**Action plan**

Sometimes your PhD trajectory is not going as planned. It might be hard to oversee how to tackle it. The following questions are meant to help you to develop an alternative strategy.

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| **1.** **What are the opportunities or alternatives for improvement?** *Focus on what could be improved, instead on what is going wrong.*  |

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| **2.** **What causes the current problem(s)?** *Determine any potential cause as an opportunity for improvement and focus on the most probable cause.*  |

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| **3.** **What would be the desired outcome?** *Focus on realistic outcomes.*  |
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| **4.** **Formulate a SMART action plan.** *For each step write down: a. action step, b. ownership, c. time line*  |

SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-based:

* Specific: Can you define the steps to reach the goal?
* Measurable: How will you show improvement?
* Achievable: Is this something you have control over?
* Relevant: Does it relate to the issue at hand?
* Time-based: What is your time limit?

If your action plan does not address each of these criteria, then it is less likely to deliver your intended results. Also, regularly review your action plans to determine progress and necessary changes.