

An Effective Personal Development Plan and Goals

Academic Partnerships – Academics among us

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HSBC – Academic Partnerships

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The PDP Basics

What is a Personal Development Plan (PDP)?

Definition: A structured framework used to assess skills, identify growth areas, and create a roadmap for professional and personal advancement.

The Three Core Questions

1. **Where am I now?** (Current skills)
2. **Where do I want to be?** (Specific goals)
3. **How will I get there?** (The strategy)

Key Characteristics

- **Individual:** Tailored to your unique “squiggly” path.
- **Iterative:** Constantly updated as roles change.
- **Action-Oriented:** Focuses on behaviors, not just wishes.

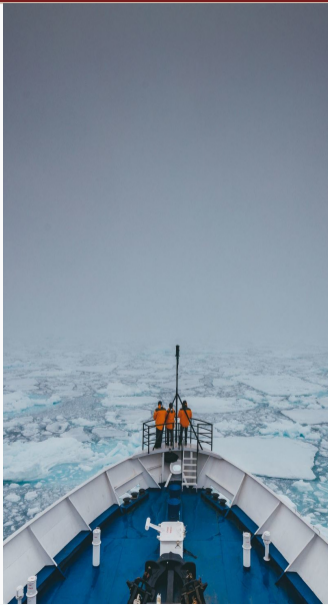
"A PDP turns a vague ambition into a series of manageable, high-performance recovery and growth cycles."

Why a PDP?

Imagine a ship at sea, water and wind all around you.

To define our strategy (course to sail), we need:

- Know where we are
- Know what type of ship we have
- Where we want to go
- Where obstacles are (land, shallow water, shipping routes, etc.)

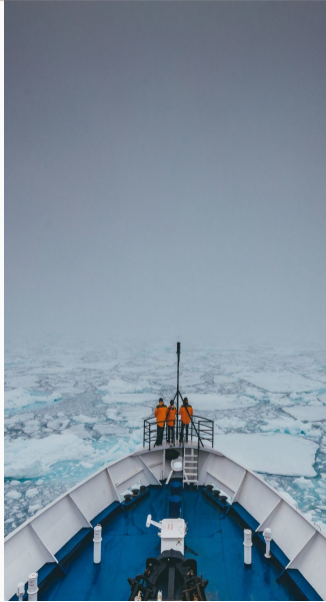


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Imagine a person with a purpose working for a corporate.

To define our strategy (PDP), we need:

- Know our strengths, weaknesses
- Know our drivers, and blockers
- Know our Purpose
- Know tools and possibilities

Why a written PDP?

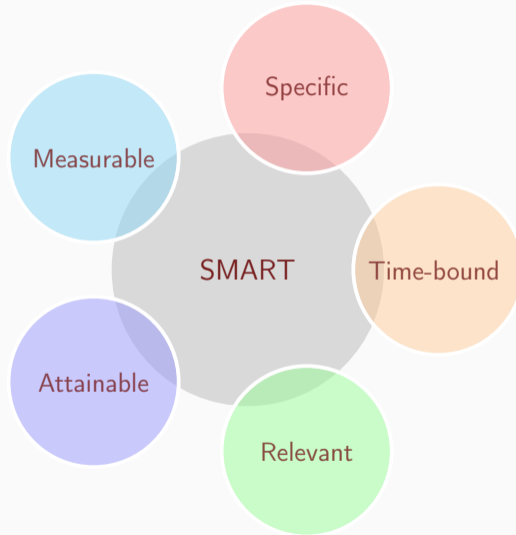
- Memory is malleable
 - We won't do everything and
 - will forget what we planned
- Once on paper it can be shared
 - Line manager
 - Mentor
 - Coach



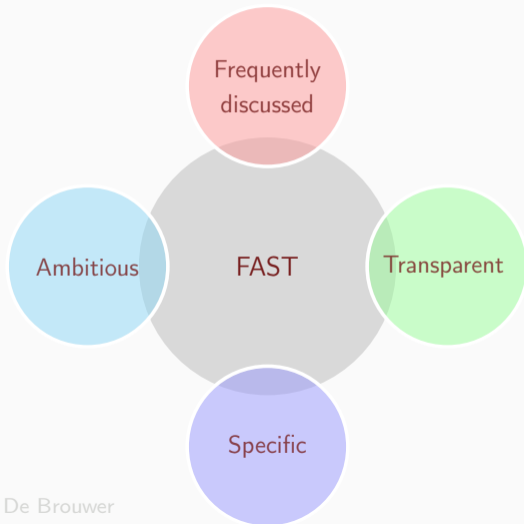
- It becomes a tool
 - Enables to follow up frequently
 - Enables to celebrate success:
Plan year - month - week - day - ...
 - Prioritise: don't do what is nice and easy, but do what is needed
 - Gives you endorphins when barring out something

Setting Goals

SMART Goals?



