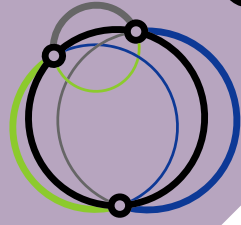


# WORKBOOK



**UNIBUND**  
Halle – Jena – Leipzig

# CAREER DEVELOPMENT FOR POSTDOCS



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1st edition | April 2026

# INTRODUCTION

As a postdoc, research is at the heart of everything you do. This means diving deep into your subject, writing publications and funding proposals, and presenting your findings at conferences. Managing all of these demands at once – while receiving progressively less supervision and feedback – is one of the defining and most energy-draining challenges of the postdoctoral phase.

Yet it is equally important to balance these demands with deliberate career planning. Whether your aspirations lie within academia or beyond it, building your professional profile, setting goals, and developing a concrete plan to reach them form the foundation of a career path shaped by your own values and ambitions. Now is the time to strategise.

This workbook is designed to support your career development, with a focus on academia and initial guidance for exploring transferable skills and opportunities outside academia. It is meant to help you begin reflecting on your professional path and options – so that when the time comes, you are prepared to make well-informed decisions. Use it to examine your goals,

assess where you currently stand and what resources you have, and bring greater clarity to your ambitions.

You may feel uncertain at first – that is perfectly normal. As you work through the exercises, clarity will emerge. Feel free to move through the workbook in whatever order feels right, set it aside when life gets busy, and return to it whenever you feel ready – it is a collection of tools and inspiration, not a linear to-do list.

You may not have answers to every question right away, and answers may shift over time. Revisiting this workbook allows you to trace how your thinking has evolved and how your career plan has grown. The strategy you develop through this process can also serve as a valuable starting point for conversations with mentors, colleagues, and peers.



# ROAD MAP

This *roadmap* gives you an overview of the workbook's contents. You can mark completed sections. Jumping around in the workbook is strongly encouraged. The workbook does not have to be worked through linearly nor completely; it can be helpful to return to earlier exercises later, or to select the exercises based on your current stage of career planning.

## KNOW YOURSELF

Current Situation	6	Personal Resources	8	Learning From The Past	10
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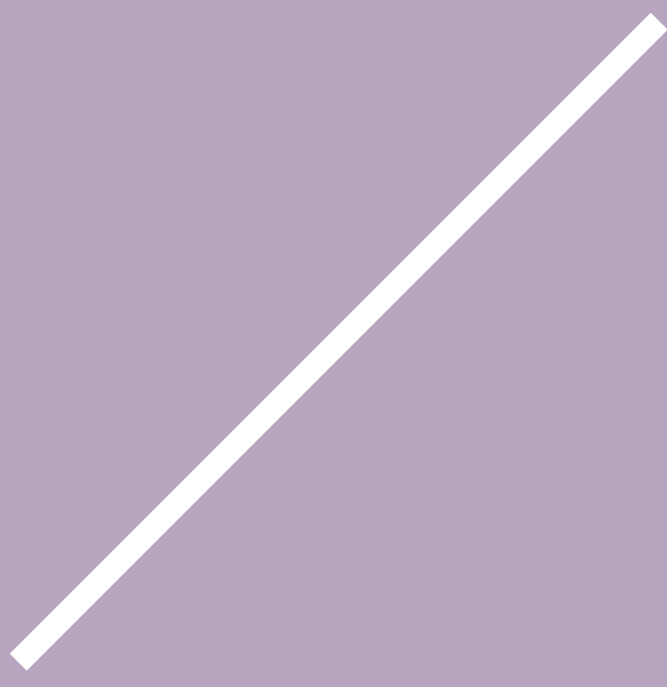
## TAKE ACTIONS

Current Career Goals	35	Ecology Check	36	Next Steps	37
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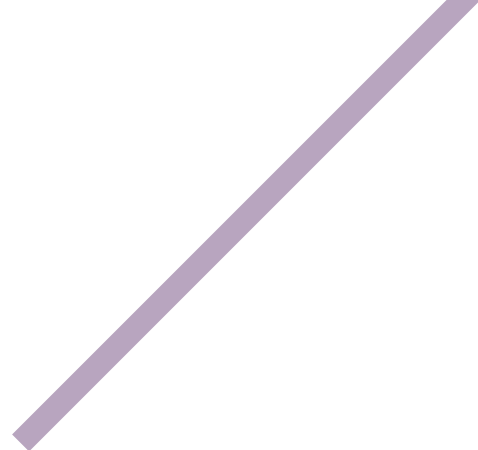


Each topic is complemented by a **DEEP DIVE** — characterized by the small diver with a mortarboard. A DEEP DIVE is a method in which you carry out an intensive, in-depth analysis of a specific problem or topic. It either gives you the opportunity to work on the topic in more detail and to do further research, or the DEEP DIVE provides you with links for further exercises and interesting information.

KNOW  
YOURSELF



# CHECK-IN: MY CURRENT (POSTDOC) SITUATION



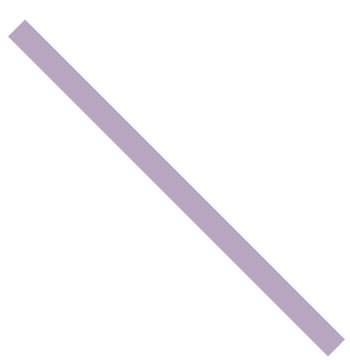
Analysing your current job situation is crucial for career decisions, as it helps to identify whether it aligns with your long-term goals and personal growth aspirations. It enables you to assess

opportunities for advancement or the need for a change to fulfil your career objectives and enhance your sense of satisfaction.

**Why did you take up your current position?**

**What excites you about your current job? And what annoys you about it?**

**What drives you to be successful? And what hinders you from being successful?**



# CHECK-IN: MY CURRENT (POSTDOC) SITUATION

How do you rate your career progress, perhaps also in comparison with others?

What feedback do you get from colleagues?

Mark your current energy level.

- What robs you of energy?
- What gives you energy?



*Journaling might help you to increase your self-awareness. Are you ready for your daily dose of self-reflection?*

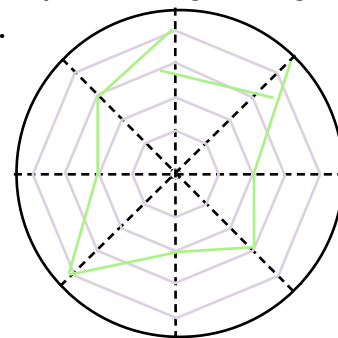


# SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS: MY PERSONAL RESOURCES

The tool *resource wheel* helps you to assess your currently available resources. Understanding one's personal resources may bolster self-efficacy, enabling you to make purpose-driven decisions, engage in effective problem-solving, identify resilience factors, and recognize limitations.

