



## Productivity & Professional Development: How to support your postdocs to increase their productivity, work on their careers and maintain healthy balance

With Dr Hannah Roberts (she/her)

It is challenging for postdocs to maintain momentum while managing multiple competing projects, demanding deadlines and simultaneously taking steps to move forwards in professional development.

1. Support your postdocs to master the ability to prioritise and focus their workload utilising a 5 pillar system and high performance habits.
2. Learn how to facilitate non-confrontational conversations around saying no, reclaiming space where a boundary has slipped and 8 steps to effective delegation.
3. Flex your leadership style to bring the best out in their performance by introducing regular structured feedback sessions where postdocs do not take feedback personally and instead welcome feedback for their rapid growth and learning.

### **1 Platform for Leadership**

To create a stable platform to be able to make our greatest contribution in the world, I believe we need to pay attention to 5 key pillars.

1. Career
2. Health
3. Relationships
4. Wealth
5. Personal Development

### **2 High Performance Audit**

Take a moment to do a quick mini audit of your pillars. Score each in turn out of 10.

**Action: Complete your performance audit**





- ✓ HEALTH /10
- ✓ RELATIONSHIPS /10
- ✓ PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT /10
- ✓ CAREER /10
- ✓ WEALTH /10

Why did you give yourself those scores? What is your biggest opportunity to improve?

### **3 Our Priorities Are Way Off**

You can use the performance audit as a review process on a monthly basis to keep track of your progress. Balance between all of these pillars of our lives is the key to everything.

“It’s about having a well of physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual strength that drives personal achievement and inspires others to follow.” – Report by McKinsey & Company

Most of us prioritise work and everyone else first and ourselves last. Take a look at your performance audit, which pillars are getting the most and least attention. Where does your focus need to be to readdress the balance? Which pillar needs to take primary focus for the next 90 days?

### **4 Yearly & 90 Day Plans into Pillar Schedules**

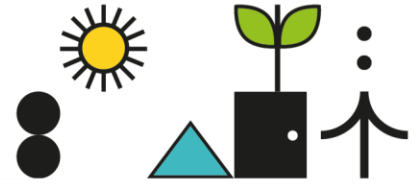
You may want to start with a longer-term plan mapped back to 6 monthly milestones and fine level planning for every quarter and week.

Q4 90 Day Plans

👉 28 Day Checkpoint 1: by 28th of October 2022

- ✓ Career A1
- ✓ Personal Development A1
- ☆ Reward for Completion:





- Health A1
- Relationships A1
- Wealth A1
- ☆ Reward for Completion:

👉 28 Day Checkpoint 1: by 28th of November 2022

- Career A1
- Personal Development A1
- ☆ Reward for Completion:

- Health A1
- Relationships A1
- Wealth A1
- ☆ Reward for Completion:

👉 28 Day Checkpoint 1: by 28th of December 2022

- Career A1
- Personal Development A1
- ☆ Reward for Completion:

- Health A1
- Relationships A1
- Wealth A1
- ☆ Reward for Completion:

## **5 The Agile Weekly Meeting**

1. Review last week
2. Show plans for this week
3. Impediments to progress





## 6 Boundaries

Definition of boundaries: simply our lists of what's okay and what's not okay." – Brené Brown.

The four types of boundary setting conversations:

1. Reclaiming space
2. General boundary setting for people in your realm
3. Saying no gracefully
4. General boundary setting for people outside your realm

### Reclaiming Space

#### THE STEPS

Acknowledge the past: "In the past, I have..."  
Set the boundary: "I'm no longer willing/able to..."  
Work it out: "My intention is..."

### General Boundary Setting - Realm

#### THE STEPS

Acknowledge the person. "It's fine if you choose to do XYZ".  
State the boundary. "But that behaviour really doesn't work for me."  
Consider if the request or behaviour is a deal-breaker. If it is then you need to make it clear by saying, "if this continues, then (state the consequence)." If the behaviour is annoying but not a deal breaker skip this step.  
Collaborate on a way forward. "Perhaps you can help me understand why you do this, so that we can work out a way for us both to get what you need."

### Saying No Gracefully

#### THE STEPS

Acknowledge the person. "Thank you for..."  
State the boundary. "But that doesn't work for me right now."





Consider if the request or behaviour is a deal-breaker. If it is then you need to make it clear by saying, "if this continues, then (state the consequence)." If the behaviour is annoying but not a deal breaker skip this step. Collaborate on a way forward. "Now let me see if I can think of anyone else who might be able to help you."

## **General Boundary Setting – Outside Realm**

### THE STEPS

“No”

The best way you can help is to model what good boundary setting looks like and support others to facilitate boundary setting using these templates.

## **6 Feedback**

### **A4 Feedback Guidelines**

Always ask if the person wants feedback. When they want it, now or later? In a meeting or in writing via email/Teams. Share with them which framework you are using.

#### ASSIST

Did it aim to assist? Was there a positive intent behind the feedback?

#### ACTIONABLE

Was it actionable? Did it focus on what you can do differently?

#### APPRECIATE

When receiving feedback, the natural human inclination is to provide a defence or excuse. It's a protection mechanism. Ask yourself, "how can I show appreciation for this feedback?" Listening carefully from a place of respect, curiosity and compassion would be ideal (not always easy to achieve in the moment, believe me, I know).

#### ACCEPT or DISCARD

Listen and consider all feedback but ultimately, you are not required to follow it.





Additional feedback methods: <https://career-advice.jobs.ac.uk/career-development/powerful-mistakes>

## 7 Q&A Discussion

- What have you found most helpful?
- What will you be implementing as a result of today?
- Where do you need further support?
- What is one word to describe how you are feeling?

## 8 Connect

Follow Prosper on LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/prosperproject>


Thank you. Get in touch:

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