

PGR Tips on developing leadership

It is likely that you will already have demonstrated [leadership](#) in different spheres of your life. 'Influence and leadership' is a descriptor from sub-domain D1 of the [Researcher Development Framework](#) although there are elements of leadership throughout as highlighted in the new '[Leadership lens' on the RDF](#). Our new booklet '[The leading researcher](#)' will help you to explore this further. It poses questions to help you in considering where and how you might take a leading role. Many of the topics in the booklet will be directly relevant to your doctorate.

Lead on your research

Do you lead on your research project? Do you recognise yourself as pushing the boundaries of knowledge in your area and see your supervisors as valued allies and collaborators rather than those in charge?

Get to know your core values

Leading from your values will make you a more authentic, coherent and powerful leader. Developing self knowledge in this area will also be of tremendous use to you when you are making careers decisions and setting other priorities.

Start with the end in mind

Having a clear vision of what you want to achieve will allow you to be proactive in achieving it. To deliver it you need to develop a clear strategy. Take some time out to consider your long-term research, career and life goals.

Getting results

Getting results is an important outcome of good leadership. Even if you are working on your own you are likely to need input from others (e.g. your supervisor, research colleagues, librarians, the lab manager). Think of yourself as the leader of this 'team' and consider what others need from you as well as what needs to be achieved.

Get the most out of meetings

Prepare to get the most out of meetings. Read any papers that have been sent out and think about what you want to achieve. Take responsibility for positive outcomes from meetings. Can you influence what is on the agenda or make the best possible use of it? Even if you don't have an official position as leader or chair, influencing outcomes is a form of leadership.

Leading virtually

Many teams interact primarily electronically. For such teams, clear and considered leadership is especially important. There are many things you can do to build and support successful virtual teams, including using a range of technologies to suit different preferences, focusing on team building and paying extra attention to cultural differences.

Multi tasking

Leading on several projects at once is an essential skill which involves taking an overview, staying connected, prioritising and delegating effectively. A leader will ensure that all involved have a clear understanding of objectives, are empowered to work towards them and engaged in achieving results.

Leading in a crisis

In a crisis a leader must be prepared to make swift and sometimes tough decisions. You will need to adapt your leadership style to each situation, for example an authoritative approach may sometimes be necessary but will not always be appropriate or successful. A leader will also take the long view, seeing a crisis as an opportunity to change things for the better.