- **Health** (physical & mental)  
To what extent does your health allow you to engage fully in work and daily activities?
- **Mobility**  
How flexible are you in choosing the location of your job or research?
- **Care & other obligations**  
How free are you from caregiving and other responsibilities?
- **Competencies**  
How competent do you feel in dealing with challenges in career planning and development?
- **Time**  
How much time do you have for research and career development?

First rate the aspects on a scale of 1–5 (next page). 1 means none, small or very low, while 5 represents very much or high. When connecting the dots, an individual resource pattern emerges. In the respective circular sector (below), you may note bullet points regarding the different aspects.



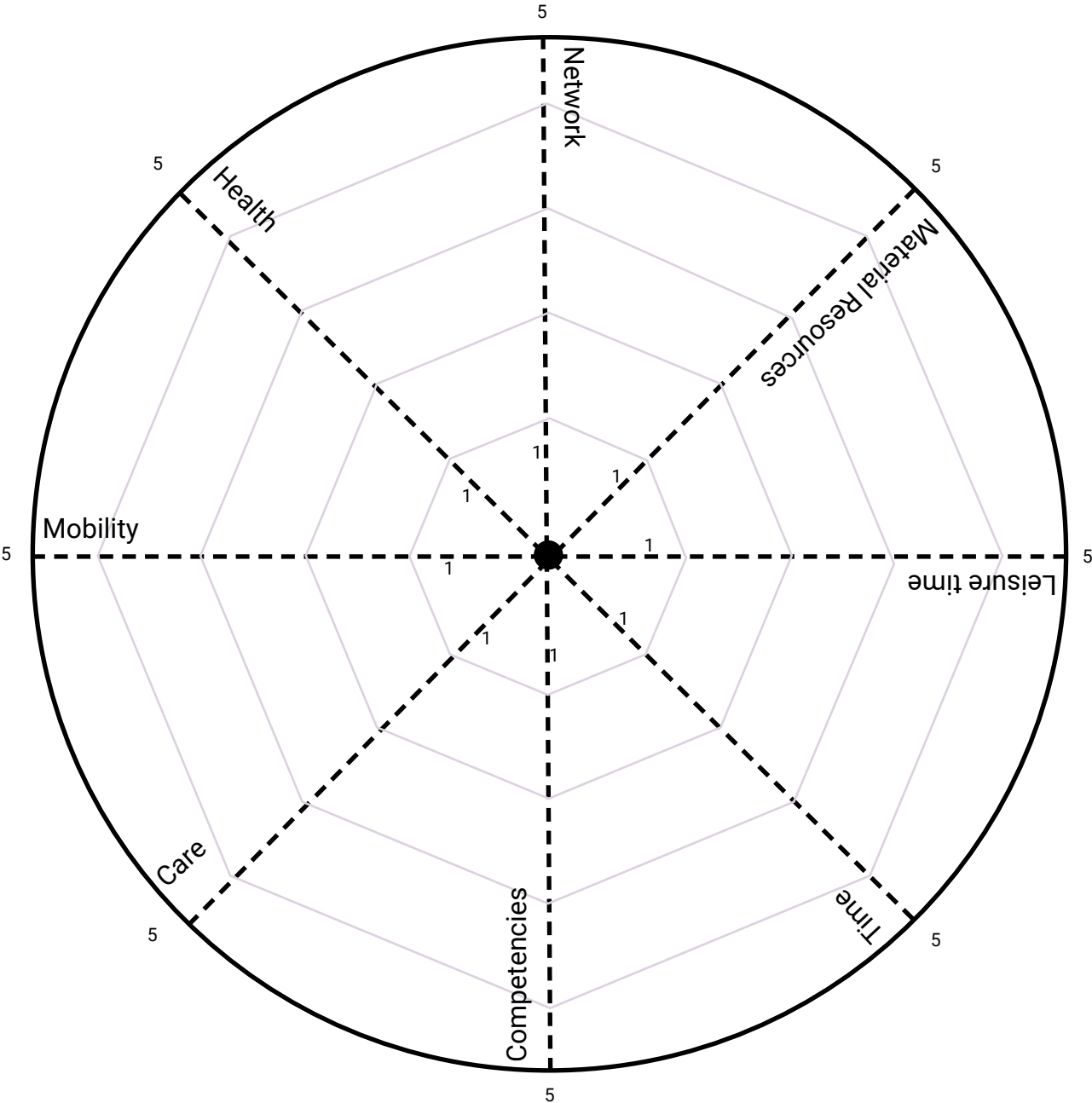
- **Leisure time & voluntary work**  
Given your current schedule, how much space do you have for relaxation and voluntary work?
- **Material resources**  
How much material security do you have (income and assets, for example)?
- **Supporters & network**  
How extensive is your personal and professional network, and how much support do you receive from mentors?



*Do you have an idea of how much time you have left according to the German Academic Temporary Employment Act (WissZeitVG)? Get information from the career counseling service at your university.*



# SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS: THE RESOURCE WHEEL



# LEARNING FROM THE PAST: BIOGRAPHICAL REFLECTIONS

Drawing your *lifeline(s)* is a good exercise to reflect on your own biography, looking at high and low points and decision-making situations. In doing so, you can identify resources, your own biographical patterns, and valuable relationships.

On page 11, sketch two lifelines, which

show a) your well-being over the course of your educational life and b) your work as well as your personal biography. On the horizontal axis, note the years; the vertical axis represents well-being and feelings. Please start with your school certificate and end with your current situation. Mark key positions and personal highlights in your biography.

**What were the key events, experiences, successes and achievements that shaped your career development?**

**What qualifications, skills and self-insights have you acquired in each position? What was beneficial for your development? What was a hindrance?**

**Which values guided you through your development?**

# LEARNING FROM THE PAST: MY LIFE LINES



## Shaping Your Future:

- What have past decisions taught you about your future direction?
- Which biographical patterns are helpful?
- Which biographical patterns do you want to consciously break?



*There are many different people, e.g. teachers, PIs, friends and family – who may have shaped your attitudes towards careers. Find out more about these influences.*



# MY INNER COMPASS: CAREER MOTIVES

Below, you will find a list of typical motives for career development. Which are the most relevant to you right now? Sort the career motives below in order of importance to you from 1 (most

important) to 10 (least important). Then estimate what percentage of this motive is fulfilled in your current job. What should change specifically in your next career step?

