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# WORKING WITH SUPERVISORS

by

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# PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- Selecting your supervisor
- Supervisor / Supervisory Committee
  - Advantages of Supervisory Committee
- Student-Supervisor Relationship
- Supervisors' expectations of their students
- Conclusions



# SELECTING YOUR SUPERVISOR

- **Scenario 1**

- You may not be able to select your own supervisor. It may be determined by the department.

- **Scenario 2**

- You have already made contacts with your supposed supervisor prior to applying to the university.

- **Scenario 3**

- You have the opportunity to 'shop around' before you make up your mind and approach the person.



# SUPERVISOR / SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

- Some universities will appoint 1 main supervisor
- Some universities will appoint a supervisory committee consisting 2 to 3 members.
  - 1 main supervisor
  - 1 or 2 co-supervisor(s)
- You need to have a **strategy** when selecting supervisors



# ADVANTAGES OF A SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

- To avoid difficulties in one-to-one supervisor-student relationship
- To provide greater range of academic expertise = multidisciplinary
- To provide multiple viewpoints on the research
- To provide wider professional network



# STUDENT-SUPERVISOR RELATIONSHIP

- Who's responsibility to manage this relationship?
- What kind of relationship should you have?
  - A friend?
  - A colleague?
  - An expert?
  - A highly respected person?
- Know **what kind of a person you are** and what kind of support you need



# STUDENT-SUPERVISOR RELATIONSHIP

- Be open and honest with your SVs
- Must always be punctilious in meeting deadlines and tiptop in your work
- What if my SV is a super busy person?



# SUPERVISORS' EXPECTATIONS OF THEIR STUDENTS





# SUPERVISORS EXPECT THEIR STUDENTS TO BE INDEPENDENT

- Need to be clear of the level of dependence / independence

Supervisee	Supervisor
Independent	Controlling
Dependent	Respects student's judgement



# SUPERVISORS EXPECT THEIR STUDENTS TO PRODUCE WRITTEN WORK THAT IS NOT JUST A FIRST DRAFT

- Proofread your work or drafts **MANY MANY TIMES** before submission
- Eliminate grammatical and spelling errors
- The work must represent some level of sophistication and not a mere rough draft.

Remember, your SV is NOT your EDITOR!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



# SUPERVISORS EXPECT TO HAVE REGULAR MEETINGS WITH THEIR RESEARCH STUDENTS

- Agree on **how** the meetings shall be done.
  - **How – frequency, medium**
- At the end of every meeting, agree on the date for the next one.
- A week before the eventual date, send a **VERY SOFT REMINDER**.
  - You may want to recapitulate the things that you want to discuss
  - You may want to ask if you should find out on other additional things.



# SUPERVISORS EXPECT THEIR RESEARCH STUDENTS TO BE HONEST WHEN REPORTING ON THEIR PROGRESS

- Remember, HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY!!!!

# SUPERVISORS EXPECT THEIR STUDENTS TO FOLLOW THE ADVICE THEY GIVE





# SUPERVISORS EXPECT THEIR STUDENTS TO BE EXCITED ABOUT THEIR WORK

- You need to be **ENTHUSIASTIC**
- You need to be **EXCITED**
- You need to be **INTERESTED**
- They are **INFECTIOUS**
- Help to create a **positive environment** around you
- **2E2I = POSITIVE ENERGY**



# CONCLUSIONS

- You need to KNOW YOURSELF
- You need to identify the kind of support you need
- You need to MANAGE your relationship with your supervisor(s).
- You need to know what are the things expected of you



*Thank you!*







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