

Reflection and Self-improvement Module

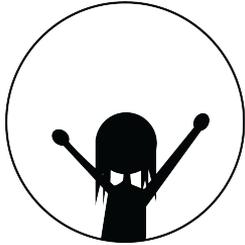
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- Communication Skills
- Conflict Prevention
- Conflict Management
- Authorship

● **Reflection & Self-improvement**

Why is reflection and self-improvement important?

For You



- Enables you to **advocate for yourself** in conflicts
- **Not be intimidated** with collaborators that are imposing
- **Manage** imposter syndrome
- **Communicate** effectively

For Others



- Build **healthy and inclusive** collaborations
- **Advocate** for others
- Good **collaborations** result in good research

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this workshop module, you should be able to:

1. **Recognize** where you can improve in collaborative interactions.
2. **Understand** what inclusive research collaborations look like.
3. **Advocate** for yourself and know that confidence comes with time.

Outline

- Communication Skills
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• Reflection & Self-improvement

1. Reflection: Where can you improve?

2. Self-Advocacy and Confidence

3. Understanding and Cultivating Inclusion

Reflect.

(with pollEV)

Which do you identify with more?

- A. You question your ability to be a good researcher.
- B. You have tremendous confidence in your ability to do good research.

Reflect.

(with pollEV)

Do you:

- A. Know what inclusivity looks like?
- B. Make an active effort to make others feel included?

Reflect.

(with pollEV)

Would you rather:

- A. Spend considerable time and energy trying to be polite while expressing your disagreement with a collaborator?
- B. Be upfront and not stress too much about how you come across?

What you can do

Imposter Syndrome

Externally, very confident

Inclusivity

Not an issue

Occupying space

Speaks a lot in a group setting, not shy to strongly disagree



**Reflection and
Self-improvement**

Imposter Syndrome

Self-doubt

Inclusivity

Know what it should look like, actively work towards it

Occupying space

Does not take up space, carefully thinks about difficult conversations

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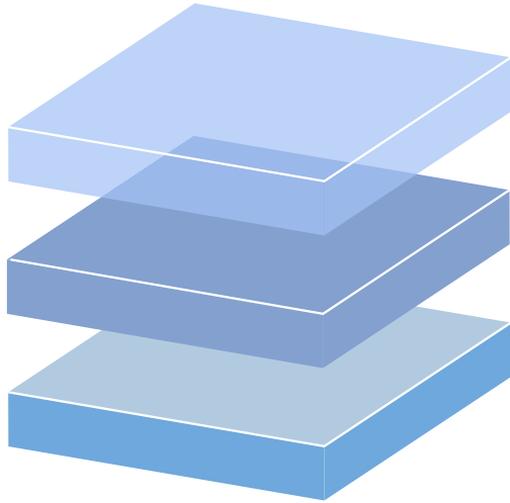
● Reflection & Self-improvement

1. Reflection: Where can you improve?

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Being an advocate for yourself



1

Confidence in presenting your work and research

2

Identifying toxic vs. tolerable collaborations

3

Responding to micro-aggressions

Confidence

Internal

- Confidence about research ideas/direction
- Takes time to build

External

- Confidence in presenting your research
- Responding to questions and critique from the audience
- Asserting and defending your ideas in collaborative interactions

Confidence: Some Examples

Internal

- Reflect on self-talk: “I will never come up with good ideas.” vs. “My intentions and efforts are focused on pushing this project forward and making progress”

External

- How would you prepare if asked to present your research before you have any results?
- How would you communicate your research ideas with a collaborator that is imposing or intimidating?

In both scenarios, don't disqualify yourself before you start!

Practice.

(enter in PollEv)

Suppose your collaborator is extremely critical about your code, approach to a proof, experimental results, etc. What would you do?

A. Continue bearing their comments—you can handle it; you don't want to upset them since they are contributing a lot to your research project.

B. Try to talk with them and express how what they say makes you feel, and that you would appreciate feedback that was more constructive than critical.

C. talk with your advisor about how they are treating you and ask whether you can end the collaboration.

Why did you select your option?

What is a micro-aggression?

