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# Challenge PhD: How the MIM mentoring program can help you

for

## PhD Program in Microbiology & Immunology

by

### Dr. Monika Clausen & Netzwerkpartner

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## The mentoring relationship



- A traditional and paradigmatic mentoring relationship: father-son. Helps to develop a professional identity and to introduce the mentee to the social rules
- Mentee reaches a status similar to that of the mentor → transfer of identity, integrity and recognition
- Mentoring is relationships between an elder and a younger person but not a supervisor
- Forms are: individual vs. group, same vs. cross-gender, institutionalized vs. non-institutionalized
- It is a very individual and concrete form of support

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## Facts about academic careers

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The number of PhD students has doubled in the last decade

=> How many students are in your lab? How much support can your supervisor give to you?

The academic career is a very competitive area

=> What is your personal PhD delivery plan? How unique is your research field?

The expectations to your personality development are very high

=> Ultimate goal during a PhD is to become an independent scientist and to learn the academic habitus.

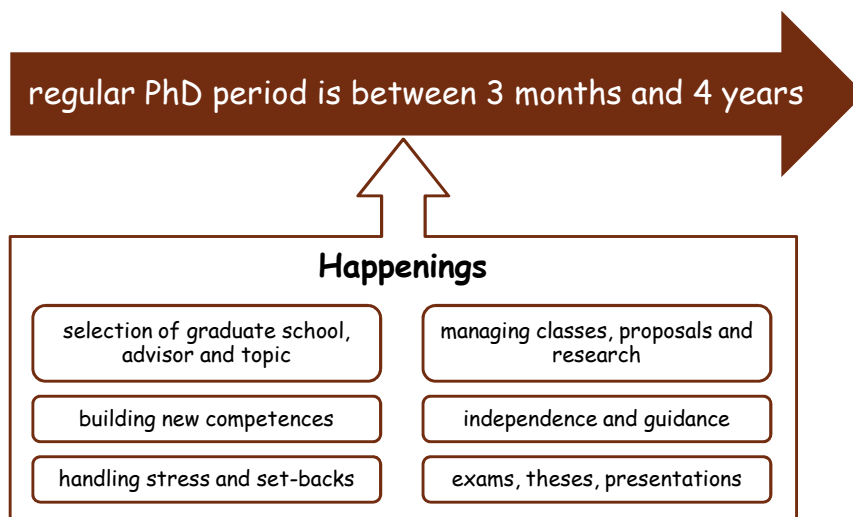
The education system today is very structured

=>What do you know about the processes?

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## PhD - the time of the challenges

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Gosling: Mastering your PhD 2006

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## The challenge of the start

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You have done already a lot by

- choosing a university and a lab
- managing to be appointed to the PhD position
- thinking about the research project



Now the real life challenges start by

- getting familiar with the topic
- starting to work in a lab
- setting realistic goals and objectives
- learning to think like a scientist
- ...

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## Taking ownership and managing career progression

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Comes with multiple challenges like

- managing the research project
  - developing a good experimental design
  - presenting own and other data
  - asking the right questions
- career planning
  - convincing committees
  - developing ideas about the future
  - planning and controlling of progress
- self-management
  - living with lots of pressure
  - learning lasting self-presentations
  - developing a solid self-motivation & confidence

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## Expectations towards competences

Expert Skills

Transferable Skills

### What expertise are you going to develop?

- Research and technical skills
- Knowledge of science

### Where, when, and how do you acquire transferable skills?

- Research management
- Personal effectiveness
- Communicative skills
- Networking and team working
- Career structuring

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## Academic career and personal development

Title	Development	assorted indicators
Professor	star / leading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has an international reputation in the field</li> <li>• demonstrates critical judgment and execution of research activities</li> </ul>
PI	established	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has an established reputation within the field</li> <li>• identifies research problems and opportunities</li> </ul>
PhD	recognized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has demonstrated a systematic understanding of a field of study (conceive, design, implement)</li> <li>• has made a contribution through original research that extends the frontiers of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work, innovation and applications shown by publications / patents</li> <li>• takes ownership for and manages own career progression, sets realistic and achievable career goals, identifies and develops ways to improve employability</li> </ul>
Student	new researcher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has developed knowledge of research methodologies</li> <li>• has demonstrated a good understanding of the field</li> <li>• has the ability to produce data under supervision</li> </ul>

Source: Towards a European Framework for Research Careers

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## Prospects and constrains

Supervisor	Mentor
<p>is your boss and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• graduates you from the university</li><li>• assures your finance</li><li>• takes responsibility for you career</li><li>• develops you to a scientist</li></ul>	<p>can support you</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• scientific techniques</li><li>• administrative questions</li><li>• social issues</li><li>• personal challenges</li></ul>
<p>is limited with regard to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• time to spend with you</li><li>• practical experience in the lab</li><li>• realistic goals in the 1. year</li></ul>	<p>but is limited with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• decision making on your career</li><li>• finding your research area</li><li>• helping with supervisory tasks</li></ul>

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## Areas the mentors believe they can help

<p><b>Scientific challenges:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support project management / methods</li><li>• Help practical questions / presentations</li><li>• Discuss data / difficult issues</li><li>• ...</li></ul>	<p><b>Administrative challenges:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Following given rules / regulations</li><li>• Knowing about deadlines / structure</li><li>• Helping with education / committee</li><li>• ...</li></ul>
<p><b>Social challenges:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Issues within the team / conflicts</li><li>• Handling difficulties with supervisor</li><li>• Finding collaborations / external help</li><li>• ...</li></ul>	<p><b>Personal challenges:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Handling time pressure / decisions</li><li>• Push self-confidence / motivation</li><li>• Time management / PhD questions</li><li>• ...</li></ul>

