How to Manage Your Supervisor?
Common problems (and how best to deal with them)

What should you expect from your supervisor?

Understanding your supervisor

Supervisor vs. see

In a nutshell!
It is not that bad!!!

T.H.E.S.I.S
True Happiness Ended Since It Started

We have all been there ....You are not alone!

How to Manage your Supervisor?- GSC 2018
Create a routine that works for you.

- Take it in steps and keep up-to-date with your literature review.
- Be prepared for "unsuccessful experiments" and troubleshooting.
- Do you need to consult a statistician before the start?
- How will you be approaching to address this? What methodology?
- Do you know the objectives/aims of your study?
- Background literature review... Introduction Chapter

Know Your Research Area - within the first term

Pre-Preparation is THE Key
What makes a graduate student successful?

- Represent your research group
- Ability to work in a team & independently
- Clarity (Ability to clearly articulate ideas)
- Tenacity (persistent determination)
- Perseverance (prepare for failures)
How to Manage your Supervisor? - GSC 2018

Your Research Journey - long & hazardous?
How to Manage your Supervisor? GSIC 2018

- Good at time management
- Monitor students' progress
- Nurture
- Coordinate various research
- Direct the work/research
- Guide
- Motivate

What are your expectations from a Supervisor?
But.....Not to write another thesis

To Scaffold learning experiences

- Be Tough
- Be Patient
- Demonstrate the path(s)

Guidance

Mentorship

Role of a Supervisor
How to Manage your Supervisor - GSC 2018

- Present their research at meetings
- Be able to critically appraise his/her work
- Resourceful & respectful
- Confident
- Able to meet deadlines
- Hard worker
- Independent thinker & worker
- Enthusiastic

What does your supervisor expect from you?
How to Manage your Supervisor? - GSC 2018

Remember we all have a different perception!
Students' Perception

Everything Else

My PhD!!
Your DPhil

Your supervisor's perception

Everything else
To name a few...
First six months are critical for both parties

- Remember every student's need is different
  - Search-read-write-think...to be confident on the research
  - Approach
  - Interact with others in the group
  - Group & 1-2-1 meetings
  - Day-to-day responsibilities...
  - Setting expectations
  - Constant interaction/communication

How to Manage your Supervisor? - GSC 2018
Communicate, Compromise, Cooperate... in a contractual way.

Both parties have to work on the "3Cs"...  
- Learn the strengths & weaknesses of your spouse.
- But one has to work hard at it.

It is like a marriage.

Supervisor/Student Relationship
How does one achieve this?... Pt 1

- Discuss each other's expectations
- Regular meeting (request for weekly or at least bimonthly ones)
- Two days before meeting, email written list of what needs discussing
- Take notes at the meeting and set targets and a date for the next meeting
- Send a record of what was agreed & discussed
- Plan ahead & be realistic re: feedback

How to Manage your Supervisor? - GSC 2018
How to Manage your Supervisor? - GSC 2018

- Take control
- Plan your 'thesis' and submission date!
- Don't get distracted too easily
- Social networking
- Be proactive & engaging
- Contribute to discussions & represent the team
- Know their timetable
- PA or directly with the supervisor
- Get to know your supervisor
- Speak to post-docs and/or previous students...be cautious as everyone's opinion may vary!

How does one achieve this?....Pt 2
How to Manage your Supervisor? - GSC 2018

Please seek help if you are very concerned!

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
Students' experiences & abilities are different

NB: One size does not fit all
PLEASE DON'T PANIC!

- Intellectual property issues
- Expecting them to organise everything
- Not allowing enough time for supervisor to respond (they need time)
- Ignoring/undermining them
- Being late for meetings or cancelling at the last minute
- Not engaging at meetings
- Repetition & interruption

What not to do:

- Poster on daily basis!
How to Manage your Supervisor - GSC 2018

He does not let me have annual leave or attend courses
- He has made derogatory comments to me
- He has told others about my personal issues
- He has written unjustified comments on GSS
- He does not reply to my emails

He won't let me think for myself & belittles me
- Not sure what I have to do next and there is no one to tell me
- He cuts our meetings short
- He ignores me at the meetings
- He spends more time with student A
- He/she is never here

Examples of issues raised... by students
Remember... we all have a different perception!
Examples of issues raised by supervisors:

- He/she is never here, either "ll or on AL
- He spends more time on Facebook
- He doesn't interact at the meetings
- He has told others about issues which are ungrounded
- He has written unjustified comments on GSS
- He does not reply to my e-mails
- He is often late for our meetings
- He has made derogatory comments to me
- "I have heard he has sent my cells to other labs without my permission or"
- "He seems to be here all the time but is unclear what he is doing"
- "Knowledge"
Now time to discuss (play) some specific scenarios!
If you wish to discuss your concerns (confidentially), Kevin & I will be happy to do so at the end of session, or by e/mail.

Please write a list of your specific concerns and we will try to address each one individually...

Let’s have some examples of specific issues
Where to go for advice & help?

- HoD
- College Advisor/Senior tutor
- Change supervisor and/or project
- Discuss the option of an additional supervisor
- Start again and re-build bridges
- Reflect

University of Oxford
- To plan your milestones
- Be respectful, responsive, engaging & team player
- Truthful & mutually beneficial
- Although the relationship can be complex, it can be rewarding...
- Trust, honesty & information...
- Relationship needs work, negotiation, openness, communication
- It takes time & effort to get to know each other & build a strong relationship
- It is up to both parties to make it work

Remember...
Remember your supervisor needs your help too!

- Cultural differences can be an issue!
- Compromise by lowering your expectations (within reason)
- Communicating without getting too personal
- Unless necessary

Working towards the same goal

- Mutual understanding
- Commitment to "us" the team
- Patience & skills

Handling your supervisor, requires:

What is take-home message?
Further Support

University Regulations: http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/regulations

Other resources:
Student-led support: Student rep, Peer Support, OUSU services & welfare:
http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/peer
http://www.learning.ox.ac.uk/learning/studentrep

It is ok to ask for help
ANY QUESTIONS??

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING....

BOLZIN MERCI

YOU

THANK

BI\u0109AN

GRACIAS

DANKSCHEEN

SHUKRIA

ARIGATO

MEHRBANI

TU

KOMA\u00d1ASIMA

TA\u00e7AKK\u0131R ATU

VAG\u00e7\u00f4NH\u00edT\u00e9A

ET

G\u00e9R\u00e0M D\u00e9S

NALS"