## Technical & Functional Competence

... becoming an expert in a specific field or skill; find fulfilment in mastering a particular area of expertise.

Nr.:  %

## Autonomy & Independence

... prioritize freedom and independence in your work; prefer roles that allow to work autonomously and have control over your tasks.

Nr.:  %

## Entrepreneurial Creativity

... desire for creating something new and innovative. You are motivated by starting new ventures and exploring uncharted territories.

Nr.:  %

## Pure Challenge

... drawn to intellectual or physical challenges: thrive on solving complex problems, learning new things and taking on demanding tasks.

Nr.:  %

## Relatedness & Acceptance

... valuing social contacts within their working context; looking for recognition for what you do and who you are.

Nr.:  %

## Managerial Competence

... seeking roles that involve leading and coordinating people and projects; enjoy organisational responsibilities and decision-making.

Nr.:  %

## Security & Stability

... prioritize job security, a stable work environment, and a predictable career path; seek a sense of stability and consistency.

Nr.:  %

## Service & Dedication to a Cause

... seeking roles that align with your values and contribute to a greater cause or mission; finding purpose in work that makes a meaningful impact.

Nr.:  %

## Lifestyle

... prioritise achieving a certain lifestyle over traditional career goals. Career choices are guided by the desire for a specific way of living.

Nr.:  %

## Power & Status

... seeking space to influence what happens around you. It is important to you that you are recognized by the people around you.

Nr.:  %



*Your role-based values help you to define your ideal working environment. They are the factors that are most important in fostering job satisfaction, career progression and your perception of career success.*



# FULFILLING EXPERIENCE: MY COMPETENCIES, TALENTS & INTERESTS

Create a list of **16 moments** or **events** from your life in which you did something both well and with genuine enjoyment. These can be memories from your childhood, more recent personal experiences, or professional

achievements – anything that felt fulfilling and natural to you.

Take your time with this task; perhaps even take a short walk may help you recall these moments more vividly.

- |    |     |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 9.  |
| 2. | 10. |
| 3. | 11. |
| 4. | 12. |
| 5. | 13. |
| 6. | 14. |
| 7. | 15. |
| 8. | 16. |

By marking them, select the **five experiences** that resonate most deeply with you. Let your intuition guide your choices. Acknowledge any self-critical or analytical thoughts that arise – but then gently set them aside.

For each of these, consider writing a brief reflection on a separate page:

- How did you feel in that situation?
- What professional, methodological, social, and personal competencies did you display?
- Were you energised, focused, relaxed, or excited?
- What exactly made this experience positive and meaningful?

You have now identified a set of strengths – things you are good at and genuinely enjoy doing.

# FULFILLING EXPERIENCE: MY COMPETENCIES, TALENTS & INTERESTS



After reflecting on the five selected experiences (p.13), answer the following questions. Your answers to these questions can offer valuable insights and guidance for your future career

choices. They may help you to identify work environments and roles where your strengths and passions are aligned, and where you are most likely to thrive.

**Which strengths appear repeatedly across these five experiences?**

**Which three strengths played the greatest role in your success?**

**Under which circumstances (e.g. situation, culture) did you perform at your best?**

# FULFILLING EXPERIENCE: MY COMPETENCIES, TALENTS & INTERESTS

Why did you feel comfortable or confident in those moments?

What types of projects or tasks do you naturally gravitate towards?

Think of at least two specific moments when you felt truly proud of what you achieved.



The VITAE RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK articulates the knowledge, skills, and behaviours of effective researchers, and can be used to plan your personal, professional and career development.



# FINDING FLOW: MY IDEAL WORKING CONDITIONS

*Flow* is a state of deep focus and enjoyment where you lose track of time and feel fully immersed in what you are doing.

On this page, you can reflect on the work conditions that help you enter this productive and satisfying state. Under what conditions do you get into FLOW?

F

How familiar do you want to be with the tasks you are working on? Are you comfortable with (ongoing) challenges?

L

How important is it for you to be a leader?

O

What kind of organisation would you enjoy working for, or would like to work for (e.g., size, purpose, sector, structure, legal form)?

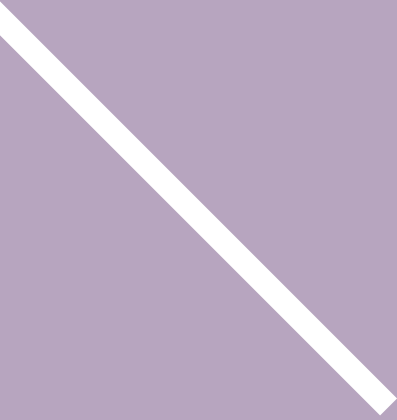
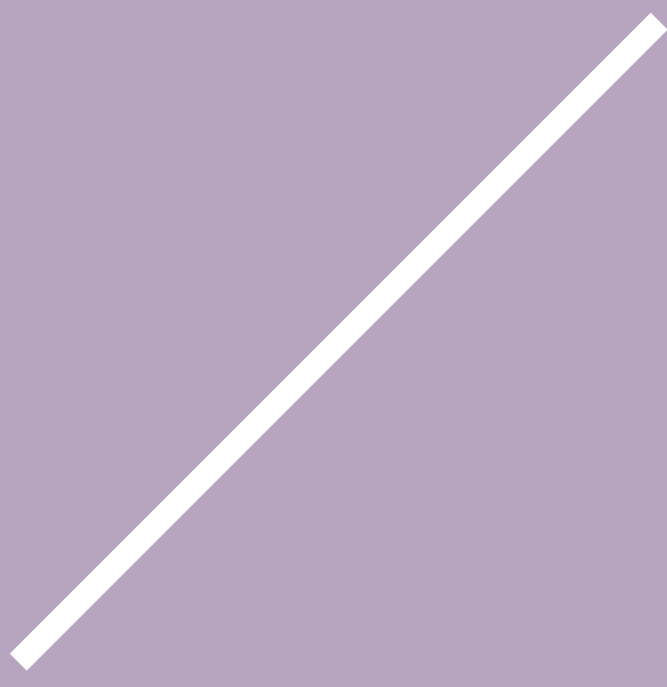
W

What are your ideal working conditions (e.g., working hours, atmosphere, workplace, participation)?

