giving and receiving feedback more regularly.
- Give advice about how to turn an idea into money.

4 Encourage time for thinking

- Time reserved for "free thinking".
- By having brainstorm sessions with the team new business ideas appear.
- More opportunities to reflect on good and poor practices.

5 Update ways of working

- Change the way the organisation operates by redefining roles and responsibilities for working remotely including use of available technologies and tools.

Zohra Butt

Zohra Butt is an experienced, Postdoctoral research scientist with a PhD in 'Cellular and Molecular Physiology - Mesothelioma Research' from the University of Liverpool. She has a first class honours degree from the University of Manchester in BSc Physiology with Industrial Experience, and a Master's Degree from the University of Liverpool in Biomedical Sciences and Translational Medicine.

Zohra is passionate about equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). She believes that EDI is vital because it means that people with a greater range of views and experiences will have the opportunity to contribute to the innovation process.

Zohra says that "Innovation is the opportunity to contribute to society through ideas. Good ideas can come from anyone, so it is essential that we embrace diversity in the innovation space and support Black, Asian, minority ethnic and disabled innovators to access opportunities from which they may have been excluded from in the past."

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"Innovation is the opportunity to contribute to society through ideas."

Zohra Butt



MINDSET

Never act unethically

Entrepreneurial values

The third essential entrepreneurial behaviour is **[N] Never act unethically.**

Despite the fact that there are numerous excellent entrepreneurial role models, not everybody agrees that it is a good idea to try to become more entrepreneurial.

The positive or negative value placed on entrepreneurship varies from country to country. In some cultures, entrepreneurs are seen as champions of change and innovation. In others, entrepreneurs are regarded as gangsters and thieves.

Some people equate an entrepreneur's focus on money with greed. They suspect that entrepreneurs may often be willing to behave unethically in order to achieve their wealth.

There is a suspicion that money, large amounts of money, inevitably corrupts. Entrepreneurs, therefore, can be seen as selfish, as valuing themselves above others, and only able to achieve their financial success at the expense of the wider society.

Ethical behaviour is essential

The definition of the mindset created by the Entrepreneurial Mindset Network acknowledges that these negative perceptions of entrepreneurs exist. The entrepreneurial mindset, as defined in the MINDSET mnemonic, therefore, explicitly rejects unethical practices.

The mindset advocates ethical behaviours including:

- Be honest and make an effort to be ethical.
- Be inclusive, empower and don't discriminate.
- Comply with the law e.g. health and safety
- Stand up for what is right.
- Challenge, don't condone, unethical behaviour.

It is probably easy for a Postdoc to see why ethics are important. There are many obvious ethical considerations involved in the planning and conduct of research. Ethical behaviour, therefore, can be seen as an essential element of professional conduct in research and in actual fact is relevant to every career not just those in research or Higher Education.

Everyday ethical choices

There is no shortage of ethical questions that people face. There are choices and decisions to be made every day. Ethical behaviour is not a consideration of how other people behave. It is about your own behaviour and consideration of the rules that apply to all of us.

We can learn to put the ethical behaviours of entrepreneurs into practice. We can comply with the law, regulations and codes of practice. We can consider how our behaviours impact on others.

Exercise: How do you know which of your actions are ethical and which ones might be considered unethical? How can you be sure what is acceptable or unacceptable practice? How do you know when you have crossed the line?

You cannot allow yourself to behave unethically just because other people do. You cannot fall in line with a culture of poor ethical behaviours. You have to find a way to challenge unethical practices. Perhaps this means that you have to take on the responsibility of being a role model for good practice in ethical behaviour.

Hellen Parra Flórez

Hellen Parra Flórez is the Founder and Director of Code-Switch Consultants and a former Research Staff Developer for the Prosper Project. She is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, a PRINCE2 Agile Practitioner and has a Masters of Laws (LLM) and a Bachelor of Laws (LLB) from the University of Manchester.

