

To Do

1. Write results section of paper
2. Mark 5 assignments
3. Write abstract for conference
4. Read article for Seminar course

Hi graduate friends,

Have you ever had a day or week when you worked a lot but you weren't able to cross much off your To Do list? Sometimes too much of that that could feel discouraging. It's hard to feel like you're moving forward if a particular stage is dragging on forever. In fact, research shows that perceived progress has an

impact on students' well being and potentially completion of studies (De Clercq et al., 2019; Marais et al., 2018). However, a lot of your work is intangible and hard to *list* before getting deep into it. So what can you do? Try writing a *Done* list. Imagine this is your week's To Do list:

Once you sit down to write the results, you realize you've forgotten your exact research questions and results as you gathered and analyzed data months ago. You go back and review those to decide what the main things to include are. You take notes. Once you have your memory refreshed, you realize you're not sure how you need to report the results. Is there an order? What details must be included? You watch a few YouTube videos and read a blog post or two for ideas. You browse a methodology book and finally decide you need to find another article that carried out the same type of analysis to see how they wrote their results section.

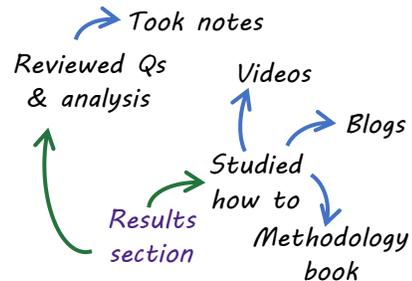
At this point your week is over and you have not written your results section. You feel disheartened and even start to doubt yourself: "I waste so much time for one simple thing... Should I even be here?"

But wait! You have been writing your results section. The preparation is also part of it! You've actually done a lot of necessary things and the fact that you couldn't list them before you did them doesn't mean they were insignificant. So you write a *Done* list or draw a *Done* map to visualize how awesome you are.

Done List

- Writing results section of paper
- Reviewed research questions & analyses
- Took notes
- Watched YouTube video on methodology
- Read examples in blog posts
- Reviewed chapter in methodology book

Done Map



You can add to it over time to keep track of all the work you put into "writing the results section". It will be a great resource for the next time you want to write a results section or give advice to a peer about it. It will highlight your gained experience and competence. And as research by Sverdlik et al. (2018) showed, your feelings of positive efficacy can be linked to making progress and completing your degree.

Best,



Najmeh Keyhani (she/her/hers), PhD, from your [Learning Development & Success](#) team!

Reference:

De Clercq, M., Devos, C., Azzi, A., Frenay, M., Klein, O., & Galand, B. (2019). I need somebody to lean on. *Swiss Journal of Psychology*, 78(3–4), 101–113. <https://doi.org/10.1024/1421-0185/a000224>

Marais, G., Shankland, R., Haag, P., Fiault, R., & Juniper, B. (2018). A survey and a positive psychology intervention on French PhD student well-being. *International Journal of Doctoral Studies*, 13, 109–138. <https://doi.org/10.28945/3948>

Sverdlik, A., C. Hall, N., McAlpine, L., & Hubbard, K. (2018). The PhD experience: A review of the factors influencing doctoral students' completion, achievement, and well-being. *International Journal of Doctoral Studies*, 13, 361–388. <https://doi.org/10.28945/4113>

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