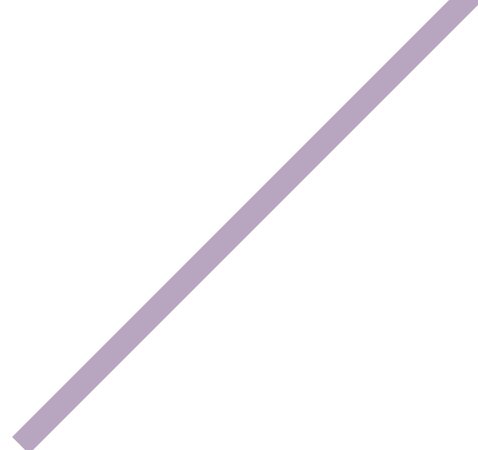


What do you need in order to work in a focused manner? What time and self-management tools do you know and use to organize your daily work routine effectively?

# EXPLORE OPTIONS



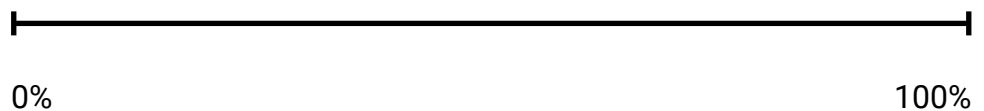
# AFFECTIVE BALANCE: STAYING OR LEAVING ACADEMIA?



To find out whether you want to stay in academia or not, it is helpful to gain clarity about your own emotional state and visualise it. This process helps clarify your desires and inclinations.

Take a green and a red pen and mark for both options how you rate your positive (green) and negative (red) feelings. Note that the ratings on the positive and negative scales do not have to add up to 100% – there is room for uncertainty or ambiguity in between.

stay in academia



leave academia

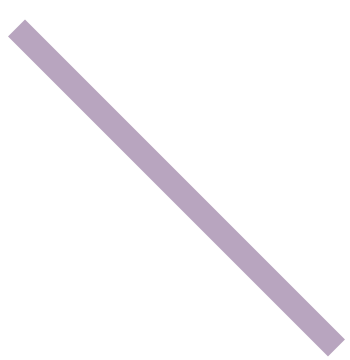


Which positive / negative feelings do you associate with staying in academia?

Which positive / negative feelings do you associate with leaving academia?

Do you have a sense of where these feelings about staying in academia come from?

Do you have a sense of where these feelings about leaving academia come from?



# AFFECTIVE BALANCE: STAYING OR LEAVING ACADEMIA?

What keeps you in academia?

What draws you to a career path outside  
academia?

What would be your “ideal” rating on the positive / negative scale to decide more  
confidently? And why?

Which of the things that need to change are within your sphere of influence? Which  
of the things are not?

Can you draw a preliminary conclusion? And who can support you in this process?



*Deep down, you may already know what matters to you – your values are your inner voice. When your life aligns with them, you feel a sense of purpose and peace. When it doesn't, you feel it too. Clarifying your values means learning to listen to that feeling and letting it guide your choices.*

# GETTING INFORMATION: SOURCES FOR UNCOVERING OPPORTUNITIES

Where do you get information about vacancies, exciting (international) companies, NGOs or interesting career paths? Complete the following collection with as much specificity as possible – ideally by naming persons or institutions. Which of these approaches

have you already used, and which have you yet to explore? Different ways reveal various opportunities, not all positions are advertised. Writing down specific events, organisations, and people sharpens your focus

colleagues /  
mentors

internet research, social media  
(e.g. LinkedIn, job portals)

friends, personal network or  
professional associations

career counselling

job fair, career events

others (e.g. headhunter)

informal interviews



*If you are looking for guidance on research in Germany, [research-in-germany.org](https://www.research-in-germany.org) is an excellent resource. It may also be worth considering a career at a University of Applied Sciences, professorships there have a different profile from those at traditional universities, and could be an interesting alternative.*



# IMAGINE CAREER OPTIONS

Take a moment to reflect on which career paths you can currently envision for yourself – including specific job titles and broader job areas such as academia, industry, science management, or education. Note them in the table below and begin filling it in, using the guiding questions above to support your reflection.

	Option	Area	What do you need (e.g. skills, resources, qualification)?	What do you already have (e.g. skills, resources, qualification)?	What else do you need and what do you still need to acquire?	What are driving and hindering factors?	What unanswered questions do you still have?	Where or how can you get the answers or more information?
1.	deep-sea diver	business world	technical knowledge, diver's licence, stamina, time far from family, lift up to 40 kg	work under pressure, dig deep into topics, swimming level/badge	medical certificate	I like the sea life, I can't hold my breath	Is it dark down there?	watch a documentary on diving, do an internship at a diving company
2.								
3.								



Get inspired and read about career stories of postdocs:



# IMAGINE CAREER OPTIONS

	Option	Area	What do I need (e.g. Skills, Resources, qualification)?	What do I already have (e.g. skills, resources, qualification)?	What else do I need and what do I still need to acquire?	What are driving and hindering factors?	What unanswered questions do I still have?	Where or how can I get the answers or more information?
4.								
5.								
6.								



*Which option speaks to what you truly value and what moves you – where did you feel that quiet spark as you wrote? Find 1-2 concrete job offers for each of the options. What do you like about the jobs offered? What do you dislike?*

# ENVISIONING YOUR FUTURE: IMAGINE YOUR CAREER

Imagine you've already taken the next step in your career – whether it is changing jobs, leaving or staying in academia or starting your ideal profession that truly inspires you.

This helps you craft a strategic approach to your professional journey, ensuring that each step you take brings you closer to your ideal profession.

Imagine you have already managed the job change or chosen the career path: What has changed? What skills have you drawn on, and what new ones have you acquired? How does it feel?

What does your ideal job look like (general conditions, salary, tasks, responsibility, etc.) and what topics and tasks does it involve?

For your ideal job, locate yourself on the following continua:



*REBECA PRACTICE is a tool that brings you the opportunity to explore professional roles other than the academic researcher role. Try it out!*



# TEAM ROLES: WHAT ROLES DO YOU LIKE TO TAKE ON IN A TEAM?

Roles embody the expectations directed at individuals and the aspects they contribute, ensuring a team's functionality and performance. On the next page, spontaneously assess: a) the extent to which each aspect applies to your tasks and work style. The centre of the circle represents low or no engagement, whilst the outer edge

represents very frequent engagement. How much effort does each role demand? b) In your future job: indicate with an arrow whether you want to cover more or fewer of these aspects (more: arrow outward, less: arrow inward).

