

FAILING TO PREPARE IS PREPARING TO FAIL

What to expect from your supervisor?

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SO WHO ARE YOU?

5-minute conversation with your neighbour

- Name, department, topic of the PhD
- Number of months since start of PhD
- 1 strong point of supervisor: role model, expert, coach, manager, influential...

Present your neighbour to the group!

4	9	2
3	5	7
8	1	6



PLANNING OF THE SESSION

- Why is the supervisory relationship important?
- What is important to you? Discuss & share experiences
- What (not) to expect from your supervisor?
- What if things go wrong?
- Tool & take action

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SUPERVISOR-SUPERVISEE RELATIONSHIP



Shared responsibility

supervisor is about
as long as many
several ways. One



WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

Successful collaboration is key to successful PhD (*)

- Timing and quality PhD
- Turnover intentions / early drop-out
- Satisfaction & mental wellbeing



Differences

- Supervisor (other supervisors, style, copy)
- PhD candidate (needs, changes over time)

Prevent problems & misunderstandings

LITTLE QUIZ

- Would you feel comfortable discussing non-academic issues with your supervisor?
 - Supervisees: 64%
 - Supervisors: 90%
- Supervisors need to give emotional support and encourage PhD candidates
 - Supervisors: 95%

1. 'FIRST' MEETING: DISCUSS IN PAIRS

- How was your 'first' meeting with your supervisor?
- Did you discuss shared expectations?
- Did your supervisor inform you on specific aspects (e.g., supervisory style, your needs, PhD process...)?



2. WHAT DO YOU EXPECT?



www.phdcomics.com

2. WHAT DO YOU EXPECT?

What would you like/have liked to discuss with your supervisor at the start of your PhD project?

Technical support

Guidance and structure

Emotional support

Research topic

Ability to deliver in time

Feedback,
Regular meetings

Publications

Practicalities

Co-supervisor

Career aspirations

...

2. WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM YOUR SUPERVISOR?

- Expertise in your subject area
- Regular supervisory meetings
- Feedback on work in progress
- Advice and support
- Mediation and representation
- Clarity on authorship, publication and conference presentations

Check [Charter](#) for doctoral students and supervisors

2. WHAT CAN'T YOU EXPECT FROM YOUR SUPERVISOR?

- Being taught
- Will inspire you on your research topic
- Taking responsibility for your thesis
- Special treatment
- Being your editor

SHARE



I'm your mentor, not your mother

By Larisa R. G. DeSantis | Nov. 2, 2017, 2:00 PM

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Tom Coenye
@tcoenye

Volg je nu

Told my PhD students they are resp for solving their research problems. I will help, but I am not their mr Wolf [youtube.com /watch?v=dTkg6w...](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dTkg6w...)

Tweet vertalen

16:23 - 26 okt. 2017

2 vind-ik-leuks



1 comment, 2 likes, 1 share



I'm Mr. Wolf
I solve problems.

3. WHAT YOUR SUPERVISOR WILL EXPECT FROM YOU

- You manage the project
- Being proactive & autonomous
- Staying in touch
- Appropriate communication
- Sticking to deadlines
- Follow up their feedback (or tell him/her why not)
- If nothing else, be professional

TAKE ACTION (AND YOUR SMARTPHONE)

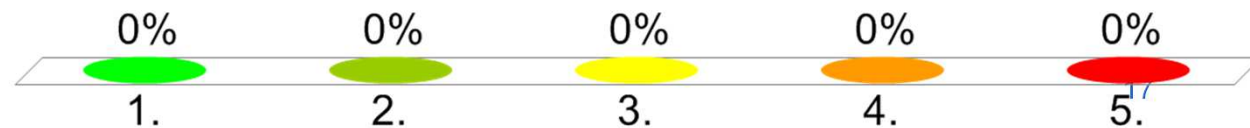
- Charter: “A good start of the doctoral project involves clear (written) **agreements** concluded between the doctoral student and the supervisor(s)”
- Communication/discussion
- Preparation is everything: **tool** to help you make expectations explicit and start a conversation

TurningPoint:

<https://responseware.turningtechnologies.eu/responseware>

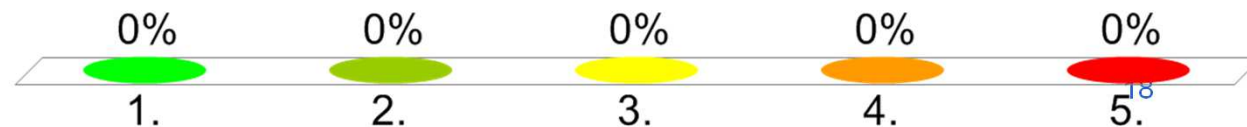
TEST QUESTION

1. Polling is great, it increases interactivity
2. ... somewhat
3. ... neutral
4. ... rather not
5. I hate polling, never use it again!



