

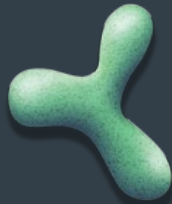


Quadram
Institute

Science • Health •
Food • Innovation

Managing people: getting the most out of your team

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HallLab



Microbiology Society 2019
Essential skills: Managing a
research laboratory. 8th April 2019

Recruitment – students

- Such an important aspect of building a team and for downstream ‘managing!’
 - Appropriate recruitment training
 - Unconscious bias
- U/G-MSc students
 - Email inquires – ‘shortlist’
 - Ask team if anyone keen for a student to develop specific project, and/or for building their CV
 - Set up Skype and then decide if good fit to project and team
- PhD students
 - Always try and respond with further written details
 - Try and set up Skype for ‘informal’ chat prior to any formal interviews
 - Discuss project, what do they find interesting, highlight scope for them to develop project as PhD progresses – ‘enthusiasm’ and ‘fit to team’
 - Interviews: independent panel (only 1 candidate) vs. traditional studentship interview

Studentship adverts!

Recruitment – staff

- Ad hoc emails
- Technicians/project scientists
 - Shortlisting
 - Interview – no presentation
 - ‘Tour’ of lab and meeting the team
 - feedback
- Postdocs
 - Shortlisting
 - Interview – 10 min presentation
 - *‘My most exciting/interesting research and how my background/skills makes me suitable for this post’*
 - ‘Tour’ of lab and meeting the team
 - feedback

Job adverts!
Essential/desirable criteria

Typical vs. atypical interview questions
project skills vs. soft skills vs. team fit

Why this lab?

Time management

Current skills

Communication

Difficult situations

Values

Training

Bullying & harassment

Future plans

Initial meeting: setting expectations

- **Students**

- Analysis of training needs
 - Internal vs external courses
- Lab contacts
- Detailed short-term goals

- **Staff**

- 6 month probation period
- Clear aims and objectives (2/4/6 months)
- Scope for interesting side projects



**My management
approach/style
'Expectations'**

Ongoing management (individual)

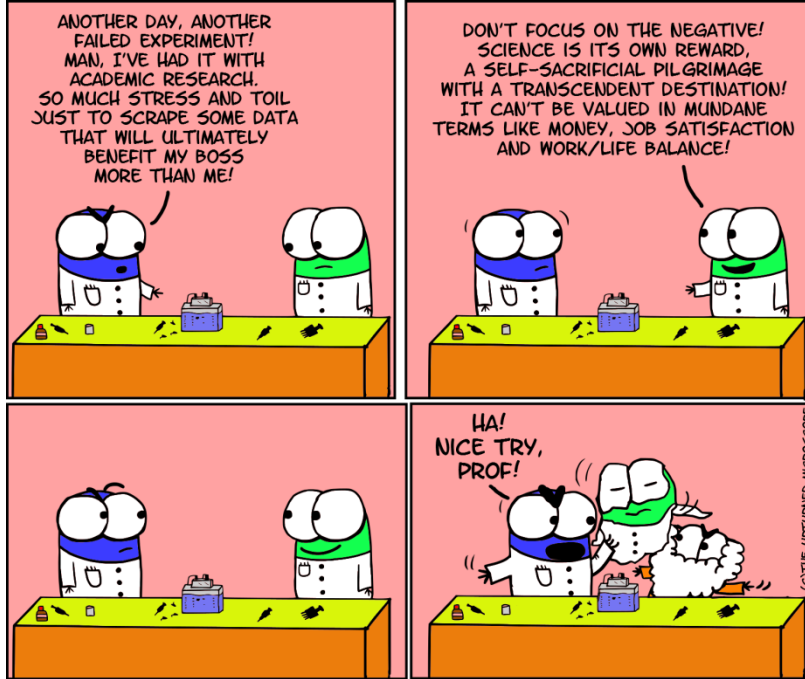
- Students
 - Monday email highlighting plans for the week
 - Either weekly 30 min meetings or fortnightly 1 hour meetings
 - Student choice
 - Formal supervisory team meetings every 3 months, plus report
 - 9 month 'probation'
 - Yearly annual extended report and formal meeting
- Staff
 - Fortnightly 1 hour meetings
 - Yearly appraisals
 - Fellowship plans/support