There are externally and internally oriented roles.

Externally oriented:

- **managing, supervising, moderating:** process leadership, directing and structuring of work, decision-making, setting goals and priorities, distributing/allocating resources, delegating.
- **creative source of ideas:** reflects on values and meaning of tasks, innovative, radical, unorthodox, source of ideas/inspiration/suggestions, open, willing to experiment, introduces new ideas and strategies.
- **networking:** representation, maintains contact and utilises networks, introduces external ideas, developments, and information, knows relevant people and external resources.

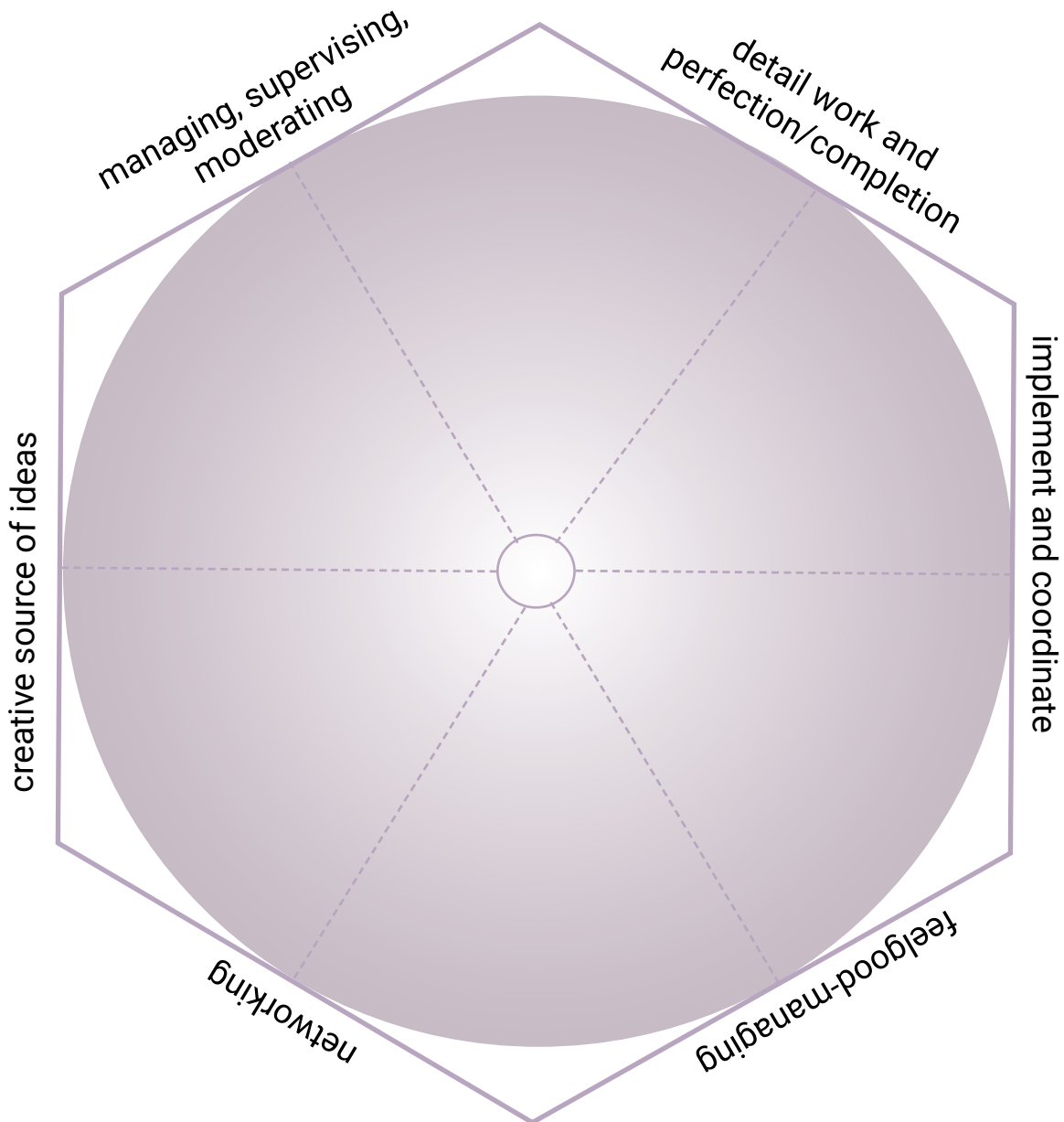
Internally oriented:

- **implement and coordinate:** initiates discussions, creates structures, disciplined, efficient, keeps an eye on work progress and feasibility, transforms plans into actionable forms, creates manageable tasks, structures work packages.
- **detail work and perfection/completion:** has an eye for individual tasks and routine activities, love for detail, conscientious, thorough, puts the final touches on things, pays special attention to quality and to deadlines.
- **feelgood-managing:** engine of unity and harmony, maintains a positive work atmosphere, inclusively engages everyone, fosters integration, connects, is a person of trust, ensures communication, high compassion and empathy, avoids confrontation, promotes a culture of mutual respect.

# TEAM ROLES: WHAT ROLES DO YOU LIKE TO TAKE ON IN A TEAM?

externally oriented

internally oriented



Repeat the analysis at team level by mapping the individual people in the team (e.g., using different colours) – who do you work well with and who less so? Is this a pattern you have noticed over the years, or is it specific to your current team? What are your wishes for future jobs?

# JOB REALITIES: INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

An *informational interview* is an informal conversation with the goal of gathering information and advice, not applying for a job or internship. It is particularly useful for learning about career paths and building your network. Informational interviews do not typically lead to immediate job opportunities, but do

help you develop valuable connections.

Find at least two people whose career paths you find inspiring and try to get in touch with them for an informational interview. Aim to gather information about their daily work through a phone or video call.