Hellen says "Every time we engage in a consultancy project with a client there are three things we always keep in mind: the interest of the client, transparency and professionalism. We only deliver projects that are in the best interest of the client, we only engage in projects that we have the required skills and experience to deliver and we always treat client's information as confidential. If you fail to do any of these, you are not being honest with the client and you will lose their trust. You can only run a successful business if people trust you."

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"You can only run a successful business if people trust you."

Hellen Parra Flórez



MINDSET

Dare to take risks

Are you a risk taker?

The fourth essential entrepreneurial behaviour is **[D] Dare to take risks**.

What could be more entrepreneurial than taking risks? Entrepreneurs take calculated risks and they avoid reckless behaviour.

It would be wrong to assume that only entrepreneurs take risks. We may not immediately think of ourselves as risk takers given that we are not entrepreneurs, gamblers or sky divers.

However, the majority of people have grown up and developed a tacit understanding of how to weigh up risks as part of their decision making. We know how to cross the road, drive a car or swim. We might have applied for a new job, moved to a different city, got married, had kids or decided to get divorced. We have secured a loan, applied for a mortgage or taken out insurance. We have said what we really think, disagreed with a boss or stood up to a bully. We are in fact no strangers to risks and we manage them in our day to day lives.

The most important point is that when we take a calculated risk it gives us access to an opportunity that otherwise would not be available. Therefore, risk taking is an essential entrepreneurial behaviour.

The MINDSET Profile Tool

It is not the case that you either have the mindset or you don't, that you are either born with it or not. Each person can develop the strength of their entrepreneurial mindset over time and improve the way they think and act like an entrepreneur.

Everybody can go on an entrepreneurial journey. All of us can benefit from learning how to integrate risk taking into our jobs in a sensible and considered manner. Nothing ventured, nothing gained!

You can gain invaluable feedback about your ability to take risks by using the online MINDSET Profile Tool, provided by the Entrepreneurial Mindset Network. As you answer a series of short questions, you will see immediate feedback.

You don't have to register any personal details and only you will have access to your personal feedback.

You will receive immediate on screen feedback and be able to note down some brief advice about how to improve your risk taking in the future. How will you use the feedback to improve your risk taking?

Use the MINDSET Profile Tool
<https://forms.gle/xjS5bSyZsQxn5oFK6>

Eamon Dubaissi

In this short interview, Eamon Dubaissi explains his role in the Prosper Team and his approach to risk taking.

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What is your role in the Proposer Team?

I am a Research Staff Developer for Prosper. I commission, design and lead development sessions and facilitate interactions between Postdocs and employer partners. I also liaise directly with Postdocs in formal and informal settings.

Would you say risk taking is part of your role?

It was certainly a risk for me to take the role, moving away from research and all that I had been doing for the previous 15 years. Each session we run has an element of risk as everything we are doing is new and so quite experimental. I take risks when leading events, having to deal with unforeseen circumstances, include everyone and manage the overall flow of the session. There is a risk that things might not go to plan with each live event that we run.

Over time, how have you developed your ability to take risks?

Experience certainly helps. But I guess being as prepared as possible and relying on others, or delegating to others, helps to mitigate and spread the risk. I have also seen that even though some elements may be risky, there are not usually huge stakes and so perhaps the scale of the risk is important to consider beforehand. Basing decisions on knowledge/evidence certainly helps me to feel more confident in taking risks, as does a faith in my own ability which has increased over time with more exposure and experience.

Why is it important for postdocs to take risks?

I believe Postdocs do take risks all the time, but perhaps don't see it in that way. Research is inherently risky, in terms of both the research project and the career pathway. I think it is important for Postdocs to take more risks, particularly when reaching out to others and opening themselves up to the world beyond academia. One thing that stuck with me from the entrepreneurial mindset Workshop is that you have to dare to take risks in order to see opportunities. However, these risks can be sensible and well thought out. If Postdocs could apply some of the risks they take with their research to other aspects of themselves, many more opportunities would open up for them.

