



## Managing Your Relationship with Your Supervisor - Case Studies

Read your case study and consider the following questions:

- What issues is the advisee/postdoc facing?
- What do you think the PI's perspective is?
- What can the advisee/postdoc do to improve his or her situation?
- What, if anything, could the advisee/postdoc have done to prevent the situation from occurring?

1. Danielle – I finally have enough data for publication. My PI has said that we can publish but he hasn't moved forward. When I've asked him about it, he says he's too busy with classes, grant applications, and committee meetings. So, a few months ago I decided to write the manuscript and he hasn't read it yet. I need to improve my publication record before I finish grad school. What can I do?

2. George – I have decided to leave my current postdoc and I have spoken to a potential new mentor about joining his lab. I sent my CV and names of three references, who all gave me a good recommendation. However, the new mentor said that he would like to talk to my current adviser. My current adviser and I have been having problems since I came and he told me that he would not give me a good reference. What do I do? What do I tell the potential new mentor?

3. Julie – I'm about to finish grad school and I'm looking for a postdoc position. I want to avoid any potentially difficult PIs. Other than the number of postdocs already in the lab and the publication record of the lab, what should I look for on a PI's website? What should I look for during interviews with potential PIs? What are signs to avoid?

4. Arthur - I am a postdoc in the life sciences applying for jobs. I'm mostly applying for writing jobs. When I asked my adviser for recommendations, he said he would not be able to write a letter vouching for my writing since he has not had a chance to evaluate it (as I haven't done a lot of writing in his lab). I am surprised and a little demoralized at this lack of support. What can I do?

5. Jennifer – I found a class at my university on science and entrepreneurship. I am interested in taking this course to enhance my personal development. My mentor suggested taking clinical courses instead to supplement my basic research. I am more interested in the entrepreneurial course. It's offered in the evening and my tuition would be paid for by benefits – he wouldn't even need to know. Do I need to let him know if I decide to take it?