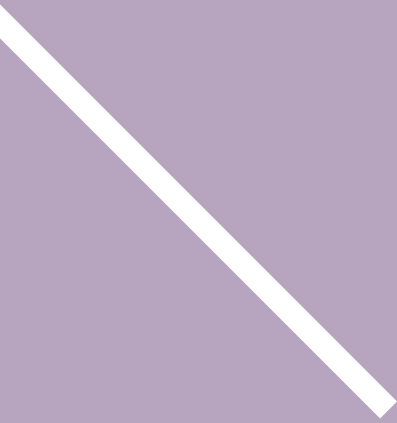
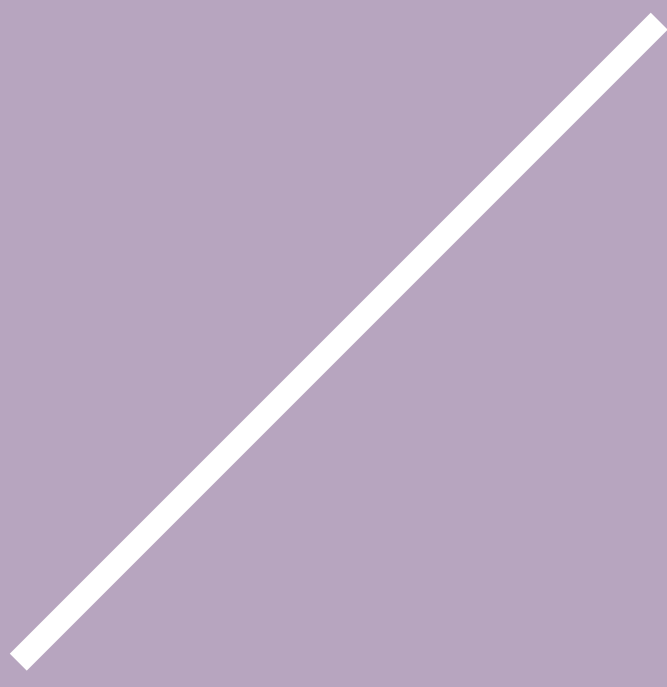
**Who do you want to reach out to? What three to five questions do you want to ask?**

**After the interview: What surprised you? What impressions were confirmed? To what extent do the descriptions make you want to follow the same or a similar career path? What skills would you need to develop or expand in order to do so?**

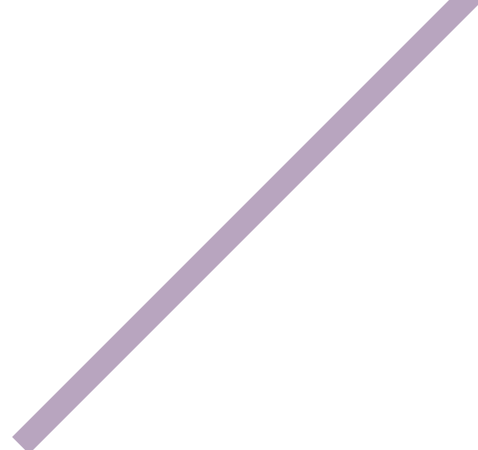


*Take it a step further: Consider Job Shadowing: Job shadowing involves following someone at work to gain an understanding of a typical day in their role.. It is a generally quick way to learn more about a career, build your network, and get something extra to add to your CV.*

GET  
FOCUSED



# PREOCCUPATIONS: WHAT IS ON YOUR MIND RIGHT NOW?



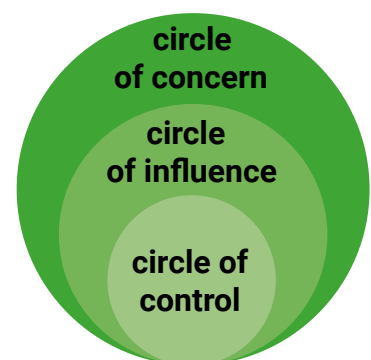
Your thoughts shape your next steps. Take a moment to reflect on the questions currently on your mind – e.g.

about your job, future, and growth. This helps you find clarity and organise your thoughts.

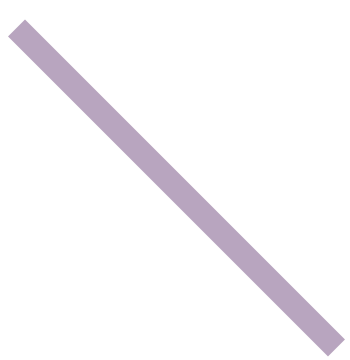
Which questions are you currently asking yourself regarding your job, your career, your future or your personal and professional development?

To what extent do your answers to these questions shape your career path?

What do you need to answer these questions (for now)?



Use this model to sort your questions: Circle of Concern – Things that affect you but you cannot control | Circle of Influence – Things you can affect but not fully control | Circle of Control – Things you can directly control.



# ANALYSING YOUR ACADEMIC PROFILE

Profile development is crucial. It helps individuals to stand out in a competitive market by establishing a well-defined area of expertise.

Your academic profile is the foundation of your career in academia – it shapes how you are perceived, opens doors to funding and collaborations, and helps you stand out in a competitive field. At the same time, reflecting on your

profile can reveal what you bring to non-academic careers as well.

For a career in academia, you should start working on the following aspects of your profile with a targeted approach, ideally as early as possible. To explore careers outside academia, it is worth taking stock of what you bring professionally – though outside academia, the focus shifts.

## 1 Essential for academia

- **Publications:** number (peer-reviewed), citation index, highly ranked journals, first authorship
- **Habilitation** or equivalent
- **Research profile:** what are your research focuses, where is your main expertise, subject areas
- **Grants and funding:** total amount and number of research grants secured
- **Teaching:** number of seminars, exercises etc., evaluations
- **Lectures:** number of lectures (keynote, invited, international)

## 2 Beneficial

- **Network and mentors:** established researchers in your network
- **(int.) Collaborations:** with which (int.) institutions have you collaborated