Agenda

Lots of informal face-to-face and email contact

Ongoing management



Team management

Lab meeting

- Weekly
- Informal
 - bespoke form + agenda
 - 2 min updates
 - Lab issues
 - AOB
- Formal
 - presentation + feedback

Team emails

- Communication
 - Core and 'wider' team
- Updates
 - 'Lab', departmental, institute, wider
- Relevant papers

Project meetings

- Planning
 - Paper plans
 - Setting objectives/tasks
- Ongoing studies
 - Updates
 - Feedback
- Papers
 - Drafts (google docs)
 - Revisions



Team building!

Lab calendar

- My schedule
 - If out the office
- Annual leave
- Conferences
- Courses
- Sick days
- Lab activities
- Etc.

Structured team building: Why?

- Decided to do 'structured' team building end of 2016 as team had grown so considerably
 - Lots of different personality types, cultures, scientific/skills backgrounds
 - Facilitated by head of NBI training
 - 1:1 with trainer prior to session to discuss scope and focus
 - based on how lab was working, and also some potential issues that might arise
 - Day long session followed by team dinner and drinks
- Pre-work included a MBTI (Myers Briggs Type Indicator) Questionnaire
 - Why was this used?
 - Asked trainer to work with the team to explore and understand the most effective ways to communicate and work together
 - MBTI well-documented way of considering personal preferences, understanding individual differences especially in relation to communications, and working with others

What's Your Personality Type?

Use the questions on the outside of the chart to determine the four letters of your Myers-Briggs type.
For each pair of letters, choose the side that seems most natural to you, even if you don't agree with every description.

1. Are you outwardly or inwardly focused? If you:

- Could be described as talkative, outgoing
- Like to be in a fast-paced environment
- Tend to work out ideas with others, think out loud
- Enjoy being the center of attention

then you prefer
E
Extraversion

- Could be described as reserved, private
- Prefer a slower pace with time for contemplation
- Tend to think things through inside your head
- Would rather observe than be the center of attention

then you prefer
I
Introversion

2. How do you prefer to take in information? If you:

- Focus on the reality of how things are
- Pay attention to concrete facts and details
- Prefer ideas that have practical applications
- Like to describe things in a specific, literal way

then you prefer
S
Sensing

- Imagine the possibilities of how things could be
- Notice the big picture, see how everything connects
- Enjoy ideas and concepts for their own sake
- Like to describe things in a figurative, poetic way

then you prefer
N
Intuition

ISTJ

Responsible, sincere, analytical, reserved, realistic, systematic. Hardworking and trustworthy with sound practical judgment.

ISFJ

Warm, considerate, gentle, responsible, pragmatic, thorough. Devoted caretakers who enjoy being helpful to others.

INFJ

Idealistic, organized, insightful, dependable, compassionate, gentle. Seek harmony and cooperation, enjoy intellectual stimulation.

INTJ

Innovative, independent, strategic, logical, reserved, insightful. Driven by their own original ideas to achieve improvements.

ISTP

Action-oriented, logical, analytical, spontaneous, reserved, independent. Enjoy adventure, skilled at understanding how mechanical things work.

ISFP

Gentle, sensitive, nurturing, helpful, flexible, realistic. Seek to create a personal environment that is both beautiful and practical.

INFP

Sensitive, creative, idealistic, perceptive, caring, loyal. Value inner harmony and personal growth, focus on dreams and possibilities.

INTP

Intellectual, logical, precise, reserved, flexible, imaginative. Original thinkers who enjoy speculation and creative problem solving.

