Challenging Academic Progression

Nadia Mazza

Lancaster University

May 2021

Outline

- 1 Challenges in academia
- Quick wins & Long term progression strategy
- 3 Takeaway

 In academia, all keeps changing, and I will never reach "the top", because there is simply no apex.

- In academia, all keeps changing, and I will never reach "the top", because there is simply no apex.
- Barriers and facilitators will keep evolving throughout my career. . .

- In academia, all keeps changing, and I will never reach "the top", because there is simply no apex.
- Barriers and facilitators will keep evolving throughout my career. . .
- ...and I, and my priorities, change too!

- In academia, all keeps changing, and I will never reach "the top", because there is simply no apex.
- Barriers and facilitators will keep evolving throughout my career. . .
- ...and I, and my priorities, change too!
- So, there is always an area in which I can improve, and I need to make progress to feel satisfied with myself. How can I succeed?

- In academia, all keeps changing, and I will never reach "the top", because there is simply no apex.
- Barriers and facilitators will keep evolving throughout my career. . .
- ...and I, and my priorities, change too!
- So, there is always an area in which I can improve, and I need to make progress to feel satisfied with myself. How can I succeed?

Don't panic!!!

Everyone is invited to take pen and paper (or whatever writing tools you prefer) to participate in this first session of the workshop.

Let's proceed with method. Step 1: list the external obstacles.



Let's proceed with method. Step 1: list the external obstacles.

Financial difficulties;



Let's proceed with method. Step 1: list the external obstacles.

- Financial difficulties;
- Lack of family/friends support;

Let's proceed with method. Step 1: list the external obstacles.

- Financial difficulties;
- Lack of family/friends support;
- Unwelcoming working environment and colleagues;

Let's proceed with method. Step 1: list the external obstacles.

- Financial difficulties;
- Lack of family/friends support;
- Unwelcoming working environment and colleagues;
- Workload: overload and unhelpful workload allocation;

Let's proceed with method. Step 1: list the external obstacles.

- Financial difficulties;
- Lack of family/friends support;
- Unwelcoming working environment and colleagues;
- Workload: overload and unhelpful workload allocation;
- ECRs: no permanent post = uncertainty for tomorrow;

Let's proceed with method. Step 1: list the external obstacles.

- Financial difficulties:
- Lack of family/friends support;
- Unwelcoming working environment and colleagues;
- Workload: overload and unhelpful workload allocation;
- ECRs: no permanent post = uncertainty for tomorrow;
- Barriers specific to each individual and their circumstances;

Let's proceed with method. Step 1: list the external obstacles.

- Financial difficulties;
- Lack of family/friends support;
- Unwelcoming working environment and colleagues;
- Workload: overload and unhelpful workload allocation;
- ECRs: no permanent post = uncertainty for tomorrow;
- Barriers specific to each individual and their circumstances;
- ...and of course: a world pandemic and all its consequences!

Let's proceed with method. Step 2: list the inner obstacles.



Let's proceed with method. Step 2: list the inner obstacles.

Impostor syndrome;

Let's proceed with method. Step 2: list the inner obstacles.

- Impostor syndrome;
- Mental/physical health difficulties;

Let's proceed with method. Step 2: list the inner obstacles.

- Impostor syndrome;
- Mental/physical health difficulties;
- Lack of confidence;



Let's proceed with method. Step 2: list the inner obstacles.

- Impostor syndrome;
- Mental/physical health difficulties;
- Lack of confidence;
- Fear of the unknown;

Let's proceed with method. Step 2: list the inner obstacles.

- Impostor syndrome;
- Mental/physical health difficulties;
- Lack of confidence;
- Fear of the unknown;
- Doubts about our choices;

Let's proceed with method. Step 2: list the inner obstacles.

- Impostor syndrome;
- Mental/physical health difficulties;
- Lack of confidence;
- Fear of the unknown;
- Doubts about our choices;
- Dwindling motivation;

Let's proceed with method. Step 2: list the inner obstacles.

- Impostor syndrome;
- Mental/physical health difficulties;
- Lack of confidence;
- Fear of the unknown;
- Doubts about our choices;
- Dwindling motivation;
- Changing priorities;



Let's proceed with method. Step 2: list the inner obstacles.

- Impostor syndrome;
- Mental/physical health difficulties;
- Lack of confidence;
- Fear of the unknown;
- Doubts about our choices;
- Dwindling motivation;
- Changing priorities;
- Barriers specific to each individual and their circumstances.



Take your "writing tools";

- Take your "writing tools";
- Split a page in 3 columns;

- Take your "writing tools";
- Split a page in 3 columns;
- RHS = write your positive achievements in the last 12 months;

- Take your "writing tools";
- Split a page in 3 columns;
- RHS = write your positive achievements in the last 12 months;
- LHS = write your failed attempts in the last 12 months;

- Take your "writing tools";
- Split a page in 3 columns;
- RHS = write your positive achievements in the last 12 months;
- LHS = write your failed attempts in the last 12 months;
- Middle column = write your work in progress.

