



SCIENTIFIC PRODUCTIVITY FOR ACADEMIC RESEARCHERS

PRINCIPLES FOR PURPOSEFUL PRODUCTIVITY

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SCIENTIFIC PRODUCTIVITY

- The measurable outputs that drive academic success:
 - publications,
 - grants,
 - mentoring, and
 - community impact

A Faculty Handbook For Success

Advancement and Promotion at UCSF

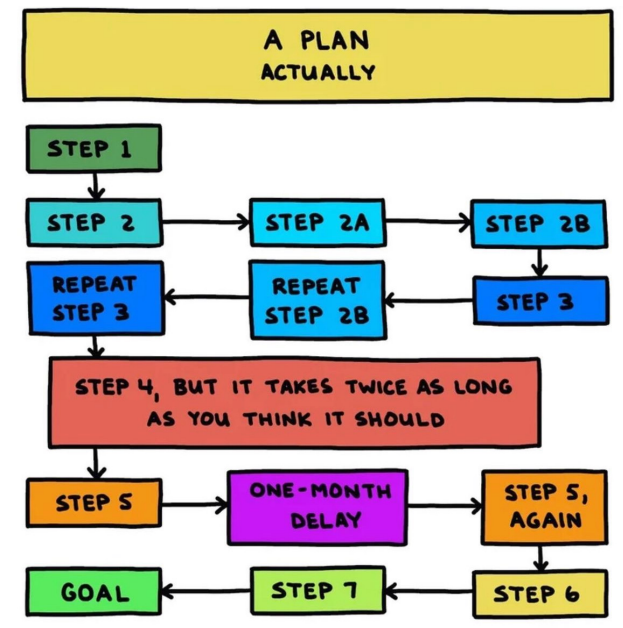
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<https://senate.ucsf.edu/FacultyHandbook-UCSF.pdf>

CAREER CHAPTERS: HOW PRODUCTIVITY EVOLVES

- Earlier career: laying a foundation (publishing, initial grant work, establishing collaborations).
- Mid-career: refining focus, securing major grants, mentoring others.
- Later career: expanding influence, leading larger-scale initiatives, building a legacy.
- Key activities (publishing, grant-seeking, mentoring) continue but evolve with experience and goals.



WHAT DOES “IMPACT” MEAN FOR YOU?

- Is it about advancing science?
- Is it about influencing the next generation?
- Is it about influencing public policy?



Aligning your daily actions with your long-term career goals ensures that your productivity reflects the values you care about most.



EMBRACE THE PROCESS AND TAKE
PRIDE IN THE INVISIBLE WORK THAT
DRIVES YOUR SUCCESS



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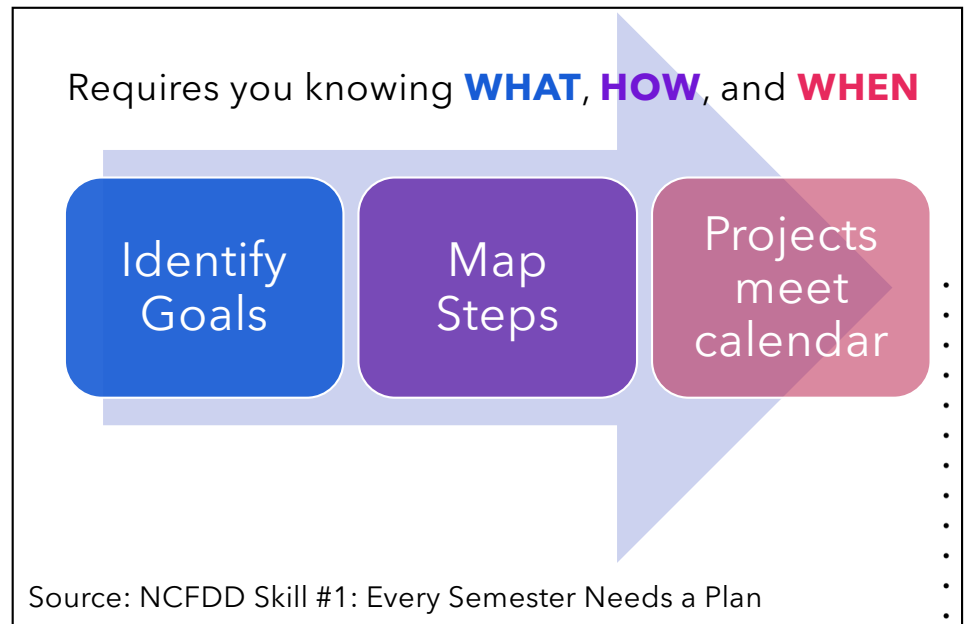
PRODUCTIVITY ISN'T SOLELY DETERMINED BY INDIVIDUAL EFFORT