“Basing decisions on knowledge/evidence certainly helps me to feel more confident in taking risk.”

Eamon Dubaissi



MINDSET Sell

Selling your ideas

The fifth essential entrepreneurial behaviour is [S] Sell.

Entrepreneurs sell, they convince us to buy their products and services, and in doing so possibly to change our behaviour or habits.

Selling is about persuading people to engage in change. So it is also connected to the idea of leadership, establishing a clear vision that motivates people and explaining how they can play their part.

We tend to, mistakenly, think of entrepreneurs as lone individuals who have some magic sauce that enables them to be successful. In reality, as in so many aspects of life, individuals are successful because of teamwork and support from colleagues, family and friends.

Another important point is that there is a limit to what we can achieve as individuals. To maximise our success and our impact we need to convince others to collaborate with us and build partnerships where each individual can play to their own strengths. The outcome is then much more than the sum of the individual parts.

Therefore, like an entrepreneur, we need to know how to sell our ideas, to communicate, to win people over, to help them to see and agree with our point of view. At the same time we must be prepared to listen and be open to other points of view.

How can you convince other people?

Exercise: How would you convince a member of the general public about the importance of your research?

Here are some examples of suggestions from the Workshops:

- Make sure it is relevant to the public, their experiences and the things that matter to them.
- Explain the big picture. What it means to society as a whole.
- Describe what would be missing without the research.
- Don't get bogged down in details.
- Use multimedia.
- Be passionate.
- Use emotive and passionate speech, keeping facts simple and relating the output to people's lives.
- Explain in simple terms what we do then show them how we do.
- Use a well-known story to tell about similar research that had been done in the past.
- Consider the level of interest of the people in the audience; are they interested/critical/neutral?
- Be open. Talk with people rather than lecture them.
- Highlight human impact, financial cost. Link your research to these questions using plain language.
- Explain the benefits to their everyday lives and the dangers of not taking advantage of the opportunity (stagnating economy, climate change, etc.).

Egidijus Kukstas

Egidijus Kukstas graduated with a MSc degree in Physics with Astrophysics from the University of Glasgow in 2016. In 2020, Egidijus was awarded his PhD from Liverpool John Moores University. His thesis focussed on galaxy evolution in dense environments; specifically, how environmental processes can 'quench' star formation in satellite galaxies.

Egidijus joined the QUASAR Group as a LIV.DAT fellow in data intensive science in September of 2020. LIV.DAT is the Liverpool Big Data Science Centre for Doctoral Training, a hub for training students in managing, analysing and interpreting large, complex datasets and high rates of data flow.

Egidijus's main role is to carry out R&D in data analysis, machine learning, and AI connected to accelerator science done in the group. He works closely with students in the LIV.DAT programme and in the wider group.

Egidijus says "To ordinary people, even those with a university degree, research can seem this nebulous thing that is done at universities, and some of the research questions can seem completely irrelevant to their everyday lives.

Many will agree with the idea that it is worth investing in research for the sole purpose of advancing our understanding, but many would also be of the opinion that the money is better spent on infrastructure, NHS, etc.

An important part of 'selling' the benefits of scientific research to the public is making it relatable to everyday lives. Every major advance in the quality of life started with (or built upon) blue sky research. When linear algebra or general relativity were worked on, nobody envisaged that they would be essential in providing us with the technology we have today."

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“An important part of ‘selling’ the benefits of scientific research to the public is making it relatable to everyday lives.”

Egidijus Kukstas



MINDSET

Exercise for productivity

The work/life balance

Our sixth essential entrepreneurial behaviour is [E] Exercise for productivity.

In simple terms this is about how do we get everything done in the time that is available. Most people at work feel under pressure because there is more work to be done than the time available. And it is unlikely that there will be less work to do in the future!

We need to make sure that we are making smart use of the resources that are available to us. However, this won't just happen. We have to work at it. It's like going to the gym to get fit. We have to exercise, put the effort in, regularly reviewing, evaluating and trying to improve our work methods.