- Take your "writing tools";
- Split a page in 3 columns;
- RHS = write your positive achievements in the last 12 months;
- LHS = write your failed attempts in the last 12 months;
- Middle column = write your work in progress.

Homework

The next two presentations may help you fill the 3 columns, or answer some points you've raised in them.

We can return to points in this "Self-assessment exercise" during the discussion at 14:45.

• Listen to your colleagues and students: listening is a virtue and a skill;

- Listen to your colleagues and students: listening is a virtue and a skill;
- Be a good colleague fulfil your duties on time and giving 100% satisfaction;

- Listen to your colleagues and students: listening is a virtue and a skill;
- Be a good colleague fulfil your duties on time and giving 100% satisfaction; (and with a smile if possible!)

- Listen to your colleagues and students: listening is a virtue and a skill;
- Be a good colleague fulfil your duties on time and giving 100% satisfaction; (and with a smile if possible!)
- Be a good colleague friendly, honest, trustworthy;

- Listen to your colleagues and students: listening is a virtue and a skill;
- Be a good colleague fulfil your duties on time and giving 100% satisfaction; (and with a smile if possible!)
- Be a good colleague friendly, honest, trustworthy;
- Seize opportunities to show your skills: research, teaching, etc;

- Listen to your colleagues and students: listening is a virtue and a skill;
- Be a good colleague fulfil your duties on time and giving 100% satisfaction; (and with a smile if possible!)
- Be a good colleague friendly, honest, trustworthy;
- Seize opportunities to show your skills: research, teaching, etc;
- Is there some training or qualification that you could/should take?

- Listen to your colleagues and students: listening is a virtue and a skill;
- Be a good colleague fulfil your duties on time and giving 100% satisfaction; (and with a smile if possible!)
- Be a good colleague friendly, honest, trustworthy;
- Seize opportunities to show your skills: research, teaching, etc;
- Is there some training or qualification that you could/should take?
- Events happen fast so don't panic!

- Listen to your colleagues and students: listening is a virtue and a skill;
- Be a good colleague fulfil your duties on time and giving 100% satisfaction; (and with a smile if possible!)
- Be a good colleague friendly, honest, trustworthy;
- Seize opportunities to show your skills: research, teaching, etc;
- Is there some training or qualification that you could/should take?
- Events happen fast so don't panic! Proceed with method: analyse what's happening to you and how it's affecting you.

- Listen to your colleagues and students: listening is a virtue and a skill;
- Be a good colleague fulfil your duties on time and giving 100% satisfaction; (and with a smile if possible!)
- Be a good colleague friendly, honest, trustworthy;
- Seize opportunities to show your skills: research, teaching, etc;
- Is there some training or qualification that you could/should take?
- Events happen fast so don't panic! Proceed with method: analyse
 what's happening to you and how it's affecting you. Hence, devise a
 good strategy to follow "now".

- Listen to your colleagues and students: listening is a virtue and a skill;
- Be a good colleague fulfil your duties on time and giving 100% satisfaction; (and with a smile if possible!)
- Be a good colleague friendly, honest, trustworthy;
- Seize opportunities to show your skills: research, teaching, etc;
- Is there some training or qualification that you could/should take?
- Events happen fast so don't panic! Proceed with method: analyse
 what's happening to you and how it's affecting you. Hence, devise a
 good strategy to follow "now".

Exercise!

Quick wins depend on individual circumstances: your institution, your peers, your research area, etc. What are your specific "quick wins"?

Nadia Ma

Lancaster Univers

00000

 Make a periodic self-assessment and commit to your SMART Action plan (cf. below);

- Make a periodic self-assessment and commit to your SMART Action plan (cf. below);
- Build up your resilience: challenge yourself to stretch your limits;

- Make a periodic self-assessment and commit to your SMART Action plan (cf. below);
- Build up your resilience: challenge yourself to stretch your limits;
- Identify (or create) your friendly support group, and nurture the relationships: avoid isolation;

- Make a periodic self-assessment and commit to your SMART Action plan (cf. below);
- Build up your resilience: challenge yourself to stretch your limits;
- Identify (or create) your friendly support group, and nurture the relationships: avoid isolation;
- Keep your mind open for opportunities, and seize them when they present themselves;

- Make a periodic self-assessment and commit to your SMART Action plan (cf. below);
- Build up your resilience: challenge yourself to stretch your limits;
- Identify (or create) your friendly support group, and nurture the relationships: avoid isolation;
- Keep your mind open for opportunities, and seize them when they present themselves;
- Keep trying: perseverance is key to success, and a failed attempt may be step 1 towards success;

- Make a periodic self-assessment and commit to your SMART Action plan (cf. below);
- Build up your resilience: challenge yourself to stretch your limits;
- Identify (or create) your friendly support group, and nurture the relationships: avoid isolation;
- Keep your mind open for opportunities, and seize them when they present themselves;
- Keep trying: perseverance is key to success, and a failed attempt may be step 1 towards success;
- Be prepared for the next (unknown) change around the corner: you don't know what it is, but you know it will come soon!