Economic Stability	Social and Cultural Connections	Education Access and Quality	Neighborhood and Built Environment	University (work place) Access and Quality
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grant funding availability• Job security• Personal financial stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family and social responsibilities• Professional networks• Cultural inclusivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advanced training• Quality of academic mentorship• Access to academic resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to research infrastructure• Living conditions and commute• Work-life balance amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Institutional support for research• Workplace inclusivity• Policies• Human resources
Researcher's gender, race/ethnicity, socio-economic status, ability				



STRATEGY 1: CREATING AND UPDATING YOUR ROADMAP

- Create and review a Strategic Plan
 - Structure your “unstructured” time
 - Create a realistic plan to meet ALL of your needs
- Step 1: Year-long goals (e.g., publishing X papers, applying for Y grants)
- Step 2: Breaking down large projects into smaller tasks.
- Step 3: Quarterly check-ins (review progress)



STRATEGY 2: CREATE A VILLAGE

- Building and/or connecting with the types of **support** and **accountability** that will **sustain** and **motivate** you throughout the ups and downs.
- Productivity is a team effort
 - Build your own “board of directors”—mentors, colleagues, and collaborators who help guide your decisions.
 - Create a core team (research lab) and develop a culture of inclusion and development
- Develop a mentoring network
 - Near-peer (same stage of career)
 - Senior advisor (knows the landscape and can guide you to information)
 - Sponsor (can champion you when you are not in the room)



PRACTICAL TIPS FOR BUILDING MOMENTUM

- Weekly “check in” meeting with YOURSELF
- Write daily. On one project.
- Time Blocking for Deep Work
- Pomodoro Timer/Method
- Adopt the “NO AGENDA = NO MEETING” Moto
- Start the day with your high-value activity (NOT email)
- Schedule writing retreats
- Celebrate milestones!



THE WEEKLY "CHECK-IN" MEETING

The weekly planning meeting is a 30-minute assessment on what you need to do, when you will do it, and getting creative with the work that doesn't fit in. Creates accountability for the progress on your main goals.

Step #1: Set up your
skeleton (calendar)
5 minutes

Step #2: Brain Dump
10 minutes

Step #3: Tasks Meet
Time
10 minutes

Step #4: Review
progress and
celebrate
5 minutes

Full tutorial available in the National Center for Faculty Diversity and Development, Skill #2 webinar



THE WEEKLY "CHECK-IN" MEETING

- Pull out your weekly calendar
- Block out all your existing personal AND professional time commitments



Step #1: Set up your skeleton (calendar)
5 minutes

THE WEEKLY "CHECK-IN" MEETING

Sample To-Do List

- Set up your main categories of responsibilities (Research, teaching, service, and personal)
- Write down everything you need to do this week in its appropriate category
- Don't forget your strategic plan!!!

Research & Writing	Teaching	Service	Personal
1.	1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.	4.
5.	5.	5.	5.
6.	6.	6.	6.
7.	7.	7.	7.
8.	8.	8.	8.
9.	9.	9.	9.
10.	10.	10.	10.

Step #2: Brain Dump
10 minutes



THE WEEKLY "CHECK-IN" MEETING

- Place your tasks into your calendar (specific day for a specific time)
- They are NOT all going to fit, so put the most important ones in first
- Figure out what to do with the tasks that don't fit

Before:



After:



Step #3: Tasks Meet Time
10 minutes

THE WEEKLY "CHECK-IN" MEETING

- Review your last week
- Write down everything you accomplished (big and small milestones)
- Tell someone



Step #4: Review and Celebrate!
5 minutes



RESOURCES FOR MAXIMIZING PRODUCTIVITY

- NCFDD (National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity): Tools for career development and productivity.
- SF BUILD Counter-Initiative Symposium: An annual event for networking, idea exchange, and collaboration.
- Harvard Business Review: Coaching Real Leaders: Leadership skills and mentoring strategies for leaders.



CONCLUSION

- Productivity flows from purpose: aligning your work with your values leads to sustainable productivity.
- Strategic planning ensures long-term and short-term goals are in sync with your definition of impact.
- Building a supportive network enhances your productivity and helps foster success in others.



Most of all, be nice to yourself.



THANK YOU!



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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Furtak, E. M. (2016). My writing productivity pipeline. The Chronicle of Higher Education. Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com/article/My-Writing-Productivity/236712>.
- Harvard Business Review: Coaching Real Leaders: Leadership skills and mentoring strategies for leaders.
- NCFDD (National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity): Tools for career development and productivity.
- SF BUILD Counter Initiative Annual Symposium (Sept 2026)