3. How do you prefer to make decisions? If you:

- Make decisions in an impersonal way, using logical reasoning
- Value justice, fairness
- Enjoy finding the flaws in an argument
- Could be described as reasonable, level-headed

then you prefer
T
Thinking

- Base your decisions on personal values and how your actions affect others
- Value harmony, forgiveness
- Like to please others and point out the best in people
- Could be described as warm, empathetic

then you prefer
F
Feeling

4. How do you prefer to live your outer life? If you:

- Prefer to have matters settled
- Think rules and deadlines should be respected
- Prefer to have detailed, step-by-step instructions
- Make plans, want to know what you're getting into

then you prefer
J
Judging

- Prefer to leave your options open
- See rules and deadlines as flexible
- Like to improvise and make things up as you go
- Are spontaneous, enjoy surprises and new situations

then you prefer
P
Perceiving

ESTP

Outgoing, realistic, action-oriented, curious, versatile, spontaneous. Pragmatic problem solvers and skillful negotiators.

ESFP

Playful, enthusiastic, friendly, spontaneous, tactful, flexible. Have strong common sense, enjoy helping people in tangible ways.

ENFP

Enthusiastic, creative, spontaneous, optimistic, supportive, playful. Value inspiration, enjoy starting new projects, see potential in others.

ENTP

Inventive, enthusiastic, strategic, enterprising, inquisitive, versatile. Enjoy new ideas and challenges, value inspiration.

ESTJ

Efficient, outgoing, analytical, systematic, dependable, realistic. Like to run the show and get things done in an orderly fashion.

ESFJ

Friendly, outgoing, reliable, conscientious, organized, practical. Seek to be helpful and please others, enjoy being active and productive.

ENFJ

Caring, enthusiastic, idealistic, organized, diplomatic, responsible. Skilled communicators who value connection with people.

ENTJ

Strategic, logical, efficient, outgoing, ambitious, independent. Effective organizers of people and long-range planners.

Structured team building: Outputs

What I learnt

- VERY diverse team!
- Needed to change informal lab meeting format to include 'introverted' personality types
- Most of the team likes detail – so changed* meeting formats to improve this
- By in large team was happy – but things for improvement

What team learnt

- VERY diverse team!
- May need to change communication styles for certain members to create positive engagement/motivation

Overall Benefits

Better relationships

Improved productivity

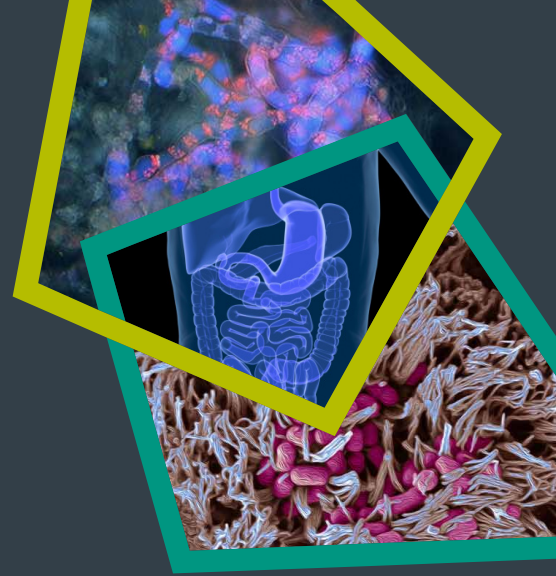
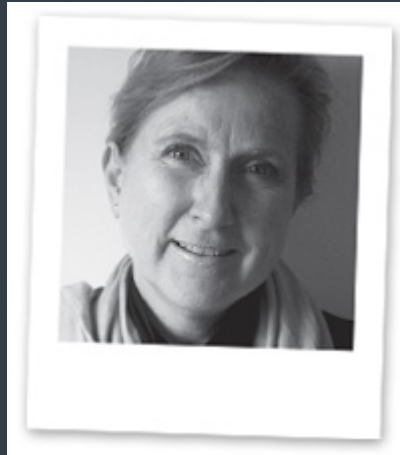
Great ideas put into practice

