

How to Be Successful in PhD Level

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Abstract

Doctoral work, studying and life have always been a common topic among all PhD students. It is also a quite important question because everyone wants to make the life meaningful for the future in these years, and also keep a balance on all sides. This short passage would focus on the sides and hints for being successful in PhD level. Different sides like the relationship with advisors, balance of studying and research, and management of time would be discussed in this passage.

1. Keep Balance between Coursework and Research

Every graduate student would have to spend some time on his coursework. These courses include the core courses, as well as other suggested courses. Getting good grades in core courses are crucial for the very beginning of the whole PhD process.

However, a PhD student must have the ability to conduct a research independently. In order to reach this target, the PhD student have to take some professional training. This would be even more important, even in the whole process before obtaining the degree. In order to make publications and have professional achievements, it is not enough to just take courses.

Another feature for PhD students is that sometimes the advisor would suggest the students to take several courses. This is probably based on the need of the future research. These courses are usually quite open like the seminar or technical talks. It is useful because the connection between the textbook and research could sometimes be a lot different. These suggested courses could try to bridge the gap between these.

In a word, a student in the PhD level must be aware of what would be needed for passing the exams, what would be needed for obtaining the degree, and what would be needed for the future research and lab work.

2. Keep a Good Relationship with Advisors and People Cooperating with You

During the process of PhD Program, finding a right advisor can be of help for the student to completing an independent topic research. The ideal advisor would be doing research in the area that is of your favorites, and is respected as the highly professional researcher in this field. After selecting the advisor, the student should have close connection with the advisor, as well as the people in the same group that might work together.

To successfully keep a good relationship among the lab, following steps should be considered.

2.1 Get to Understand the Advisors

As issued above, before taking the research with the advisor, a student must consider the background matching, and the professional standing of the potential advisor. Besides this, there would be other things to get to know before working with the advisor.

For example, the advisors have different experiences for their faculty lives. It is useful to get to know how long they have been working as faculties, and what they have achieved during the time of faculties. Suppose that you are the first student in a research group, there would be advantages and disadvantages for that. On the one hand you might be free to choose the topic you would work on during your PhD life. However, you are sometimes more isolated and

thus getting less help from other faculty members.

2.2 Keep a Good Connection with Advisors

Meeting with the advisor is also an important part of PhD students. As the advisors are always very busy, the students must make the most of every chance to talk with their advisors, and share the idea of the research.

It is useful and efficient for the students to plan ahead and get hold of where they are in the research process. Different types of students have different preference on the advisors. Some would like to receive more advices, suggestions, and need to be 'pushed' often, while others would like to have more freedom on upholding the idea on previous and next step of the work. As a result, a student must have a clear view of himself in the type of connection with his advisor. After finding proper way of connection, each time of meeting could be valuable and efficient.

2.3 Attend the Group Meetings

Being successful in PhD life cannot go without any feedback. This process contains with the cooperation and critical thinking. To get enough training for these, social work in research group is very important.

In order to get feedback, the student must learn to make presentations. Practicing this could start from writing down the work before every presentation, and show it to the people in the lab.

If there are chances, it is also a good experience to give presentations at seminars or conferences. The advisors would help in finding these chances, so getting hold of every chance would be of much help for this.

3. Get to Know the Financial Supporting

Financial support is also a very important part of the graduate students. For PhD students, most of them would choose to take teaching or research assistant jobs. Teaching assistants

should help the faculties to do some teaching work, such as holding recitations, grading homework, or answering students' questions.

Different from the TA's, research assistants would focus more on the research and lab work. Those jobs taken by the students could bring with financial support, as well as professional training and preparation for potential future work. So a successful PhD student should be familiar with these and make the most of the support sources, and get trained at the same time.

4. Keep a Good Pace for the Research

Finding a balance in the PhD life among work, entertainment, health and social activities is not a very easy topic. Some student would be like workaholics and spend almost all the waking time on the research, however it is usually not a good way for keeping a good pace.

It is not just a one-way traffic for the students to focus on one single topic. For PhD students, we must have the publications to meet the requirements for a well-behaved PhD researcher. As a result, there would also be a balance on how to make a good and efficient plan. It is a good way to make multiple plans with different tiers, including annual plan, monthly plan, weekly plan and daily plan. The plans should not be a law-like files, but should be flexible and work for the better performance in research work. Another important thing for the plan is that it must have the connection with the conferences and other milestone timestamps. You would not like to miss a good chance to publish papers, because these chances are decisive in some places you might meet sometime in the future. It is bad to produce a car just in a house without trying to look outside.

5. Conclusion

The life of PhD students are interesting and meaningful. To make the most of these precious years, one must be aware of what is doing, what is going to do, and what has been done. Besides

this, the students must have a balance on all sides in PhD life, like studying, research, health, and other things.

This short passage has only pointed out several hints for making the most of PhD life. However, every student is a different challenger on the way to the top of academic life. They may also come to the top from other ways, but hopefully this passage could be a safe way guidance for the challengers.

6. References

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