- Make a periodic self-assessment and commit to your SMART Action plan (cf. below);
- Build up your resilience: challenge yourself to stretch your limits;
- Identify (or create) your friendly support group, and nurture the relationships: avoid isolation;
- Keep your mind open for opportunities, and seize them when they present themselves;
- Keep trying: perseverance is key to success, and a failed attempt may be step 1 towards success;
- Be prepared for the next (unknown) change around the corner: you don't know what it is, but you know it will come soon!
- What is your plan B, if one (or more) barrier becomes unbearable?

Who wants to be a mathematician? What's my Plan B?



Figure: Camp Claudine, Religious of Jesus and Mary, May-June 2004, Haiti

(ロ) (部) (注) (注) 注 のQの

A honest self-assessment exercise helps to identify your strengths, weaknesses, obstacles, and perhaps current limits.

A honest self-assessment exercise helps to identify your strengths, weaknesses, obstacles, and perhaps current limits.

SMART= (one interpretation; for alternatives, cf. Wikipedia)

A honest self-assessment exercise helps to identify your strengths, weaknesses, obstacles, and perhaps current limits.

SMART= (one interpretation; for alternatives, cf. Wikipedia)

Specific: specific target area and expected outcome?

A honest self-assessment exercise helps to identify your strengths, weaknesses, obstacles, and perhaps current limits.

SMART= (one interpretation; for alternatives, cf. Wikipedia)

- Specific: specific target area and expected outcome?
- Measurable: quantifier(s) of success?

A honest self-assessment exercise helps to identify your strengths, weaknesses, obstacles, and perhaps current limits.

SMART= (one interpretation; for alternatives, cf. Wikipedia)

- Specific: specific target area and expected outcome?
- Measurable: quantifier(s) of success?
- Ambitious: is progression visible?

A honest self-assessment exercise helps to identify your strengths, weaknesses, obstacles, and perhaps current limits.

SMART= (one interpretation; for alternatives, cf. Wikipedia)

- Specific: specific target area and expected outcome?
- Measurable: quantifier(s) of success?
- Ambitious: is progression visible?
- Realistic: can you do it?

A honest self-assessment exercise helps to identify your strengths, weaknesses, obstacles, and perhaps current limits.

SMART= (one interpretation; for alternatives, cf. Wikipedia)

- Specific: specific target area and expected outcome?
- Measurable: quantifier(s) of success?
- Ambitious: is progression visible?
- Realistic: can you do it?
- Time-bound: what is your target deadline?

A honest self-assessment exercise helps to identify your strengths, weaknesses, obstacles, and perhaps current limits.

SMART= (one interpretation; for alternatives, cf. Wikipedia)

- Specific: specific target area and expected outcome?
- Measurable: quantifier(s) of success?
- Ambitious: is progression visible?
- Realistic: can you do it?
- Time-bound: what is your target deadline?

A useful action plan, whatever its purpose, must be "SMART" and specific to each individual.

A honest self-assessment exercise helps to identify your strengths, weaknesses, obstacles, and perhaps current limits.

SMART= (one interpretation; for alternatives, cf. Wikipedia)

- Specific: specific target area and expected outcome?
- Measurable: quantifier(s) of success?
- Ambitious: is progression visible?
- Realistic: can you do it?
- Time-bound: what is your target deadline?

A useful action plan, whatever its purpose, must be "SMART" and specific to each individual.

The self-assessment exercise is necessary for making your own SMART action plan, relevant for your (academic) progression.

- (ロ) (個) (注) (注) (注) (注) かんの

Sustainable inner strength comes from inside.

Sustainable inner strength comes from inside. So how can each one become more resilient?

Sustainable inner strength comes from inside. So how can each one become more resilient?

Diversify your skills (academic and other);

Sustainable inner strength comes from inside. So how can each one become more resilient?

- Diversify your skills (academic and other);
- Safeguard your mental and physical health;

Sustainable inner strength comes from inside. So how can each one become more resilient?

- Diversify your skills (academic and other);
- Safeguard your mental and physical health;
- Seek trustworthy friends and nurture relationships;

Sustainable inner strength comes from inside. So how can each one become more resilient?

- Diversify your skills (academic and other);
- Safeguard your mental and physical health;
- Seek trustworthy friends and nurture relationships;
- Find role models whose example inspire you;

Sustainable inner strength comes from inside. So how can each one become more resilient?