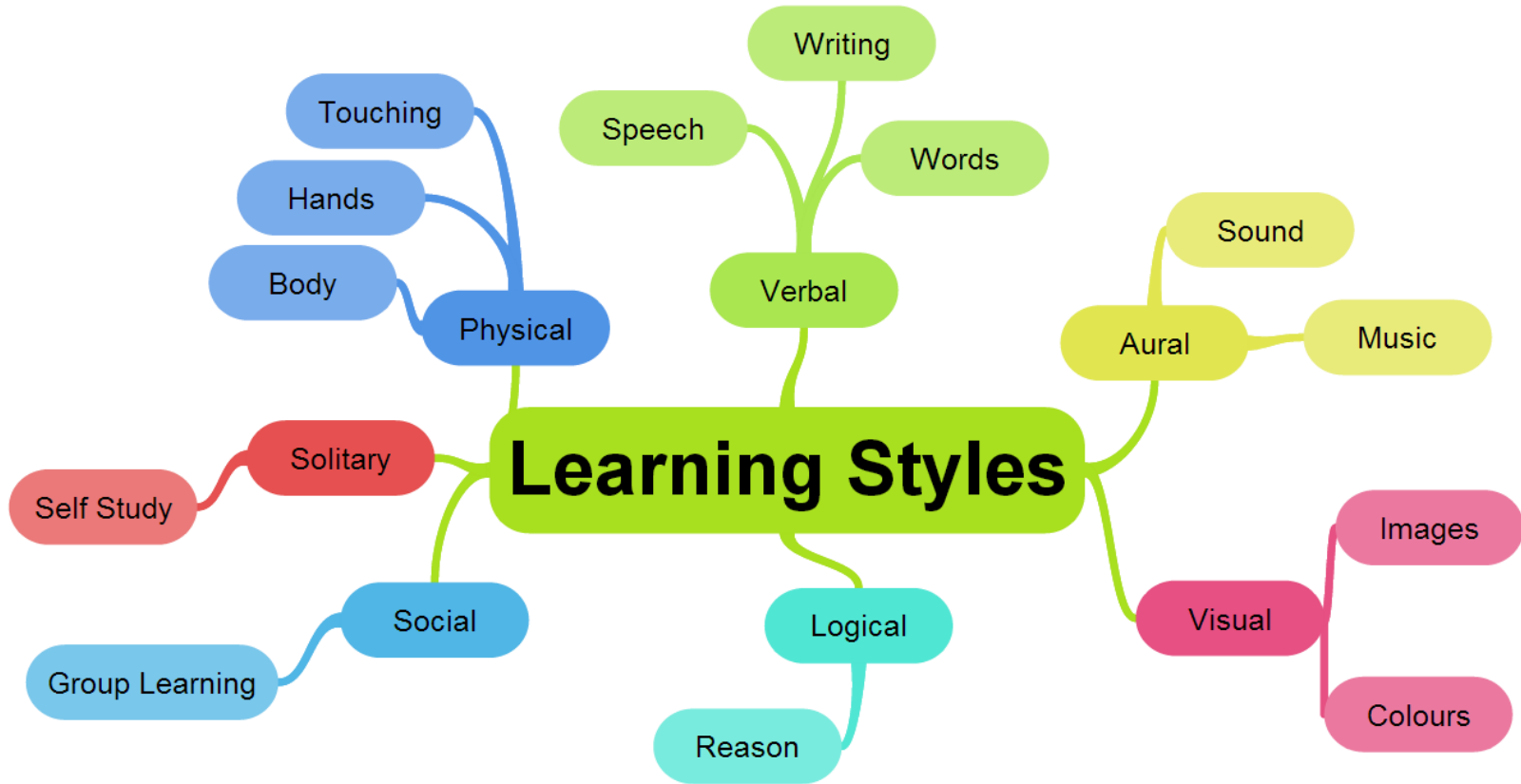
Enhanced motivation

Problem solving and creativity

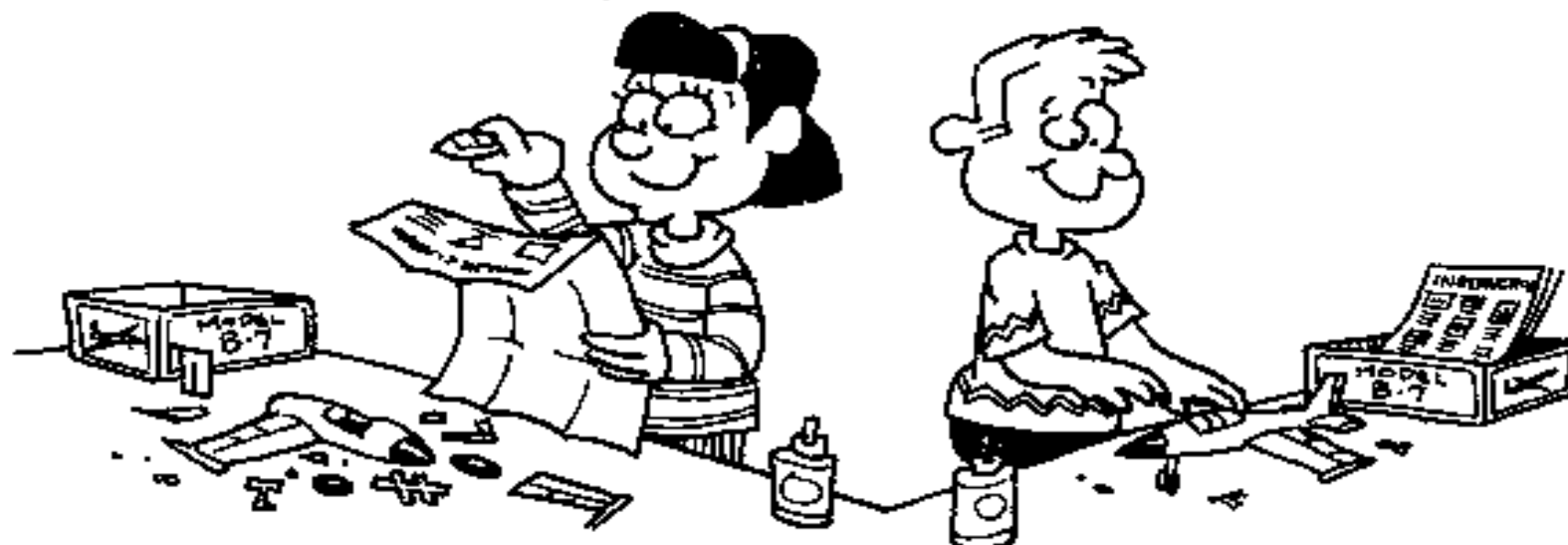
