

*Last Updated: August 2021*

## Working on Projects

1. **Give due credit to other people's work.** When working on a paper that builds on another, it is tempting to de-emphasize the existing literature. It is important, however, that we give credit where it's due and properly acknowledge the past innovations and limitations of other papers.
2. **Practice working on multiple projects.** Unlike the summer paper in year 2, you start working on multiple projects in parallel. Figure out which system works best for you. For example, you can choose to allocate different days of the week to different projects. Alternately, you can dedicate the mornings to one project and the afternoons to another.
3. **Your audience really shapes how you write your introduction.** The audience for your paper is primarily a group of economists, not policymakers or investment professionals or central bankers. People generally take a cursory look at your introduction. Therefore, your first few paragraphs in the introduction should clearly explain why your paper matters for the academic audience.
4. **Master the art of addressing hard-to-answer questions.** Depending on the nature of the talk, certain types of questions can be quite disruptive to your presentation: asking for generalizations early on, suggesting alternate explanations preemptively, arguing about aspects that are outside the model, etc. Plan ahead to maximize the time actually spent on discussing your progress and results.

## Teaching Assistantship

1. **MBA courses are useful for reviewing institutional details and latest developments.** For finance, it is particularly important to know not only the academic discourse but also the industry developments and mechanics. Working as a TA for MBA courses will naturally expose you to the developments in the financial sector.
2. **PhD courses are useful for reviewing key ideas and research topics.** Most PhD coursework is structured around classic papers that have shaped the literature. TAing for these classes is useful for both reviewing the key ideas and contemplating what might come next.
3. **Use the office hours and review sessions to practice communication.** Communicating knowledge is generally a very difficult task, especially for foreigners. Use this (relatively) safe space to practice.

## Reading and Working Groups

1. **Reading groups are a great way to explore cutting edge topics.** Creating a reading group with other students for topics in the frontier of research can be very useful. With Zoom, this has never been easier.
2. **Working groups are a great way to discipline research progress.** Join a working group where you're scheduled to present your working projects once or twice each quarter. These pre-scheduled opportunities can serve as further motivation for getting things done.