



Progressing your career

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Africa Research Excellence Fund

www.africaresearchexcellencefund.org.uk

What do researchers do?



Everything!

- Academic Route
- Policy
- Charity/NGO
- Pharma
- Business/industry
- Consultancy
- Entrepreneurial

Your career vision



What do you want to do?

How sure are you?

Big secret: It is ok not to know and
it is ok to change your mind

But you can still plan for success!

In academia: Establishing your research niche

- **What makes you unique?**
 - Combination of research skills
 - Different experiences
 - Networks/collaborations

- **What makes your research area unique?**
 - Different to that of your supervisors
 - Not directly competing with more senior people for research funds
 - What are your ideas

Academic success tips



• **Publication matters**

- First authorships then last authorships
- Middle authorships for balance
- Citation rates
 - 'Good Journals'
 - Promote your research---social media plus old fashion ways ;-)

• **Mobility helps**

- Moving institutions
- Short mobility placements

• **Networks and Collaborations**

- Put yourself out there
- Be positive
- Not about now...about future

• **Start applying for grants**

- Get to know funders
- Money brings money

Outside of academia is all about skills



Not usually lab skills...transferable

What skills do researchers have?

Skills that academic research is particularly good at developing

- **Analytical thinking skills**
 - Ability to find patterns and relate seemingly unrelated information.
 - Ability to process large amounts of information effectively.
- **Critical thinking skills**
 - Able to follow complex arguments and find strengths and weaknesses
 - Able to construct sound, critical arguments.
- **Ability to conceptualise and create new ideas**
- **Problem solving abilities (novel problems)**
- **Resilience (never give up)**

Other skills you gain doing research



Understanding Health and Safety and ethics

Subject specific knowledge

People Management

Innovative thinking

Presentation Skills

Mentoring

Risk Management

Responsiveness to change

Collaboration

Teamworking

Research Skills

Time Management

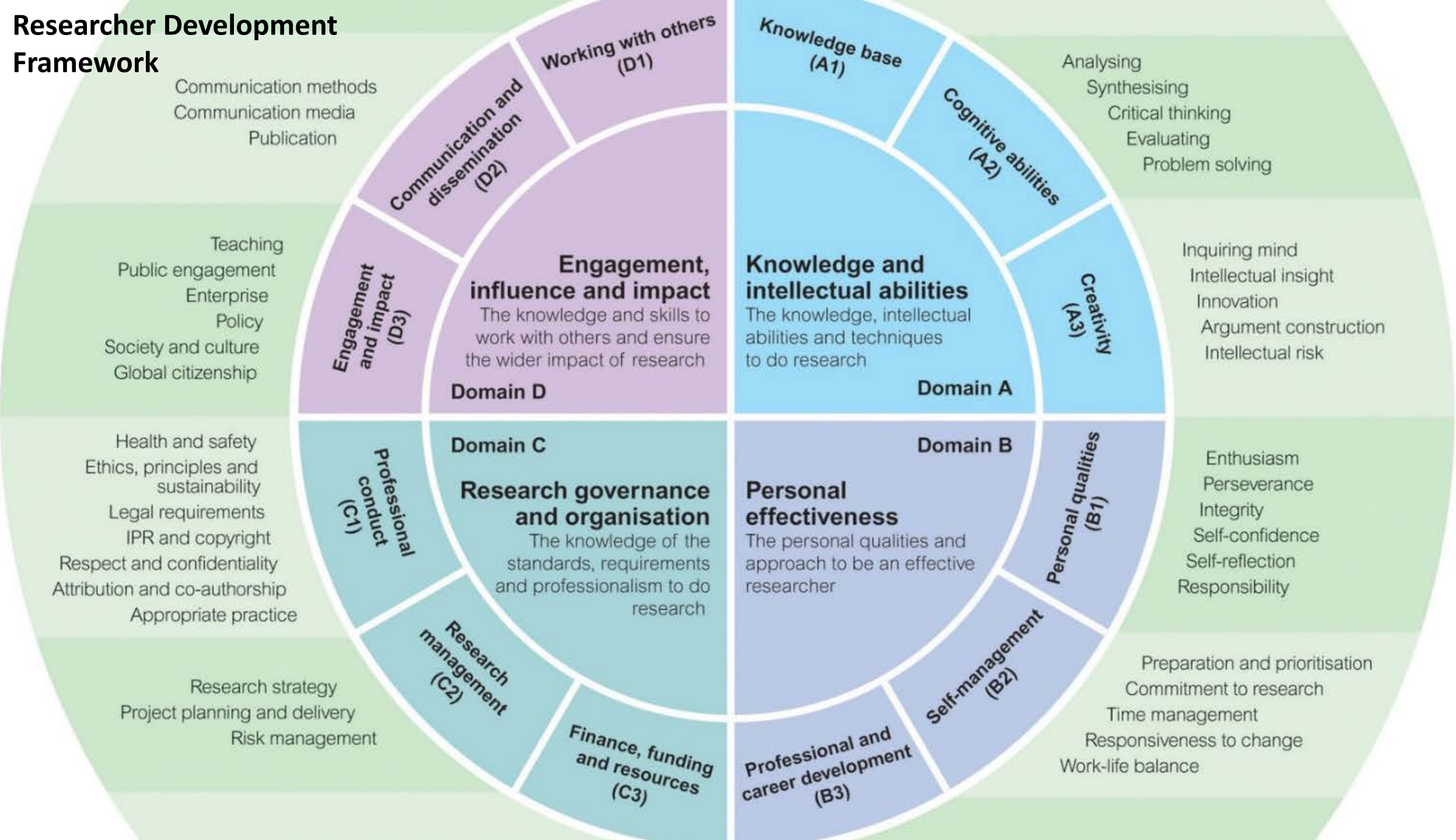
Argument Construction

Ability to work independently

Project Management

Written Communication Skills

Researcher Development Framework



Success outside of academia



- Don't assume employers outside academia understand the wealth of skills research develops.... Tell them!
- Develop a range of skills
 - Plan
 - Stretch yourself
 - Talk with different audiences
- Network outside of academia
 - Learn the way people talk
 - What they value

Final tips



- Planned serendipity
- Keep your eyes out for opportunity
- Say yes to new things
- Allow yourself to change your mind
 - All people change throughout their life
 - Your talent, skills and experience will help you adapt to change

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