Activity: learning styles

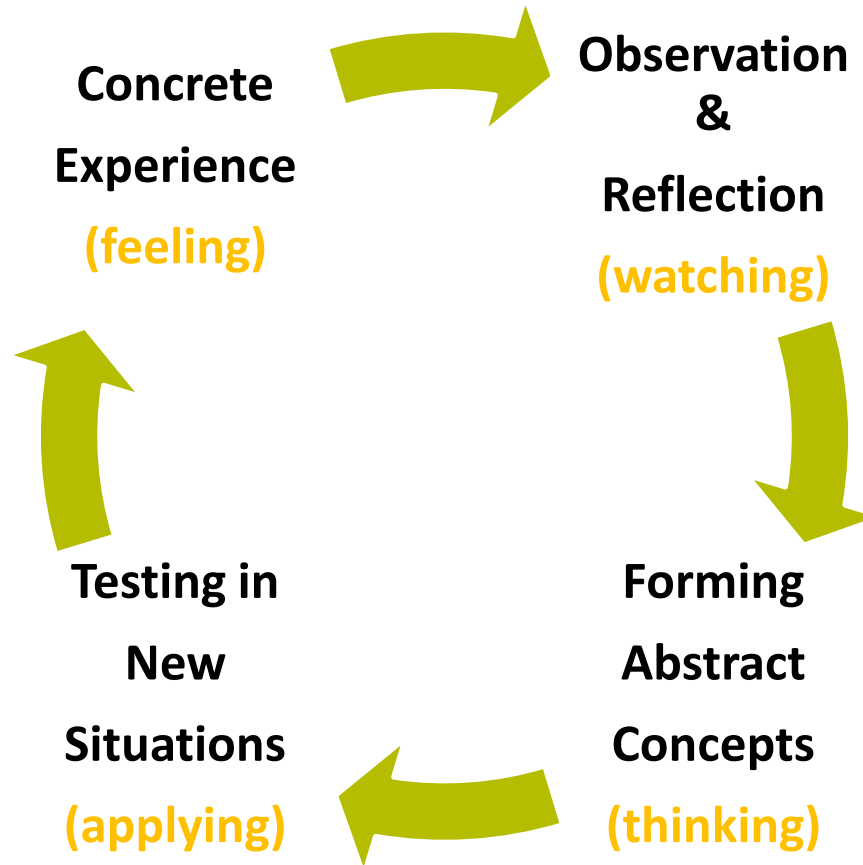
Thanks to: Vanda Morgan – head
of NBI training