FAST goals

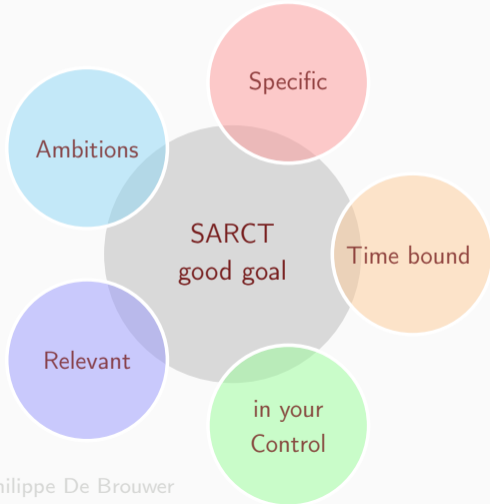


FAST beats SMART, but
FARST brings you farther
than FAST

See <https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/with-goals-fast-beats-smart/>

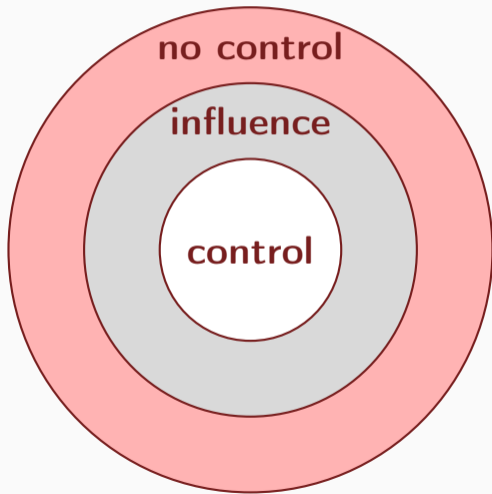
A better framework

A good goal is ...



Efficiently working with goals includes ...





- **Control**

- Your own emotions and judgments
- Your own decisions and actions
- Your preparation and effort

- **Influence**

- Reactions of others (communication)
- Team motivation (example and leadership)
- Information (asking good questions)

- **No control:** Accept with equanimity

- Corporate strategy and reorganizations
- Financial markets and economic conditions
- Others' final decisions and career paths

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Goal Example	Specific	Ambitious	Relevant	Control	Time B.
Become analyst in the data team	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗

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Apply for STEP in data next mnth	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Learn Python	✗	unclear	✓	✓	✗
Read Python book X next month	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

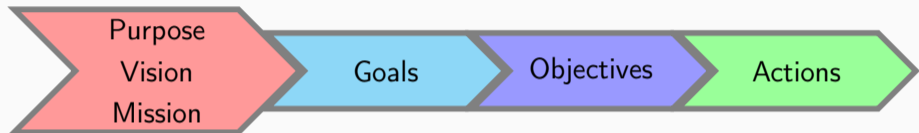
Working with goals

The art of breaking down FMNT



Setting Milestones

Executing this



Setting Milestones

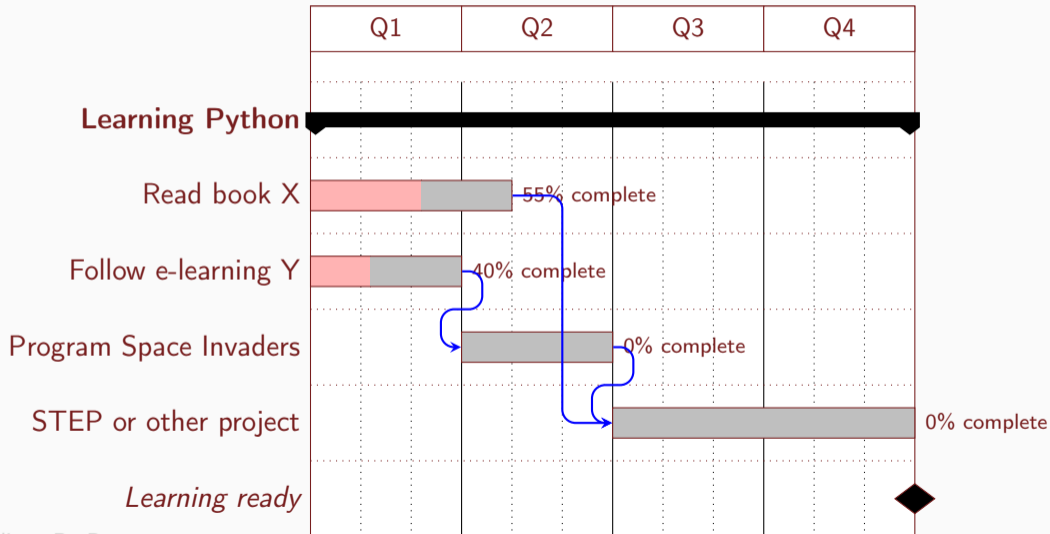
Executing this



by breaking it down to this:



A quarterly plan



The Monthly and Weekly Plan

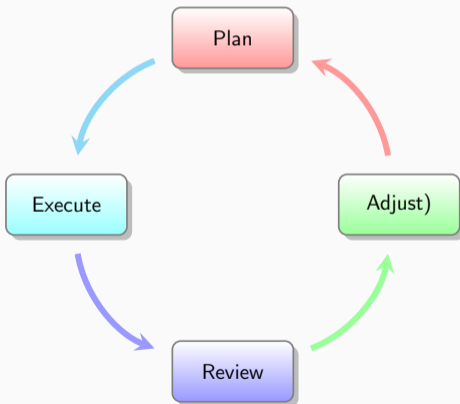
Set monthly goals to meet your quarterly goals, then set weekly goals to meet your monthly goals.

The weekly plan is then ready:

- set a weekly and daily goal
- plan recurrent meetings
- plan recovery time (e.g. lunch)
- group recurring activities (e.g. replying calls, emails, etc.)
- block time for reflection, planning, evaluating and uninterrupted focus on your goals

Working with a PDP: a continuous process

Getting started is 80% of the work.

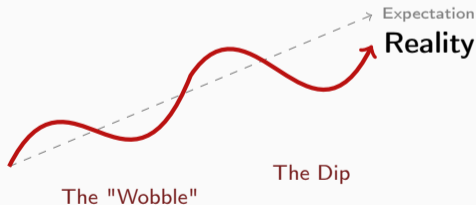


Focus and Recovery

The "Wobbly Line" Concept

Source: Helen Tupper & Sarah Ellis (*The Squiggly Career*)

- **The Myth:** Career growth is a straight, linear ladder.
- **The Reality:** Progress is a "wobbly line" filled with dips, plateaus, and pivots.
- **The Shift:** Success isn't about avoiding the wobble; it's about navigating it.



The Critical Pillar: Recovery

In the “Squiggly” framework, the **recovery** after a wobble is more important than the wobble itself.

Why Recovery Matters

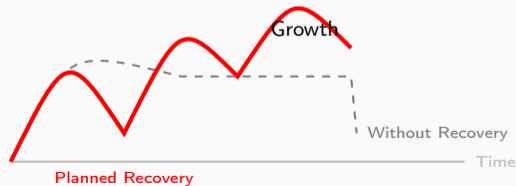
- **Resilience Building:** Recovery is a muscle. The faster you bounce back, the more adaptable you become for future “unknowns.”
- **Data Collection:** Dips provide unique insights into your strengths and limits that a “straight line” never could.
- **Psychological Safety:** Accepting that wobbles are inevitable reduces the paralyzing fear of failure.

“Your career isn’t a ladder to be climbed; it’s a series of squiggles to be mastered.”

Strategic Recovery: The Engine of Performance

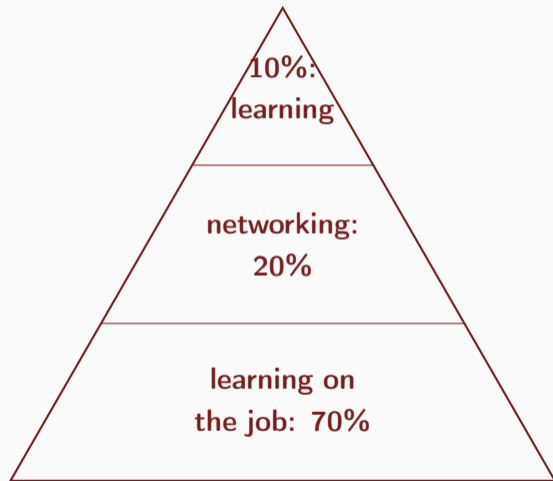
High performance is not constant exertion; it is the **rhythm** between stress and recovery.

- **Preventing Burnout:** Unplanned wobbles often stem from "running on empty." Planned recovery keeps the wobbly line from becoming a downward spiral.
- **The Supercompensation Effect:** Muscles, brain and spirit grow stronger during the *rest* period following a challenge, not during the challenge.
- **Cognitive Reframing:** Recovery provides the distance needed to look at a "wobble" objectively and extract the lessons.



Learning New Skills

The 10-20-70 Rule



- **10% of results from formal training**
 - university, school, course,
 - books, eLearning, video, etc.
- **20% of results through networking**
 - mentor, coach, sponsor,
 - conferences, discussion fora, Reddit,
 - peers, asking feedback, discussions, etc.
- **70% of results from learning by doing**
 - project, STEP, day-job,
 - failing ...

Conclusions

3 Essential Steps

1. **Write your PDP TODAY** – Getting started is 80% of success
2. **Set SARCT goals you CONTROL** – Specific, Ambitious, Relevant, in Control, Time-bound
3. **Plan 70-20-10 learning experience** – 70% doing, 20% networking, 10% courses

Start NOW

Your future self will thank you.

Your Weekly Rhythm