For example, when we have a lot of different tasks to complete we often try to multitask, even though research has shown that the human brain is just not configured this way and that we are more efficient and more satisfied when we concentrate on one task at a time.

Sometimes we work long hours to get things done. This may be necessary in the short term but it isn't a sensible long-term solution because the quality of our work, our physical and mental health can all suffer.

What are you going to stop doing?

Exercise: One of the really useful things you can ask yourself is what isn't a good use of your time?

In the workshops we asked people to consider this question and then say what they are going to stop doing. Spend a moment or two answering that question for yourself. Then compare your ideas with those of the Workshop participants:

Avoid distractions

- Stop browsing Reddit.
- Stop web-browsing for anything and everything.
- Avoid getting sidetracked into interesting things that are completely unrelated to what I am supposed to be doing!
- Stop looking at my phone during work time.

Manage Email

- Don't have my email open so that I get notified every time a new email arrives.
- Unsubscribe from emails instead of just deleting them.
- Take work email off my phone and only look at it on the computer during work hours.

Focus on the task at hand

- Stop jumping around between tasks.
- Don't work without a schedule.

Prioritise

- Stop procrastinating.
- Try not to worry about getting everything done.
- Don't take on too many things or volunteer for everything.
- Don't go down research rabbit holes.

Say no

- Stop overworking.
- Stop saying yes to all work related opportunities, because it gets overwhelming quickly.
- Say no to jobs that others ask me to do last minute which are not a priority for me.
- Spend less time on things that benefit my supervisor/the university, etc., but that don't help me achieve my goals/need.

Could you try any of these ideas? Have you got your own suggestion to add to the list? If you had to choose one thing, what is the one thing you are going to stop doing, the one action you could take that would improve your productivity?

Dominic Chiwenga

Dominic Chiwenga is a Postdoctoral Research Associate in the Operations and Supply Chain Management (OSCM) group at the University of Liverpool Management School (ULMS) with a demonstrated history of working in the Food Industry. He is a strong research professional with a Doctor of Philosophy focused on 'Building Resilience and Sustainability in Food Supply Chain Networks'.

Dominic felt the behaviour [E] Exercise for productivity really stood out for him during the Workshop.

He says "The Workshop helped me reflect on the importance of a good work/life balance and how achieving that would boost my overall productivity. I found the exercise useful by providing very useful tips on reviewing and adjusting my behaviour to attain greater productivity."

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"The workshop helped me reflect on the importance of a good work/life balance and how that would also boost my overall productivity."

Dominic Chiwenga



MINDSET

Take the initiative

Take action!

The seventh and final essential entrepreneurial behaviour is [T] Take the initiative.

Entrepreneurs don't just talk about things, they take action and get things done. This is a behaviour that we definitely want to copy and put into practice.

Like an entrepreneur, you don't passively wait for somebody else to take action, you say to yourself "What am I going to do about this? What am I going to do today?"

Entrepreneurs get things done and they don't give up when the going gets tough. Like an entrepreneur, because of the mindset, once you have decided to take action, you remain determined and resilient when you encounter obstacles and setbacks.

Like an entrepreneur you will want to identify unmet needs. You will innovate and act ethically. You will dare to take a risk and sell your ideas to get other people on board. You will actively be managing your workload to make sure you can get everything done in the time available. You won't be discouraged. You will ask yourself "What do I need to do to make this happen?"

What are you going to do?

Exercise: What action or actions are you going to take as a result of reading this Workbook, learning about the entrepreneurial mindset and trying the various exercises? Here are some examples of what people said in the Workshops:

- Reflect on MINDSET behaviours and how I can find them in my everyday life/work.
- Write a reflective journal entry asking how far I meet the mindset.
- Organise a block of time every week/fortnight where we can come together in a forum to brainstorm / provide feedback / strategise.
- Make a plan to take calculated risks that will progress my goals.
- Try and be more direct and ask people I find interesting whether they'd like to collaborate.
- Assess how I use my time during the working day. I think there are things I could trim to gain some efficiency.
- Apply MINDSET framework to my projects.
- Apply the MINDSET framework to my job search.
- Consider the importance of risks in career decisions.
- Read up on the basics of self-employment and financial management.

