

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL RESEARCH CAREER

Eric R. Wright, Ph.D.
Professor, School of Public and Environmental Affairs
Director, Center for Health Policy
Indiana University- Purdue University Indianapolis

Prepare a “Strategic Plan” to Guide Your Research Career

1. Organize your strategic plan around your chosen area of excellence (research, teaching, or service).
2. Include short, medium, and long-range goals.
3. Review your plan regularly.
4. Assess your progress.

Design Your Plan With Long-Term Productivity in Mind

1. Conceptualize different stages of the plan.
2. Consider how to implement the stages.
3. Write, analyze, and disseminate the results of each stage.

Your Strategic Plan Should Include Steps you Need to Take to Submit a Successful Grant Proposal.

Keep Your Focus on the Profession/Field NOT Your Department, Your Graduate Program, or IUPUI.

1. Stay involved in your professional associations.
2. Skim your field's top journals regularly.
3. Present your work at professional meetings.

Surround Yourself With Mentors/Role Models!

1. Within your department.

2. Outside your department/school.
3. Senior scholars in your field.

Be Ruthless in Managing Your Time

1. Allocate 4 hours each work day to uninterrupted writing and research.
2. Allocate your non-research time based on the priorities in your strategic plan.
3. Avoid robbing your priority area to respond to demands in other areas (e.g., taking “research” time to respond to “teaching” or “service” requests).
4. Don’t make commitments or respond to external requests on the fly – take at least 24 hours to evaluate how the activity will impact your strategic plan; if you’re not sure, ask your mentor(s), chair, and senior colleagues for their views.

Remember how you Obsessed Over Your Dissertation? Forget That!

1. Learn to accept that “good enough” is just that: “good ENOUGH”!
Perfectionism paralyzes!
2. Take care of yourself mentally and physically.
3. Maintain a healthy balance among work, family, and personal time (e.g., sleep, exercise, recreation).
4. Don’t work harder, work smarter!
5. Maintain a positive attitude about your work; see the “joy” in your work.

To read more about it, see Stephen Covey’s “Seven Habits of Highly Effective People” www.stephencovey.com