“Subtle, intentional -- and oftentimes *unintentional* -- interactions or behaviors that convey *bias* against some historically marginalized group”

Some examples:

- A colleague constantly interrupting or dismissing your ideas
- Continuing to misuse pronouns even after a student indicates their preferred gender pronoun.
- Hearing demeaning remarks about other folks that you share a common identity with

Responding to micro-aggressions (as the recipient)

1

Decide if it is something you want to address. Think about your feelings, time invested, repercussions,...

2

You can respond in real time or revisit at a later time once you've had time to think it through.

3

Assert the difference between intent and impact.

Practice.

(enter in PollEv)

Someone else says: “It will be easy for you to find a faculty job, because you are a woman”.

Would you choose to respond to this (y/n)? If yes, what would you say?

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Inclusion: The Basics

Be Open

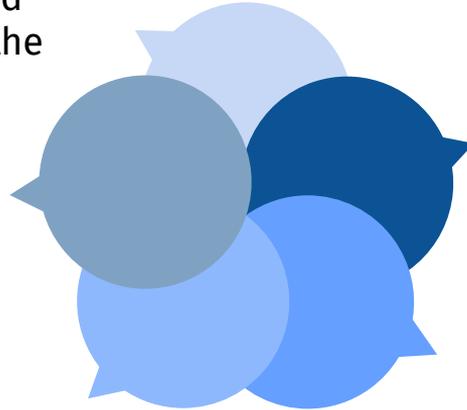
If you're doubting your collaborator's ability to do good work, reflect why this might be the case?

Constructive Feedback

When do you tend to get frustrated with a collaborator?
Do you take the time to give constructive feedback?

Healthy Environment

Encouragement, reassurance,
positive feedback
vs.
gossip, hostile attitude



Mentorship

Do you reflect on your mentorship style? Whether you share nuggets with junior researchers equally?

Showing appreciation

Do you show appreciation for your collaborator's work?

Practice.

(enter in PollEv)

Responding as a bystander

Your colleague says, “People should just tell me if something I say offends them.”

Possible answer: It’s great that you recognize that anyone can make mistakes. However, people may hesitate to give feedback because of power dynamics or because they’re unsure of how it will be received.

Practice.

(enter in PollEv)

Responding as a bystander

Your colleague says “The candidate didn’t seem like they’d be a good fit for the department culture?”

Possible answer: What specifically do you mean by department culture? What interaction with the candidate led to this conclusion? Sometimes “fit” just means someone doesn’t fit the stereotypes -- and we certainly don’t want to use stereotypes as a hiring criteria.

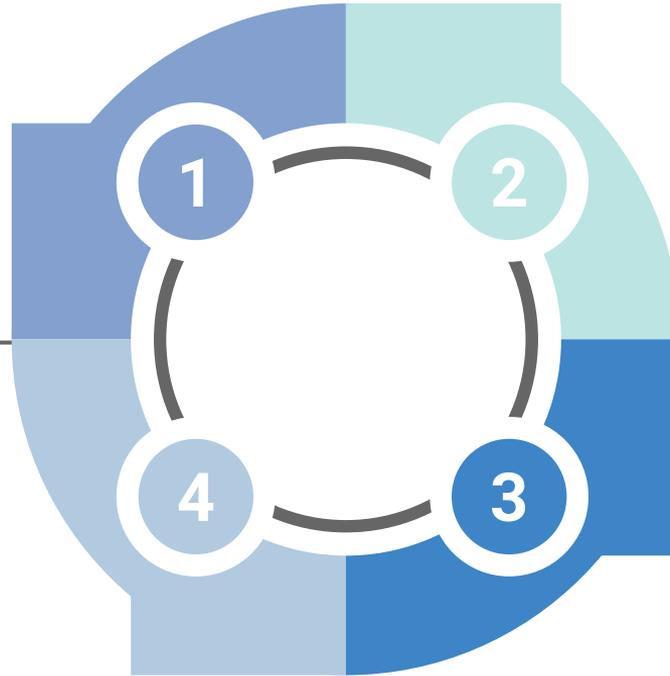
Tangible things you could do

Language

Use language to show that you are willing to help.

Appreciation

Be approachable. Offer encouragement and/or say that you're happy to discuss research.



Active Listening

Exercise patience and give junior researchers the time and space to meet

Collaborator not supervisor

If you're not the student's supervisor, indicate that you're a colleague, not a boss

Special Thanks To...

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Note, some infographics inspired from <https://slidesgo.com/>

Thanks for listening!!
Questions?