Could you try any of these ideas? How do these ideas compare to your own actions?

Using the mindset in an interview

Exercise: How would you convince a future employer of the value you can bring to the company because of your entrepreneurial mindset, research experience and skills? Here are some examples of what people said in the Workshops:

- Present examples of my track record of adapting, learning, solving problems.
- I'd start with the role description then use my experience as examples of when I have shown these essential traits.
- My research itself is not important to an employer, but project management, negotiation, communication etc are all skills that I can demonstrate through my research history.
- Show I am used to working with international, diverse groups on complex problems. Communicating your thoughts and work clearly to an audience.
- I would highlight how my skills and experience would not only compliment their existing team but add to it. Helping to advance their business with my input.
- Be enthusiastic and give relevant examples. Start with your skills and bring in relevant research experience. Display the skills you are talking about and be authentic.

Andrew Holmes

Andrew Holmes is a Research Staff Developer and part of the Prosper Team at the University of Liverpool.

Andrew is a zoologist with over 10 years experience conducting research and lecturing on animal welfare, behaviour, evolution and conservation. He is a research developer with experience of the UK research funding environment and grant development, with particular expertise in global challenges research.

Andrew says "I've really taken onboard the proactivity of the entrepreneurial mindset, the idea that I need to stop holding back as much as I do, to take ownership of my career and ensure that I'm working as productively as possible instead of trying to multitask and not make much progress with anything. As a result of this I've adopted the mantra of 'if not now, when' which is helping ensure that I don't put off thinking about careers (and in all sorts of other areas of my life), and I am trying to be slightly less risk averse and push myself further out of my comfort zone."

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"I've really taken onboard the proactivity of the entrepreneurial mindset."

Andrew Holmes



MINDSETRESEARCH

How does the entrepreneurial mindset relate to academic research?

We might first think that the two concepts of academic research and the entrepreneurial mindset are quite distinct and unrelated.

However, with a little bit of reflection it quickly becomes apparent that there is a strong overlap between the two concepts in practice.

Let's start by considering the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) that was developed by Vitae in collaboration with UK HEIs, and which according to its website is "the global leader in supporting the professional development of researchers, experienced in working with institutions as they strive for research excellence, innovation and impact."

The Researcher Development Framework is "structured into four domains covering the knowledge, behaviours and attributes of researchers. It sets out the wide-ranging knowledge, intellectual abilities, techniques and professional standards expected to do research, as well as the personal qualities, knowledge and skills to work with others and ensure the wider impact of research."

The Vitae Researcher Development Framework

"The four domains in the Framework are:

Domain A: Knowledge and intellectual abilities: The knowledge, intellectual abilities and techniques to do research

Domain B: Personal effectiveness: The personal qualities and approach to be an effective researcher

Domain C: Research governance and organisation: Knowledge of the professional standards and requirements to do research

Domain D: Engagement, influence and impact: The knowledge and skills to work with others to ensure the wider impact of research

Within each of the domains there are three sub-domains and associated descriptors. For example, Domain A: Knowledge and intellectual abilities, is composed of the three sub-domains:

A1 Knowledge base

A2 Cognitive Abilities

A3 Creativity"

A Comparison of the entrepreneurial mindset and the Vitae Researcher Development Framework

"Each of the 12 sub-domains has associated descriptors. For example, B3 Professional and Career Development has the following descriptors:

- Career management
- Continuing professional development
- Responsiveness to opportunities
- Networking
- Reputation and esteem"

Exercise: Look at the diagram on the next page which illustrates the domains, sub-domains and descriptors in the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. Do you agree with the comparison made with the 7 entrepreneurial mindset behaviours?

