

**Title:**                   **Lessons Learned From My Supervisor**

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## **Abstract:**

### **Session Learning Outcomes**

Appreciate the importance of dialogue between supervisor and supervisee of a PhD dissertation

### **Session Outline**

Students pursuing a Masters in Education in the university I attended are required to produce a thesis after completing only 6 3-hour courses or a research project after completing 8 3-hour courses. For the Master's programme, students are required to complete only one research course which is an introductory course to the two approaches in research: qualitative and quantitative. A quantitative data analysis course is optional. For doctoral students, there are no course requirements; the only requirement is a dissertation at the end of three to four years.

Lecturers commonly argue that their busy research agendas and heavy teaching loads leave little time for supporting students in terms of tutoring and taking responsibility for students' knowledge base in terms of exposure to different research methodologies and data analysis techniques. This means that the majority of university students in our School of Education have insufficient prior knowledge because of the limited courses offered at the graduate level. **(I will show a comprehensive of list of courses at the graduate level in a face –to- face programme)**. In addition, supervisors are not formerly trained in the area of supervision and there are rarely any workshops or seminars for supervisors. Only once in my six years at the university did I hear about any form of seminar for the supervisors.

This presentation looks back at the experiences of other doctoral students from my university community along with the important lessons I learned from my own PhD supervisor. The intent is to allow these experiences and lessons learned to influence my future role as a supervisor and also to work at improving the doctoral program that is offered in my department at the University where I work by sharing the experiences and lessons with my fellow colleagues.

### **Key issues to be addressed are:**

- The need for maintaining contact with supervisee
- Guiding supervisee through the unknown
- The difference between training and educating.
- Identifying philosophical assumptions as a researcher
- A researcher must always seek understanding not judgment
- It's important to build networks.
- The PhD lays the foundation to an academic career
- Always have a scratch pad.
- Embrace technology.
- Never stop upgrading

## Session Activities and Approximate Timings

1. Presentation of paper (15 mins).
2. Discussion session: (a) How does the doctoral process differ between institutions represented by participants in the sessions **or** depending on the response in “a”, (b) presenter would solicit participants’ own experience with the PHD dissertation (a time of reflection as supervisee) and an evaluation of themselves as supervisor.(10mins.)
3. Group work: Participants will be presented with a Scenario concerning the restructuring of our PhD programme. This is an actual occurrence as the UWI is planning to turn the School of Education into a School of Graduate Studies only. The participants will be asked to work in groups to develop suggested models of restructuring to enhance the quality of supervision.(It is expected that the participants will consist of very experienced supervisors, it is hoped that they will draw on their own experiences to help supervisors at the new school ). Individuals will be encouraged to share with the group (20 mins).

## References

Rudestam, K.E., & Newton, R.R. (2007). *Surviving your dissertation: A comprehensive guide to content and process*. Sage Publications, Inc., London .

Wisker, G. (2005). *The good supervisor: supervising postgraduates and undergraduates research for doctoral theses and dissertation* Palgrave Macmillian. New York.

Taylor, S & Beasley,N. (2005). *A handbook for Doctoral supervisors*. Routledge, Great Britain,