From Idea to Publication: managing projects for academic work

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Project management is fundamentally about managing the anxiety produced by "open loops" and unfinished tasks. This handout surveys a few strategies which help close the open loops and increase productivity. Your mileage may vary.

Introduction

Close the loops

Managing projects is, at its core, fundamentally about managing the anxiety produced by the nagging question in your head "Oh, don't forget to do [x]." As it turns out, human nature is surprisingly inefficient when it comes to remembering tasks, "to-do" lists, and priorities.

David Allen *Getting Things Done*

Apps don't matter

You can waste a lot of hours jumping from application to application, pursuing task-management utopia. But remember that at the end of the day, what application you use does not matter. Find the ones that work for you, learn the hell of it. Grasping a few basic concepts for *process* will serve you much better. Let the tasks determine the tools, not the other way around.

Kieran Healy, *Plain Text Guide*

Process