We might conclude, through a comparison of the 7 entrepreneurial behaviours and the 12 sub-domains, that there is a strong overlap between the concepts of academic research and the entrepreneurial mindset.

Exercise: Do you think that the Researcher Development Framework places enough importance on risk taking?

Career planning: self-reflection and action

There is much food for thought to be had in a more detailed comparison of the 7 entrepreneurial behaviours with the 60+ descriptors in the sub-domains.

Vitae recommends that "the Researcher Development Framework is useful when you are looking at future career options and goals, because you can use it to:

- consider the capabilities and experiences that will enhance your career prospects

- assess opportunities provided by your institution and look for development opportunities outside your research

- highlight, articulate and provide evidence of the transferability of your capabilities and expertise in your CV, in job applications and at interviews."

You can use the 7 essential entrepreneurial behaviours and the MINDSET Canvas in exactly the same way to reflect on your career and life goals. Makes sure you use your self-reflection to take action!



Access the Researcher Development Framework on the Vitae website

<https://www.vitae.ac.uk/vitae-publications/rdf-related/researcher-development-framework-rdf-vitae.pdf/view>

Read the Vitae Enterprising Researcher The Enterprising Researcher

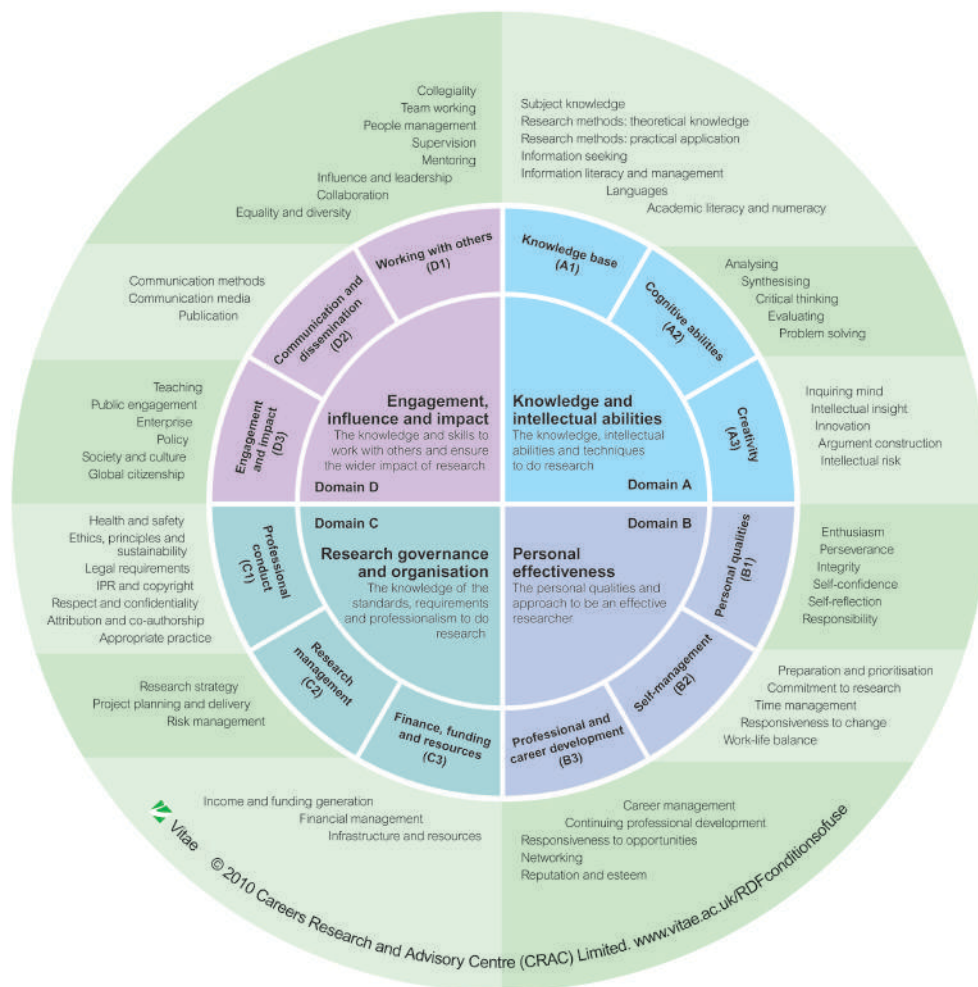
<https://www.vitae.ac.uk/vitae-publications/guides-briefings-and-information/the-enterprising-researcher-vitae-2013.pdf/view>