STEP 1: ASSEMBLE PART A TO
PART B. STEP 2: GLUE THESE
PIECES SECURELY. STEP 3:
FIND PART C AND CONNECT
TO PART D...

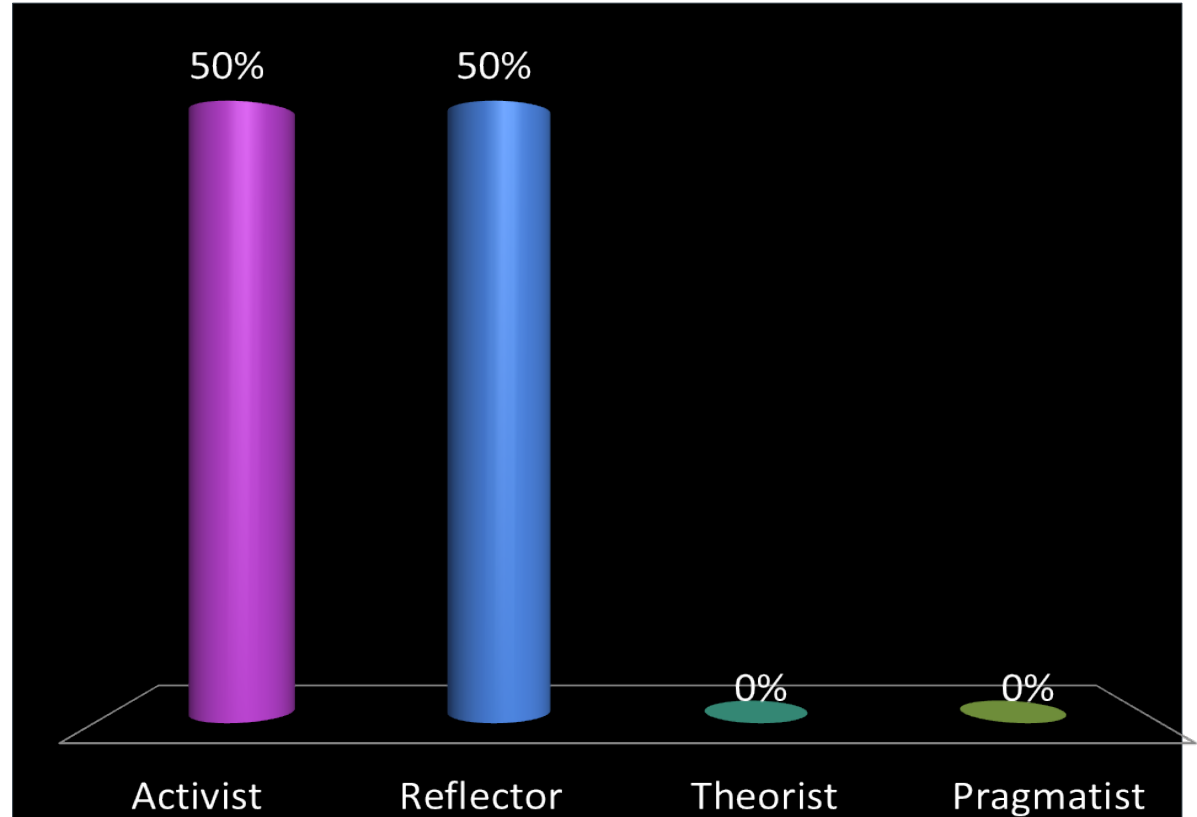




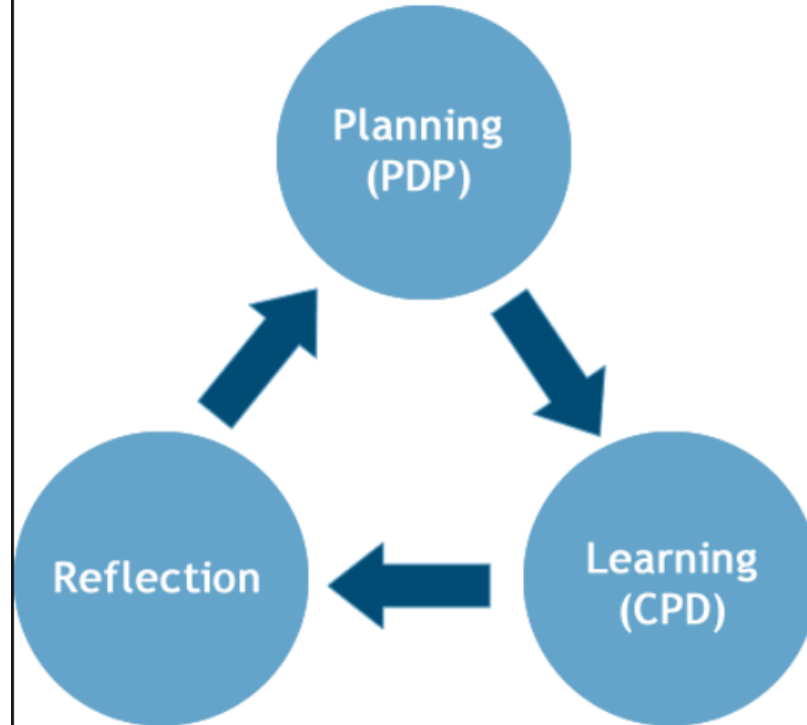
Learning Style Preference	Thumb nail descriptors of how they prefer to learn	
Activist	Hands on; experiential Can I have a go at doing this now?	Trial and error
Reflector	Tell me; prepared and pre-thought Can I have a think about that?	Briefed before proceeding
Theorist	Convince me; pre-read Why / how does it work that way?	Clarity; does this make sense?
Pragmatist	Show me; practical application How will this work in the real world?	Likes an expert to demonstrate

What is your strongest preference?

- A. Activist
- B. Reflector
- C. Theorist
- D. Pragmatist



The CPD cycle



Fun team building!

- Planned dinner/drinks or 'event' every 3 months
- Informal drinks last Friday every month
- Half or day long team building activity every ~6 months
 - Paid for by 'media' fees

**PE & Team Building
'Guardians of the Gut'**

Leadership training: Why, and what have I done?

- Scientists are not normally trained in 'leadership' or managing teams
 - Needed some diverse training in different approaches/tools to improve management skills
- EMBO lab management course
- Media/PE training
- Managing change
- Effective appraisals
- 360° feedback
- PhD supervisor training
- Mentoring/Coaching
- Leadership programme
 - Reflecting on interactions
 - Difficult conversations
- Mental health training



Difficult conversations

- Difficult conversations are part of managing a team
 - really important to have these effectively for productive outcomes for all parties
 - BUT I find these really difficult(!), as do many others