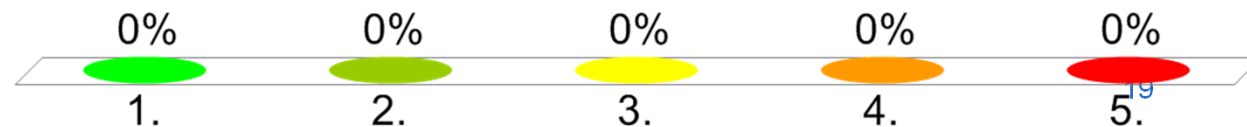
KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE

1. The **supervisor** is the specialist and expert in the research field of the PhD project
2. ...
3. ... equally
4. ...
5. The **PhD researcher** is or will become the specialist and expert in the research field of the PhD project



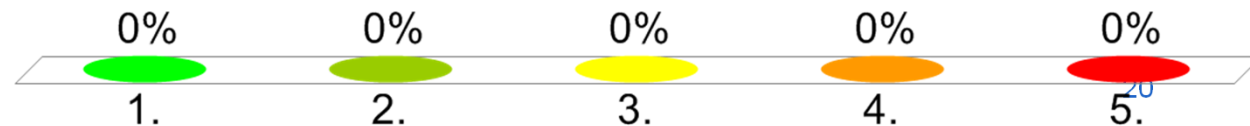
REGULATIONS AND TIMING

1. The **supervisor** is responsible for informing PhD researcher on administrative/regulatory framework of the doctoral project
2. ...
3. ... equally
4. ...
5. The **PhD researcher** looks for info on administrative/regulatory framework and asks supervisor for information only if necessary



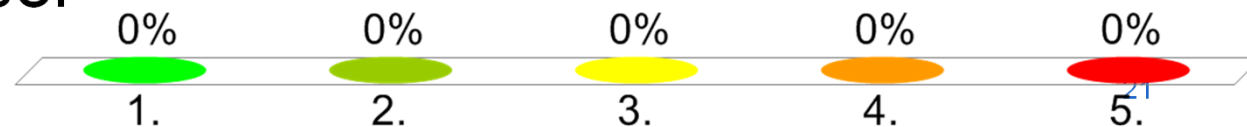
REGULATIONS AND TIMING

1. The **supervisor** sets deadlines for the PhD researcher
2. ...
3. ... equally
4. ...
5. The **PhD researcher** works autonomously and sets his/her own deadlines



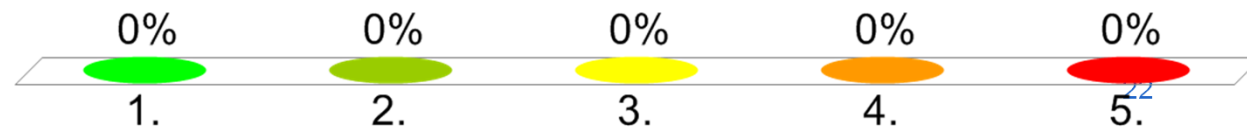
GUIDANCE, FEEDBACK AND AUTONOMY

1. The **supervisor** insists on regular meetings with the researcher
2. ...
3. ... equally
4. ...
5. The **PhD researcher** decides when she/he wants to meet with the supervisor



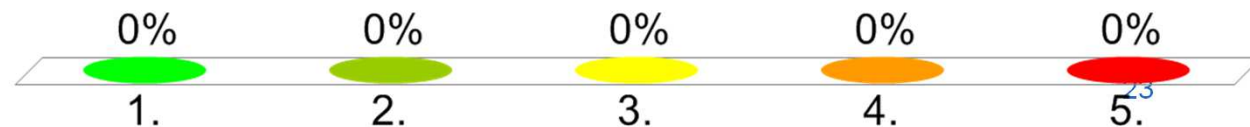
GUIDANCE, FEEDBACK AND AUTONOMY

1. The **supervisor** takes initiative to talk about personal wellbeing, professional development and career aspirations of PhD researcher
2. ...
3. ... equally
4. ...
5. The **PhD researcher** takes initiative to talk about personal wellbeing, professional development and career aspirations



WORKING RELATIONSHIP

1. The **supervisor** is an authority figure and evaluates the PhD researcher
2. ...
3. ... equally
4. ...
5. The **supervisor** is a colleague/friend, acting as a sounding board



EXPLORE THE TOOL

Feedback?

- Helpful?
- Things missing?
- Suggestions?

What's next?

- Ask your supervisor to fill it in
- Discuss with your supervisor (and repeat)

WHAT IF THE RELATIONSHIP IS PROBLEMATIC?

- Try to **talk** with your supervisor, co-supervisor, colleagues
- Go to the **ombudsperson** of your faculty:
www.ugent.be/en/phd/ombudspersons-phd.htm
- In case of **serious conflicts** (harassment, bullying, psychosocial issues), contact the mediation person:
www.ugent.be/intranet/en/human-resources/health-safety/psycosocial-welfare/overview.htm
- If you have HR-related questions regarding your **contract or career**, contact DPO:
www.ugent.be/en/ghentuniv/organization/administration/dpo

CONCLUSION

- Supervisor – PhD student relationship is key & shared responsibility
- Think about what is crucial to you, what do you need?
- Talk about this with your supervisor
- Keep monitoring and discussing the (changing) relationship throughout your PhD process

Enjoy your PhD period!!!