

Support from the frontline

Stories from successful supervisors on how to support
PhD researchers

AND THEMSELVES

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“[PhD students] are largely naive about the highly competitive nature of science when they start in a lab, and often have no experience of project management. PhD students are not trainees or employees: they need guidance and supervision, particularly during the first two years.”

In *Nature's* 2017 global PhD survey:

- 34% of respondents said that a supervisor helped them to reach their current career decision
- Most respondents said that they were happy with their adviser
- **but nearly 25% said they would switch if they could.**

How can you make sure YOU'RE not one of the 25% that they want to run away from?

“New principal investigators commonly adopt the practices of their own mentors without reflection, and often their role models were not ideal.”

Developing the human dimension of research

- Set your goals. Make them public
- Look for leadership development opportunities
- Invest time in your science, your self and your scientists
- Adopt an experimental mindset

Do research you are **passionate** about and find joy in your work.

Stay focused, make **strategic** decisions with your goals in mind, and advocate for yourself

Commit to the required hard work, have **integrity**, be honest with yourself, stay humble. Cutting corners never pays.

Cultivate **relationships** and draw strength from others. Build a rich network of great colleagues and be willing to learn from others

Seven keys to success in research

Have interests outside of work and **give yourself time** to think.

Be an engaged, respectful team **leader**. Be deliberate about building your team, interact with your team members regularly, and take time to listen.

Be **resilient** in response to criticism and failure. Learn from failures and do not take criticism personally. Believe in what you are doing.

Supervision is a Two-way Relationship

As a supervisor, you can help students understand themselves better

Skills gaps

Career goals

What they enjoy (or not)

Researchers in your lab can help you understand
how YOU are doing as a supervisor

How can I define success as a supervisor: help people get to where they
want to go.

How can I do that?: Get them to tell me.

GROW



Sašo Kočevar – HFP Consulting

GoalROW

Ask researcher to define the goal

Short term/long term

Specific

Time-bound

GRealityOW

What have you learned

What are your technical skills?

What are your soft skills

GROptionsW

What options do you have?

What resources do you have inside and outside of academia to help you?

Brainstorm ideas of future paths

GROWWAY FORWARD

Create an exit plan

After looking back at conversation, look back over it and create actions.

Write it down

Individual development plans

Angela DePace– Harvard Medical School

Individual development plans

- Set **specific** goals: short and long term
- Establish **how to measure** goals: how will you know if goals have been achieved?
- Establish **time-frame** for completing goals
- Evaluate **skills needed** to achieve goals
- Evaluate **skills gaps**
- **Review** goals regularly

Fostering a healthy relationship with researchers in your lab

- Develop trusting relationships
- Be open
- Be flexible
- Be helpful
- Be nice

THANK YOU