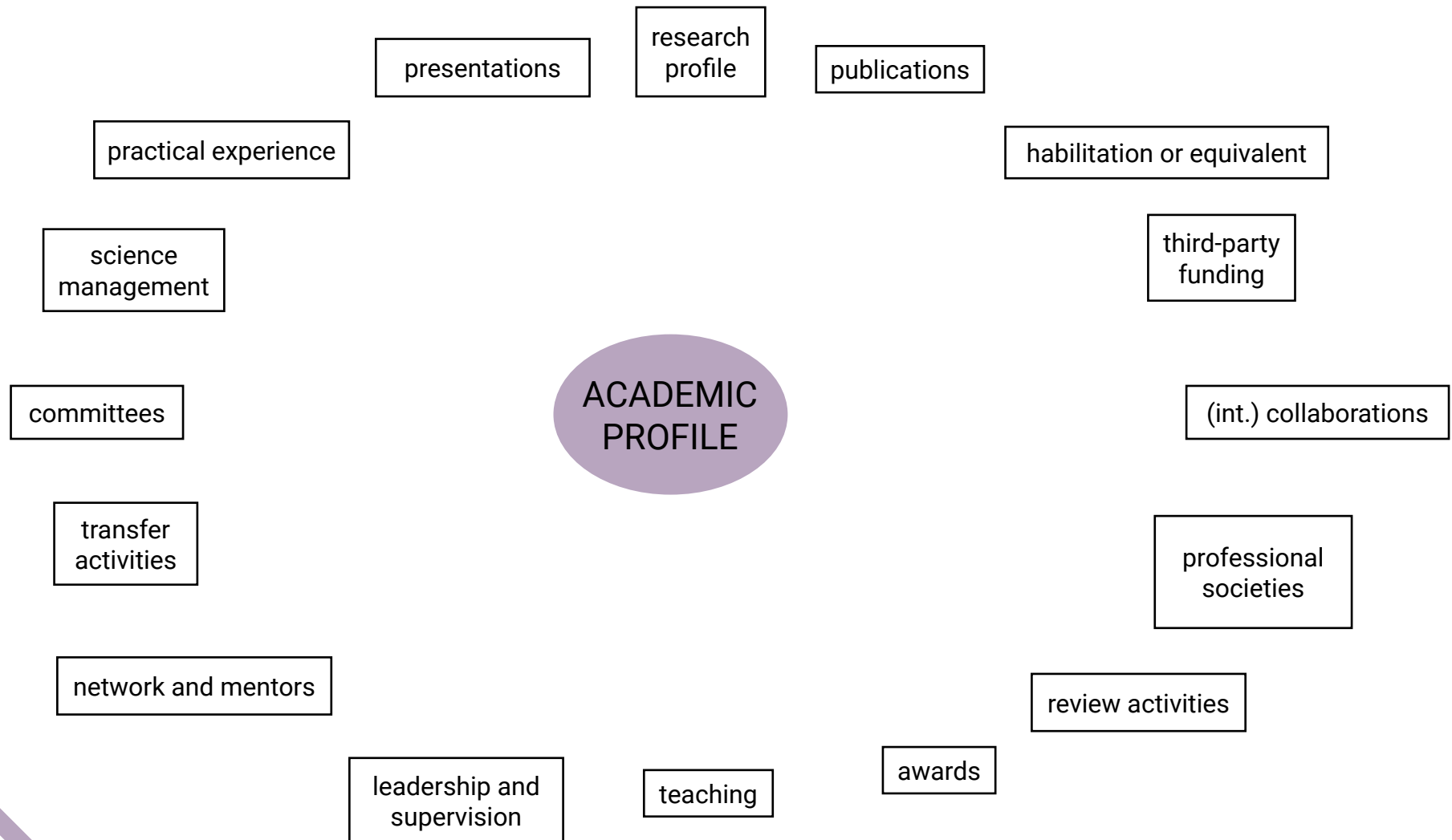
- **Awards:** which
- **Review activities:** journals, research proposals, editorships
- **Professional societies:** e.g. memberships, organisation of events
- **Management, leadership and supervision:** supervised theses, previous management responsibility
- **Science management:** experience in project management, organisation of conferences, career support
- **Committee activities:** membership or participation in commissions, working groups or committees
- **Transfer activities:** projects with transfer aspects, contributions to media, policy and society, patents
- **Practical experience:** professional experience outside the university



*Deep Dive: What makes you stand out from other researchers in your field (your unique selling point)? What is your own vision for your own contribution to science? What do you want to achieve in science? What questions do you want to answer?*

# ANALYZING YOUR ACADEMIC PROFILE

Indicate the aspects in which you have already achieved a great deal. Make bullet points that show what you have achieved and note where you still have gaps. Feel free to use a separate sheet if needed.



# REALITY CHECK: PERFORMANCE AND ENJOYMENT

Select the categories from the *Academic Profile* overview and sort them according to how well you perform the associated

tasks and how much you enjoy them. If you like, make notes on possible reasons.

	I am good at	
I dislike		I like
	I am not good at	



*When research tasks feel overwhelming, stress can block learning and growth, making it much harder to step outside your comfort zone. In that case, it is worth considering how you might reframe or restructure these tasks. Who can help you?*

# ASSESSING YOUR TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

For your personal career development, it is important to reflect on and assess your own skills. *Transferable skills* are skills you have developed in academia that are also valuable in careers beyond

research. Use the table below to assess how strongly each skill applies to you personally. You might also ask a colleague or friend to rate these skills for you to gain an outside perspective.

	FOUNDATIONAL	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	EXPERT
<b>COGNITIVE ABILITIES</b>				
Abstract thinking				
Critical thinking				
Analytical thinking				
Strategic thinking				
Systemic thinking				
Problem solving				
Creativity				
<b>WORKING WITH OTHERS</b>				
Interact professionally				
Develop networks				
Work in teams				
Ensure wellbeing at work				
Build mentor-mentee relationships				
Promote inclusion & diversity				
<b>SELF MANAGEMENT</b>				
Manage professional development				
Show entrepreneurial spirit				
Plan self-organisation				
Cope with pressure				
<b>MANAGING RESEARCH TOOLS</b>				
Manage research data				
Promote citizen science				
Manage intellectual property rights				
Operate open-source software				

