

## PDS: How to keep motivation?

Here are some of the tips we shared by answering the different questions below. We hope that some of these tips will help you! 😊

### What do you do to start a day or a week, even if you don't feel like it?

- First, come to the office if you were planning to work from home; sometimes it helps to get going
- Plan things that involve someone more than just you, so you have to go to work, and you know that you will meet someone
- If you work from home, arrange Zoom meetings with colleagues when you each work on your own project, but take breaks together
- Think about which day is suitable for you to work from home to work better, depending on the schedule and not on “if you feel like going or not”
- Plan the week ahead already on Fridays, so you know what to start with each day (it is, of course, flexible)
- Write a list of very simple tasks (for example, the inventory of the material in the lab, marking tubes) to start with
- Start to work on your project as soon as you arrive at work (keep the emails and other things for later)
- Think about the Fika coming up
- Go for a short walk during some of the breaks
- Work in units (45 min then break)

### What do you do to organize your tasks so you don't get stuck on a difficult one?

- Divide your work into sub-tasks (if it's a big task that feels overwhelming)
- You can also mark things that are ongoing in your to-do list, so you can see that you have accomplished some things, even small
- Try to make priorities within your to-do list and move on to a different important task if you're stuck
- Use some time during the day (just 1h can be enough) to work on things that you will do when “you have time”.
- Take a break and talk with people
- Set a list of things that must be done before the next meeting with your supervisors (and tell them about it)
- Book times for your different tasks in your calendar

## What makes you lose motivation?

- “When things pile up and I lose control of the very organized schedule”
  - Reorganize (divide into subtasks, for example)
- “I am not making progress”
  - Start with a small task
  - Talk to your colleagues
  - Think retrospectively to realize how many things you’ve done in the past months in your project and outside (courses, PhD council...)
- “When everything in the list is a top priority”
  - Talk to your supervisors (maybe there is too much, or you just need help)
  - Get help from others (meeting with SLUBI, for example)
  - Wait for a day and try again (maybe it will feel like it wasn’t such a priority after all)
  - Rank it in another way (what is the most feasible, what takes the most time, when is the closest deadline...)
- “When things that are out of my hands are not getting done”
  - Prepare everything you can so everything is ready when you have control again (you may not realize it when preparing, but you will see that it’s usually useful)
- “When it’s dark at 3 pm and the bad lights in the offices”
  - Bring your own light (EU certified and unplug before you leave)

## What are your best tips to keep your motivation?

- Do inspirational things: go to conferences, courses somewhere else, meet other people.
- Have a nice office place that you like (plants, decorations...)
- Set deadlines for yourself
- Stay organized with a clear idea of what you must do
- Come to the office
- Take care of yourself (enough sleep, gym, meet friends...)
- Find new hobbies (you can at least progress in running or knitting 😊)
- Find joy and excitement in your project, so celebrate the small stuff to keep a positive mindset
- Come to the Professional Development Series (😊) to realize that you’re not alone and other PhD students are probably having the same struggles!
- Be kind to yourself
- **YOU ARE DOING A GREAT JOB!**