View the Vitae Enterprise Lens on the Researcher Development Framework

<https://www.vitae.ac.uk/vitae-publications/rdf-related/enterprise-lens-on-the-vitae-researcher-development-framework-rdf-apr-2012.pdf>

Researcher Development Framework and the Entrepreneurial Mindset

Researcher Development Framework 12 Domains



Entrepreneurial Mindset and the RDF 12 Domains

[M] Meet real needs

- (A1) Knowledge base
- (B3) Professional and career development
- (D3) Engagement and impact

[I] Innovate

- (A2) Cognitive abilities
- (A3) Creativity

[N] Never act unethically

- (C1) Professional conduct

[D] Dare to take risks

- (A3) Creativity/intellectual risk

[S] Sell

- (D1) Working with others
- (D2) Communication and dissemination

[E] Exercise for productivity

- (B2) Self-management
- (C3) Finance, funding and resources

[T] Take the initiative

- (B1) Personal effectiveness
- (C2) Research management

More information about the RDF can be found on the Vitae website:
<https://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers-professional-development>

MINDSET CANVAS

Use the MINDSET CANVAS as a framework to evaluate any project or your goals in life or your career options. Step through each of the 7 essential entrepreneurial behaviours, writing your ideas onto the CANVAS and above all noting down your commitments to take action.

[M]

[I]

[N]

[D]

[S]

[E]

[T]

MINDSET BENEFITS

Benefits

Anyone can benefit from having an entrepreneurial mindset.

You can use the mindset behaviours to help you in your Postdoc research.

You can undertake a self-reflection, stepping through each of the 7 essential entrepreneurial behaviours, and use this framework to consider your current role and responsibilities, and also to consider your career options.

The entrepreneurial mindset is highly relevant to you as an individual, to your day-to-day life and to the achievement of your life and career goals.

Personal benefits

P1 The mindset helps you to think and act like an entrepreneur.

P2 The 7 entrepreneurial behaviours help you to cope with change.

P3 The mindset is a can-do-attitude: "how do I make this happen?"

P4 The mindset keeps your motivation high, even in difficult times.

P5 The mindset helps you to achieve your goals in life and your career, and to make your unique contribution to the world.

Organisational benefits

O1 Organisations can get the very best from each employee.

O2 Leaders & managers can release untapped human potential.

O3 Innovation is enhanced by diversity, inclusivity and equity.

O4 Employees with the mindset transform the organisational culture.

O5 Organisations can use the mindset to succeed with large scale change.

Societal benefits

S1 More people feel empowered to take action about societal issues.

S2 Each individual can make their contribution to societal problems.

S3 People can see their place in the larger system & the part they can play.

S4 It makes a difference when people collaborate to create greater impact.

S5 We can all see how we can help with Sustainable Development Goals.

Further Information

Access the Prosper webpage
<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/researcher/prosper/>

Access the Entrepreneurial Mindset Network's website
<https://www.entrepreneurial-mindset.network>

Order a print copy of the book Entrepreneurial Mindset
<https://www.entrepreneurial-mindset.network/mindset-examples/book>

Order an electronic copy of the book Entrepreneurial Mindset
<https://www.entrepreneurial-mindset.network/mindset-examples/book>



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