

Working Effectively with my Supervisor

Your supervisor is an important component of your research and should be there to guide you through the scientific process. Creating a productive, professional relationship with your supervisor is essential.

Choosing the right supervisor

- **Relevant subject area.** It's important to ensure your supervisor has a thorough knowledge and experience in the relevant subject area. A search on the internet or through your university website should reveal this.
- **Discuss your interests.** Arrange a meeting with a potential supervisor to discuss the project. They may suggest a more appropriate supervisor.
- **Professional relationship.** It's important to get along with your supervisor, so if possible avoid people you know you don't see eye to eye with.

Maintaining a good working relationship

- **Regular contact.** Even if you're confident that you can be autonomous, it's important to maintain contact with your supervisor. Depending on a number of factors, this may mean regular meetings or simply catching up via an email.
- **Discuss expectations.** Know what you and your supervisor expect from each other, and discuss any misconceptions.
- **Develop milestones.** It's important that you and your supervisor agree on a number of milestones for you to achieve. This will help you plan your time more effectively and will ensure any demands on your supervisors time (eg reading drafts of your work) will be timetabled.
- **Deliver your milestones.** If you've committed to handing in a draft thesis by a particular date, your supervisor will have arranged their timetable to ensure they have enough time to read and comment on it thoroughly. If you find that you can't deliver inform your supervisor in plenty of time.
- **Credit where due.** Without your supervisor it's unlikely that you'll succeed with your research. Remember to credit your supervisor wherever possible, eg in the acknowledgements section of your thesis and PowerPoint presentations and as co-author for scientific publications and posters.