- Diversify your skills (academic and other);
- Safeguard your mental and physical health;
- Seek trustworthy friends and nurture relationships;
- Find role models whose example inspire you;
- Identify your haven (your "feel good" place, walk, hobby, etc);

Sustainable inner strength comes from inside. So how can each one become more resilient?

- Diversify your skills (academic and other);
- Safeguard your mental and physical health;
- Seek trustworthy friends and nurture relationships;
- Find role models whose example inspire you;
- Identify your haven (your "feel good" place, walk, hobby, etc);
- Don't be afraid of the unknown;

Sustainable inner strength comes from inside. So how can each one become more resilient?

- Diversify your skills (academic and other);
- Safeguard your mental and physical health;
- Seek trustworthy friends and nurture relationships;
- Find role models whose example inspire you;
- Identify your haven (your "feel good" place, walk, hobby, etc);
- Don't be afraid of the unknown;
- Welcome change . . . with an analytical mind.



• Academic progression is challenging. . .

- Academic progression is challenging. . .
- and it's up to me to seize the challenge!

- Academic progression is challenging. . .
- and it's up to me to seize the challenge!
- But in order to do so, I need to know where I am, and my actual boundaries.

- Academic progression is challenging. . .
- and it's up to me to seize the challenge!
- But in order to do so, I need to know where I am, and my actual boundaries.
- These evolve with time, in a fast changing world, affected by all sorts of ailments.

- Academic progression is challenging. . .
- and it's up to me to seize the challenge!
- But in order to do so, I need to know where I am, and my actual boundaries.
- These evolve with time, in a fast changing world, affected by all sorts of ailments.
- Therefore a periodic self-assessment, like a health check, helps me clarify my position,

- Academic progression is challenging. . .
- and it's up to me to seize the challenge!
- But in order to do so, I need to know where I am, and my actual boundaries.
- These evolve with time, in a fast changing world, affected by all sorts of ailments.
- Therefore a periodic self-assessment, like a health check, helps me clarify my position, set realistic ambitions,

- Academic progression is challenging. . .
- and it's up to me to seize the challenge!
- But in order to do so, I need to know where I am, and my actual boundaries.
- These evolve with time, in a fast changing world, affected by all sorts of ailments.
- Therefore a periodic self-assessment, like a health check, helps me clarify my position, set realistic ambitions, and identify areas for improvement.

- Academic progression is challenging. . .
- and it's up to me to seize the challenge!
- But in order to do so, I need to know where I am, and my actual boundaries
- These evolve with time, in a fast changing world, affected by all sorts of ailments.
- Therefore a periodic self-assessment, like a health check, helps me clarify my position, set realistic ambitions, and identify areas for improvement.
- Then I can review my SMART action plan in line with the current trends, and keep progressing.

4 D > 4 A > 4 B > 4 B >

Change is often frightening, and being afraid isn't helpful.

Change is often frightening, and being afraid isn't helpful. One thing is sure: I can't stop our changing society. . .

Change is often frightening, and being afraid isn't helpful. One thing is sure: I can't stop our changing society... so I'd better welcome change... with a pinch of salt and wisdom:

Change is often frightening, and being afraid isn't helpful. One thing is sure: I can't stop our changing society... so I'd better welcome change... with a pinch of salt and wisdom:

analyse what is changing and how,

Change is often frightening, and being afraid isn't helpful. One thing is sure: I can't stop our changing society... so I'd better welcome change... with a pinch of salt and wisdom:

- analyse what is changing and how,
- adapt my strategy and action plan in line with change,

Change is often frightening, and being afraid isn't helpful. One thing is sure: I can't stop our changing society... so I'd better welcome change... with a pinch of salt and wisdom:

- analyse what is changing and how,
- adapt my strategy and action plan in line with change,
- and keep working with a smile...

Change is often frightening, and being afraid isn't helpful. One thing is sure: I can't stop our changing society... so I'd better welcome change... with a pinch of salt and wisdom:

- analyse what is changing and how,
- adapt my strategy and action plan in line with change,
- and keep working with a smile... there must be something good for me in it, and

Change is often frightening, and being afraid isn't helpful. One thing is sure: I can't stop our changing society... so I'd better welcome change... with a pinch of salt and wisdom:

- analyse what is changing and how,
- adapt my strategy and action plan in line with change,
- and keep working with a smile... there must be something good for me in it, and
- that may help my progression in academia?!



Change is often frightening, and being afraid isn't helpful. One thing is sure: I can't stop our changing society... so I'd better welcome change... with a pinch of salt and wisdom:

- analyse what is changing and how,
- adapt my strategy and action plan in line with change,
- and keep working with a smile... there must be something good for me in it, and
- that may help my progression in academia?!

Questions?