# ASSESSING YOUR TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

FOUNDATIONAL INTERMEDIATE ADVANCED EXPERT

## MANAGING IMPACT

Participate in publication process

Disseminate results to the research community

Teach in academic or vocational contexts

Communicate to the broad public

Increase impact of science on policy & society

Promote open innovation

Promote the transfer of knowledge

## MANAGING RESEARCH

Mobilise resources

Manage projects

Negotiate

Evaluate research

Promote open access publications

## DOING RESEARCH

Have disciplinary expertise

Perform scientific research

Conduct interdisciplinary research

Write research documents

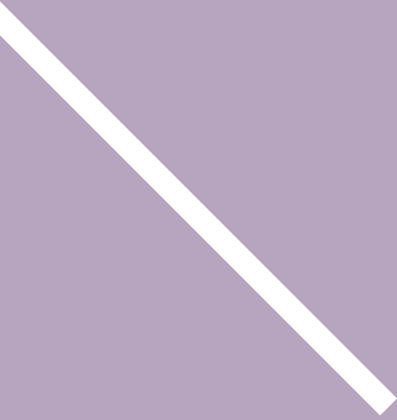
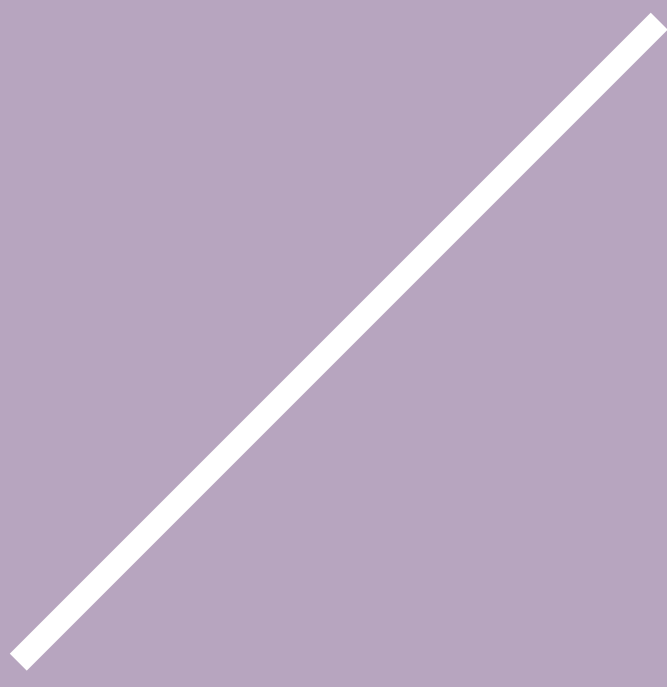
Apply research ethics and integrity principles

OTHER SKILLS (personally important)



*In which two to four areas of competence would you like to develop further in the near future (mark in table)? Where can you find information and opportunities?*

# TAKE ACTION



# DIRECTION AND FOCUS: MY CURRENT CAREER GOALS

Having a clear sense of your career goals is essential, as it provides direction and focus, ensuring that your efforts are directed towards well-defined objectives.

Considering your previous notes and gathered information, take a moment to clearly note which career goals are

currently important to you. Feel free to add the date so you can refer back to it when you return to this workbook. Include why achieving these goals matters to you or what benefits they might bring you. Formulate your goals using the SMART framework, ensuring each goal is: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.

**What are your current career goals in academia or outside academia?**

**What motivates you to achieve these goals and what is your hoped-for outcome?**



*Deep Dive for academia: Growing into the role – Developing a professorial mindset. What does it involve, and where can you find support if you are unsure?*  
*Deep Dive for leaving academia: What do you gain from the change? How will a future employer benefit from your academic profile?*

# ECOLOGY CHECK: ALIGNING GOALS WITH HOLISTIC WELL-BEING

The tool *ecology check* helps you ensure that your goals and changes are truly aligned with your overall well-being and life context. It is about looking beyond immediate benefits to consider the

broader impact on yourself and those around you. Reflecting on these aspects helps you make choices that are both meaningful and sustainable in the long run.

**How do these goals align with your core values and beliefs?**

**What might you lose or sacrifice if you pursue these goals?**

**What makes these goals feel truly your own, and in what ways might others' expectations have played a role?**



*Consider a holistic check: How do you feel when thinking about these goals? Are there negative emotions that should be recognised? | What is preventing you from making a change or taking the first step? | How will your goals affect your relationship system? | What impact might these goals have on your (mental) health?*

# MOVING FORWARD: NEXT STEPS AND MILESTONES TOWARD MY GOALS

You have defined your next major career goals and decided where you want to be. On this page, outline a *milestone plan* to achieve them, including a timeline, a development plan, and the key people to contact.

Be sure to break down each goal into smaller, manageable steps that you can track over time (e.g. SMART). Setting clear deadlines for each milestone will help you stay focused and measure your progress effectively. Identify at least five organizations, groups, or individuals that are important to your goal – people

whose work fascinates you or whom you find truly inspiring.

Once a week, take a moment to journal: What went well – what held you back? What do you want to create? What are two to three things you want to focus on next? And who or what do you need to support you on your career path?

Above all, remember to take care of yourself first. Block time in your calendar for what truly matters to your own growth. Just make sure it is a benefit for you too.



*If your plan involves applications, take time to prepare them well. Applications require strong, tailored cover letters and CVs. Helpful examples and guidance can be found in a Cambridge University publication: CVs and Cover Letters for PhDs and Postdocs.*

# WORKING WITH THIS CAREER WORKBOOK OVER A LONGER PERIOD OF TIME

Congratulations! You have taken the time to reflect on your own career development through individual exercises. This can be a conclusion or a beginning. You can now share your results with your supervisor, mentors, friends, or a career advisor to explore them further. They may offer you additional valuable perspectives. Or perhaps this workbook will be set aside for a while.

When you revisit it, a lot may have changed. Has another year of your postdoc passed? Have you had job

interviews? Are you (re-)questioning your current situation?

For some of the exercises in the workbook, it may be valuable to revisit them after some time has passed – to expand on your thoughts, to check whether your conclusions still hold true, to evaluate or adjust your goals.

You may have noticed that some page numbers are circled ○. We suggest revisiting these pages. But feel free to choose whatever appeals to you.

- **What has changed in your goals, values, or priorities since you first or the last time filled out this workbook?**
- **Looking back, which answers still feel true and which ones no longer resonate with where you are now?**
- **What experiences or insights over the past weeks or months have shaped the shifts you are noticing in your responses?**



*CHECK-OUT: If my career (development) had a catchphrase right now, it would be ...*

# NOTES SECTION



*For additional resources and career tools, the website of the German Postdoc Network is well worth a visit.*



# CONTACT

On our websites, you will find a wealth of valuable information on career paths and opportunities for postdocs. In addition, the UNIBUND Universities offer various informational events and workshops on career planning and development. Finally, you are welcome to contact us for personal career counselling.

## **Career counseling for postdocs at University of Jena**

postdoc@uni-jena.de

Events: [Graduate Academy](#)  
Workshops: [Qualification](#)  
Infos: [Postdoctoral Phase](#)  
Linkedin: [Postdocs in Jena](#)

## **Career counseling for postdocs at MLU Halle-Wittenberg**

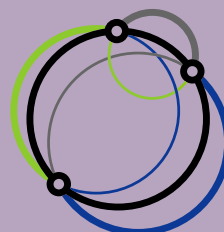
postdoc@ingra.uni-halle.de

Events: [Graduate Academy](#)  
Workshops: [Qualification](#)  
Infos: [Postdoctoral Phase](#)

## **Career counseling for postdocs at Leipzig University**

postdoc@uni-leipzig.de

Events: [LRDP](#)  
Workshops: [Qualification](#)  
Infos: [Postdoctoral Phase](#)  
Linkedin: [Postdocs in Leipzig](#)



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