Achieving your goals and performing more successfully in your PhD

Course description

This personal development course aims to help you become more effective in your PhD project. We’ll discuss how to set good goals and achieve them, how to improve your interaction, 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 will gain important insights into your personality, your personal strengths, and your pitfalls. For a full overview of the subjects refer to the course contents below.

Previous participants characterized the course as engaging, fun and open to interaction. One PhD candidate described it as “improving your ability to get things done, not just in your PhD project, but also in your subsequent career.”

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

**Session 1**

- Learn to apply the scientific guidelines to set better goals;
- Identify the goals in your work and increase their effectiveness;
- Discover the qualities and principles that you consider to be important, and their impact on your behavior and your motivation.

**Session 2**

- Establish what drives and motivates you in your work and in the pursuit of your goals;
- Analyze your behavioral strengths, learn how to apply these optimally and discover how they affect your collaboration with others.

**Session 3**

- Identify your personal skills and learn how to effectively develop new and existing skills;
- Learn how nonverbal behavior and expectations affect your performance, and how you can use these in surprising ways to become more effective in your work.

**Session 4**

- Learn how to get more useful, helpful feedback;
- 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:

- Have acquired a valuable set of tools that will serve you in your work, such as the ability to set clear and effective goals, to keep developing your skills, and to 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 cooperate with people and how you interact with them in order to get things done and to attain your goals.

Teaching method

The course provides an equal balance between theoretical background, discussions and exercises. It incorporates elements of psychology, drawing from the research of prominent scientists such as Edwin Locke, Albert Bandura, Piers Steel, Robert Rosenthal, David Matsumoto, Anders Ericsson and Till Roenneberg. It also builds on personal efficacy best practices as identified by leading thinkers such as Peter Drucker and Stephen Covey. Finally, several elements are lifted from professional project management methodologies like PRINCE2.

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

Exergy was founded in 2009 by Michiel Jongerden and several other communication, training and coaching professionals. Exergy trains young professionals to help them get the most out of their professional selves.

Michiel is an organizational psychologist with a broad theoretical foundation in the art and science of training. He is a 3rd degree black-belt martial arts specialist. Occasionally he likes to incorporate elements from this sport in his training courses as engaging metaphors for more abstract concepts.

Michiel trains together with his brother, Jacques, who, having performed consultancy and management work for a variety of corporations and governmental clients, helps proof the training with real-world experience of what works and what doesn’t.