Achieving your goals and performing more successfully in your PhD

Course description

This evidence-based course helps you achieve your goals and become more effective in your PhD project, considering your personal situation. We’ll discuss how to set good goals and achieve them, how to structure and prioritize your work, how to get the most out of the people that you work with, and how to best manage your time and the risks in your project. Along the way, you’ll gain important insights into your personality, your personal strengths and your pitfalls.

Previous participants characterized the course as engaging, fun and open to interaction. One PhD candidate described it as “a course where you will not only learn the theory of how you should manage your project and yourself but will also discuss how you can directly implement it in your own situation.”

In four sessions, this course explores a variety of complementary subjects:

Session 1
- Learn to apply the scientific guidelines to set better, more effective goals;
- Discover the principles that guide you and their impact on your behavior and motivation.

Session 2
- Establish what drives and motivates you in your work;
- Analyze your behavioral strengths and learn how to apply these optimally in your work and in your collaboration with others.

Session 3
- Identify your personal skills and find out how to effectively develop new and existing skills;
- Learn how to get more useful feedback from your promoter and supervisor as well as colleagues.

Session 4
- Use practical time management strategies to get more out of your limited time each day;
- Identify possible threats to your project and learn the strategies to deal with them.
Course objectives

After this course, you will:

- Be able to set clear and effective goals, understand how you can structure and prioritize your work, and better manage your time and risk;
- Have a clear sense of your drivers, strengths and skills, guiding your future (career) choices;
- Be more proficient in how you interact and collaborate with people in order to get things done and attain your goals.

Teaching method

The course provides an equal balance between theoretical background, discussions and exercises. It incorporates elements of industrial and organizational psychology, drawing from the research of scientists such as Edwin Locke, Albert Bandura, Piers Steel, Peter Gollwitzer, Gabriele Oettingen, Anders Ericsson and Till Roenneberg. It also builds on personal efficacy best practices as identified by leading thinkers like Peter Drucker. Finally, several elements are lifted from professional project management methodologies.

The interactive group exercises will help you develop a solid understanding of the covered topics by putting the theory to practice using your own personal examples. During the course, participants are actively involved and encouraged to share their own experiences and insights.

About the trainers

This course is given by Jacques and Michiel Jongerden of Exergy Training.

Exergy Training was founded in 2009 by several communication, training and coaching professionals, including Michiel Jongerden. He is an organizational psychologist with extensive experience in training young professionals. He is also a 3rd degree black belt martial arts specialist. Occasionally, he uses insights from his martial arts to explain abstract concepts in an engaging way.

Jacques Jongerden, Michiel’s elder brother, started his career in consultancy and management work for various corporations. Nowadays, he is involved in sustainable energy R&D and business development, particularly for energy storage. He helps reinforce the course with real-world experience of what works and what doesn’t.