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## Mentoring is a specific kind of support

Coaching is	Counseling is	Teaching is
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a professional service</li> <li>• it is time limited</li> <li>• the coach does not share his / her opinion</li> <li>• a structured way of working together</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a place where a professional person is telling what you should be doing</li> <li>• a method that involves different diagnose instruments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• set up to transmit know how</li> <li>• done by a teacher / trainer</li> <li>• transfer to day-to-day life is done after the course</li> <li>• hierarchical</li> </ul>

But mentoring is individual and concrete, it helps in socialization process, it aims to familiarize people / PhD students with the habitus in the academic society; it help to overcome hurdles and get to know formal and informal rules, it helps to learn about expectations and norms in the community. It is a great chance and present!



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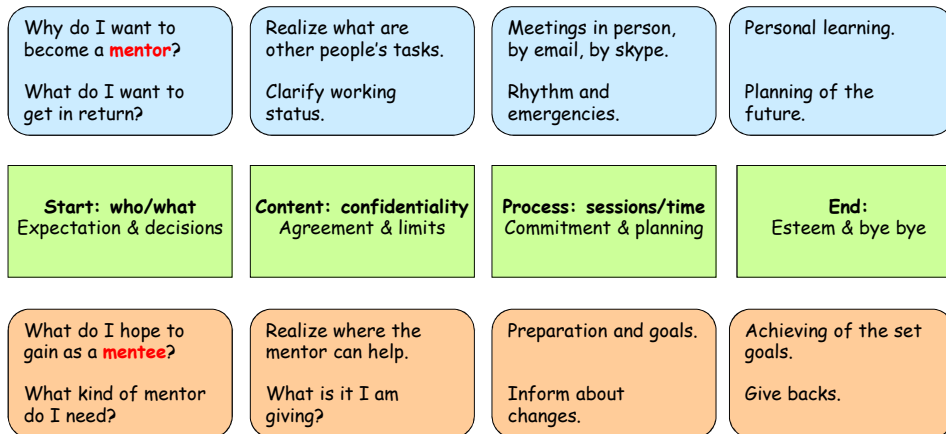
## From the mentor workshop

Becoming a mentor	Becoming a mentee
<b>Promises:</b> Confidentiality, open ear, educated on «how to mentor», advice in the interest and honest for mentee, possibility of regular meetings, emergency contacting, connections to other people, mentoring until the end of the PhD	<b>My promise:</b>
<b>NO goes:</b> Not showing up for meeting, not handling information confidential, no communication	<b>My no goes:</b>
<b>Expectations:</b> Regular exchange, honesty, mutual trust, willingness to participate, realistic expectations	<b>My expectations:</b>

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## Expectation setting and process planning

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## Mutual exchange and support

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Hopes of mentees	Hopes of mentors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support in development of expertise like project management - new skills</li> <li>• Support in professional development - career planning</li> <li>• Insights into needs for next career steps - career advice</li> <li>• Access to new networks - informal contact</li> <li>• Support in development of non-expert skills - social skills</li> <li>• Widening one's horizon and perspectives - orientation</li> <li>• ...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-reflection on own career path</li> <li>• Feedback on self-perception</li> <li>• Improving advisory competences</li> <li>• Informal information</li> <li>• Push the own image as supportive person</li> <li>• Enlargement of own network</li> <li>• Propagation of values</li> <li>• Taking influence in people development</li> <li>• ...</li> </ul>

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## What the mentors are looking at

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- helping you in sorting what the «real» issue is => goals
- taking time to discuss the issue in depth => listening
- giving positive support => encouraging
- helping to identify the next steps => actions
- pointing out critical issues => blind spots
- expending possibilities => options

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## Effect of mentoring program on concrete career steps

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Factor	Effect
Reach an important next step in career	51
Publish the work	51
Get invitations to conferences or for presentations	50
Start scientific collaborations	35
Initiate an own research project	35
Get a fellowship	27
Get a research stage at a different university	24
Get a new job in academia	22
Get a price	15

D. Nienhaus: Akademische Seilschaften

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## Profiting from the offer to have a mentor

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- Be aware that you are in the drivers seat
- Be clear what you want to get out of the mentoring
- Decide how much time & energy you are willing to invest
- Make sure that you have precise questions for the mentoring
  - Define fields where you need support
  - Ask yourself what will be different when you have the answers
- Lead the process and take responsibility
- What do you offer in return?



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## What else to you need to know?

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Thanks for your attention!

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## Mentoring a solid way of getting help

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**Mentoring** is a relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person. It is a process for the informal transmission of knowledge, social capital, and the psychosocial support helping the mentee in professional development, career guidance, and work incidences.

Mentoring exists since ancient times. Since the 1970 it is an integral part of the academic education and is gaining popularity in industry.

Mentoring can have a formal (structure process) or an informal (develops between the two parties) setting, and can be community-based, peer-based, individual-based, e-based, it can take place in same or cross gender situational, group or one-to-one settings.

If a supervisor is also a mentor it might give some problems.

Mentoring can result in higher income, better education, fast promotions, more job satisfaction and better information status.

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