The productive researcher

Outline and agenda
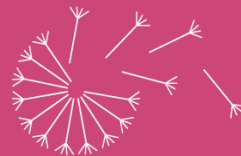
Half-day (3-hour) session:

Virtual delivery

training@fasttrackimpact.com

Course description

Find out how you can become significantly more productive as a researcher in a fraction of your current working day. Rather than learning (yet more) time management techniques, you will learn new ways of thinking that will reframe your relationship with work.

The course works by shifting you from focusing on tasks to focusing on priorities linked to your values and identity. By working regularly on your most important priorities, even if only for a small proportion of the working day, you can become increasingly motivated to make time for these priorities, creating a powerful positive feedback loop. Rather than encouraging you to extract ever more productivity from your working life, the emphasis is on using your new-found productivity to get a better work-life balance, and by resting well, working even more effectively. This course will make you more productive and more satisfied with what you produce, and it will enable you to be happy working less and being more. Participants receive a free electronic and audio copy of the second edition of *The Productive Researcher*.

Key benefits:

- Leave with practical tools you can use immediately to prioritise limited time to achieve more ambitious career goals

- Gain a deeper understanding of the values that underpin your work, and the reasons why you feel time pressured

- Identify priorities that are as much about being as they are about doing, and turn these into an "experiment" to make practical changes that create a positive feedback loop between your priorities and your motivation, so you can become increasingly focused and productive

- Create a memorable shortcut to help you instinctively stay aligned with your priorities from minute to minute

- Discuss how you can become more authentic as a researcher and lead change by tackling competing priorities, imposter syndrome, perfectionism, people-pleasing and fear of failure

At the end of the workshop:

- Receive slides and links to free resources to help you embed impact in your research.

- You have the option to make a commitment to an action based on the course and receive a follow-up email from Prof Jensen to check in and help as necessary after a month.

- Prof Jensen and Prof Reed continue to answer all questions from participants via email after the course, guaranteeing a response to all questions within one week.

Indicative agenda

Start: 09:30 am (20-minute break included)

Part 1: Work less to achieve more

- Introduction: What I learned from the world's most productive researchers
- Application: writing
- Plenary discussion
- Exercise 1: identity and values pie chart (followed by plenary discussion)
- Exercise 2: time pie chart
- Poll: how are you aligned?
- Paired discussion: what are your priorities?
- Exercise 3: summing up

Part 2: Taking achievable action

- Managing competing goals: insights from Goal Hierarchy Theory
- Becoming more authentic: tackling people-pleasing, perfectionism and imposter syndrome
- Exercise 4: How do you deal with competing priorities?
- Choose from:
    - Exercise 5: Building on the things you identified to align the time you spend with your identity and values in Exercise 2, come up with more actions, including things you want to spend doing and being, in the short and longer-term
    - Exercise 6: design an experiment/activity to do in the next month
- Action planning

Close: 12:30 pm

About Fast Track Impact

Fast Track Impact is an international training platform, delivered by the Institute for Methods Innovation, a non-profit organisation. Its mission is to change the way busy researchers generate and share knowledge so that their ideas can change the world and they can get their thinking time back.

Fast Track Impact runs training for researchers from every discipline, from PhD students to Professors, from departmental away days to cross-institution training days. It has trained 15,000+ researchers from more than 200 institutions in 55 countries.

About the trainer

Professor Eric A. Jensen

Prof Jensen is a social scientist with a PhD from the University of Cambridge in sociology. He is part-time professor at the University of Warwick, where he has led courses on public engagement with science, science policy, audience research and social research methods (including surveys and statistics). He is also a doctoral research supervisor for the University of Oxford. As a visiting research scientist at the National Center for Supercomputing Applications at the University of Illinois, Jensen works on a Sloan Foundation-funded project on research software policy.

Prof Jensen has 20+ years of research and practice experience in social research, evaluation, public and policy engagement and science communication. He has delivered hundreds of training workshops on evaluation methods and evidence-based science communication, as well as leading and consulting on projects large and small on public engagement with research, impact evaluation, socially responsible research, and environmental communication. Prof Jensen also serves as an Independent Ethics Mentor for European Commission-funded projects, reviewing data management and ethics planning. He has extensive experience in ethical approval processes in higher education.

What people are saying about this course

"[Doing the course online was] really useful and engaging."

"Inspirational day."

"Very beneficial and eye opening."

"I now aspire more to be an inspiring researcher, and realise that productivity is both 'doing' and 'being'."

"I liked that I am going away with a workable plan at the end of the day."

"I like the structured approach, the build-up and especially the space and time to think. It has changed my approach to goal setting entirely. My whole work goal emerged entirely from the values I had identified in my personal life and I now have something to aim for that I really believe in – thank you!"

"Food for thought or a great kick start to moving forward."

"I'm switching from being task-orientated to being priority-orientated."

"It's very helpful to be reminded why we wanted to become an academic in the first place, and to reconnect with values-based priorities when we are struggling to get daily routine work done. Thank you!"

"Thinking about what is important compared to how I spend my time is very powerful."

"If I implement these techniques, I see a lot of untapped potential being unlocked, so this workshop is a real eye opener."

"Positive, useful, thought-provoking."

"It made me really think about what sort of researcher I want to be. It has given me the time and space to think through ways I might start to achieve this, both in the short-term and in my longer career. It has given me hope that there is a way forward to get work-life balance and it has focussed me on a path to achieve it."

"Really inspiring course. Motivated to become a better researcher and person after attending this course."