Prosper. Unlocking postdoc career potential

THE RESOURCEFUL RESEARCHER

EFFECTUATION: 5 PRINCIPLES FOR MAKING THINGS HAPPEN

Effectuation is a way of making progress when you can't predict exactly what will happen next. Rather than waiting for certainty, start with what you **have**, take manageable **risks**, involve other **people**, learn from what happens and focus on what you can **influence**.



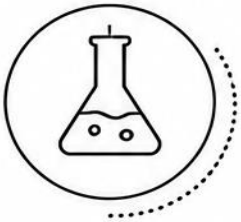
1 BIRD IN THE HAND

Start with what you already have.

Don't begin with what's missing. Start with who you are, what you know and who you know. Think about your knowledge, skills, experience, characteristics, connections, technology, equipment, funding and other resources already within reach.

Ask:
What do I already have, and what does that allow me to do?

Mindset shift:
I may have more to work with than I realise.



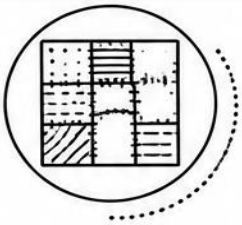
2 AFFORDABLE LOSS

Take a risk you can afford.

You don't need to know that something will work before you try it. Instead, understand the downside and decide what you're genuinely prepared to risk. Time. Money. Energy. Reputation. Discomfort. If the potential loss is too great, make the experiment smaller, safer or more reversible.

Ask:
What's the realistically worst outcome? Could I cope with it?

Mindset shift:
I don't need certainty. I need a risk I can live with.



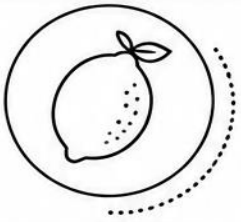
3 CRAZY QUILT

Don't build it alone.

You don't need to have everything you need. Get better at knowing who you can build with. Invite people who bring different knowledge, experience, connections, resources and perspectives. Think about what they can contribute, but also what you can contribute.

Ask:
Who could I learn from, build with or help?

Mindset shift:
Other people can change what's possible.



4 LEMONADE

Learn, adapt and keep moving.

Things won't always go to plan. An experiment may fail. Funding may be rejected. A collaboration may stall. Your results may surprise you. Don't pretend a setbacks is good news. Instead, extract the learning and use it.

Ask:
What has this taught me, and what will I do differently next?

Mindset shift:
A setback doesn't have to be the end of the story.



5 PILOT IN THE PLANE

Focus on what you can influence.

You can't control funding panels, reviewer decisions, other people's behaviour or what happens in your sector.
But you're not simply a passenger either.
You can decide who you approach, what you ask, what you share, what you try, who you invite in and what you do next.

Ask:
What can I influence, and what will I do with that influence?

Mindset shift:
I have more agency than I think.

THE EFFECTUATION HABIT

