

Establishing and Maintaining the Relationship Between Student and Supervisor

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Research on Research Productivity: Ramsden's monograph
Research on the Student-Supervisor Relationship: negotiation, reflection, facilitation, trust, structure, support.

My Advice: lead by example; be informal, enthusiastic, expert.

Research on Research Productivity

- Ramsden P (1998). Learning to lead in higher education. London UK: Routledge
- Individuals **publish more** when they...
 - are **intrinsically interested** in their research;
 - have clear **research-oriented goals**;
 - attend **conferences** and journal clubs;
 - apply for **research grants**;
- **supervise students**; 82% of my papers this year involved students!
- achieve a co-operative, **supportive climate** within the department **and with their research students**.

Research on the Student-Supervisor Relationship

 "student supervisor relationship"
80 hits since 2000; five accessible and useful.

- **Research Training and Supervision Development**
Pearson and Brew, Studies in Higher Educ. 27(2), 135-150, 2002
 - Perspective-type review focused on the supervisor.
 - Need programs that help supervisors...
 - expand skills as educators and leaders;
 - become adaptable, flexible;
 - negotiate learning and career outcomes with students;
 - improve through self-awareness by reflecting on four models of research/supervision: synthesis, analysis, outputs, self-discovery.
 - Outline of such a program is provided.
 - skills, mentoring strategies, evaluation, etc.

- **The Synergistic Thesis: Student and Supervisor Perspectives**
Styles and Radloff, J. Further Higher Educ. 25(1), 97-106, 2001

- Theoretical plus case study, authored by supervisor and student.
- "Self-regulatory synergistic" model of supervision:
 - Awareness of the components of the postgraduate experience, ability to reflect on them, ability to orchestrate them.
 - Components are goals, strategies, beliefs, outcomes (cognitive and affective).
- Student's Reflections
 - Developing confidence as a postgraduate student.
 - Using discussion as a tool for learning.
 - Finding my own identity and voice as a researcher.
 - Gaining useful skills.
 - Developing a rewarding and productive professional relationship.
 - Gaining a friend.

- Supervisor's Reflections
 - Knowledge of supervising processes and strategies.
 - Knowledge of own discipline.
 - Opportunity to engage in exciting, creative research.
 - Personal friendship, intellectual companionship, collegial support.
- Recommendations
 - Joint supervisory arrangements with more experienced staff.
 - Formal and informal student skill-based seminars.
 - Time for reflection.
 - More resources for students to study full time.

- **Academic Supervision: Seeking Metaphors and Models for Quality** Mackinnon, J. Further Higher Educ. 28(4), 395-405, 2004

- Perspective of a law lecturer-researcher
- Metaphor for supervisor-student is *professional-client*:
 - ethical relationship;
 - effectiveness and continuance depends on trust;
 - differentials in knowledge and power respected, not exploited;
 - mutual responsibilities and obligations rather than rights.
- Contrast with *paternalism*, a widespread metaphor within the professions generally, which disempowers and marginalizes.

- *Students' Experience of the Honours' Supervisory Relationship: a Preliminary Investigation*
Drew et al., Queensland Uni. Technol., 2002
- Discussion paper, based on interviews of 8 BBus (hons) students.
- In general, the students...
 - wanted supervisors to do more mentoring, be more innovative, and be more judgmental;
 - preferred facilitative interventions (e.g. supportive and catalytic strategies) rather than authoritative interventions (e.g. prescriptive or confronting);
 - wanted promotion of confidence building and independence.
- Implications for...
 - Student: be willing to communicate needs to supervisor.
 - Supervisor: reflect on practice to ensure student's needs met.
 - Student+supervisor: discuss and implement "psychological contract" (?); explore expectations of supervision.
 - Institution: workshops/seminars for staff and students.

- *Eleven Practices of Effective Postgraduate Supervisors*
James and Baldwin, University of Melbourne, 1999
- Discussion paper, based on surveys and authors' experiences.
- Effective supervisors...
 - ensure the partnership is right for the project;
 - get to know students and carefully assess their needs;
 - establish reasonable agreed expectations;
 - work with students to establish a strong conceptual structure and research plan;
 - encourage students to write early and often;
 - initiate regular contact and provide high-quality feedback;
 - get students involved in the life of the department;
 - inspire and motivate;
 - help if academic and personal crises crop up;
 - take an active interest in students' future careers;
 - carefully monitor the final production/presentation of the research.

My Advice to Supervisors

- Lead **by example**.
- Become an **expert** as soon as possible.
- Be **enthusiastic** and sometimes **obsessive**.
- Be **available** today, preferably right now.
- Be **informal**.
 - But **keep records** of meetings and decisions to protect yourself.
- Place the student **ahead** of the institution.
- **Nurture** your research student (and your colleagues).
 - **Helping others** is an end in itself and possibly the only end.
 - In any case, you **learn heaps by helping** others.
 - And if you help others, they will **help you**.
- Go the **extra mile** for the student and the research.
- Repay their diligence with your **unconditional loyalty**.

- Establish student needs and provide training opportunities.
- Use a student **research agreement**.
 - See Sports science (sports sci.org) 5(1), 2001.
 - Try not to be too busy to follow through with it.
 - Some points from the agreement:
 - Plan the research in as much detail as possible.
 - Know your institution's regulations and deadlines.
 - Agree publication practices and procedures in advance.
- Use the student's idea for a project, or develop one **together**.
 - **Ownership** of an idea is a great motivator.
- "**Research comes first**. To finish your project successfully, **work nights and weekends** often."
- Have a **holiday after** you've done the hard work.
- Spend time **talking about research**.
- But don't forget **life, the Universe, and everything**.

This presentation was downloaded from:

SPORTSCIENCE sports sci.org

A Peer-Reviewed Site for Sport Research

See Sports science **10**, 2006