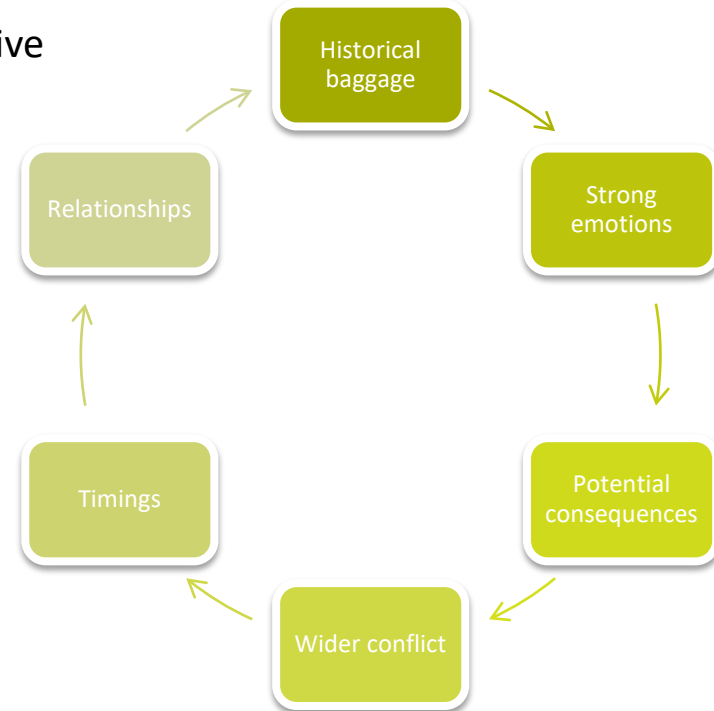
There's an emotional toll ...



66%

feel stressed or
anxious if they
know a difficult
conversation is
coming up

- Think of a difficult interaction between you and a colleague – representative of the kinds of situations you want to handle more effectively



Difficult conversations

- Briefly describe the context of the situation
 - who was involved, what were you trying to accomplish?
- Describe the actual conversation

My unspoken thoughts and feelings

What we actually said and did

- Reflections and questions
 - From your point of view what were the most problematic results of the conversation (i.e. what do you wish has turned out differently?)
 - What questions do you have about the incident or how you handled it?
 - What would you hope to learn, or what did you learn from the incident?

Desired results

Strategy for getting results

What would you say differently... dialogue

Framing the conversation

What are the reasons for this conversation?

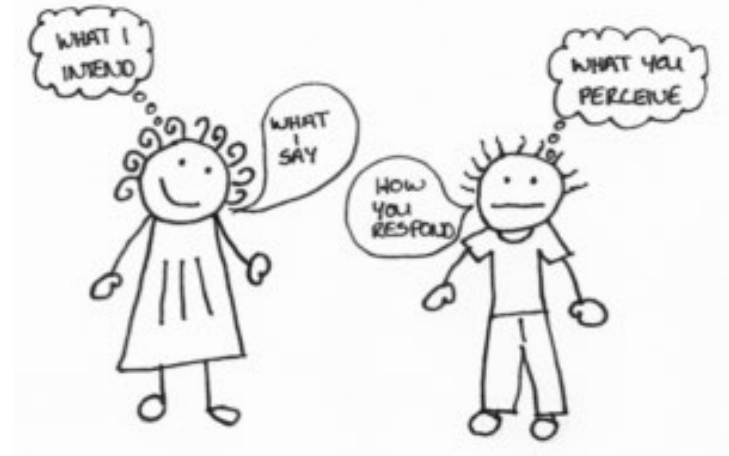
Why do I need to have this conversation now?

What factors have contributed to this?

What do I want to happen?

Practicalities: when and where?

- Arrange the meeting sooner rather than later
 - If there is a problem, it is better to deal with it quickly and efficiently
 - Try to arrange the meeting in a place that is private and where you and your colleague won't be interrupted
- Book a meeting room if possible as it's neutral – or take a walk!
- Avoid sitting behind a desk and creating an automatic barrier
 - Immediate sense of hierarchy
- Arrange the meeting at the end of the day so your colleague can leave meeting and reflect on conversation
- Let your colleague know what the meeting is about beforehand so that they don't arrive 'cold'



How to open the conversation

Can use KISS technique to open meeting

- Important your colleague understands reason for meeting
- Keep introduction short (e.g. 2/3 minutes)
- Thank your colleague for meeting with you
 - essential to show respect and remain professional at all times
- Briefly explain
 - why you are meeting now
 - what has led to the current situation
 - the impact of the situation
- Use clear and straightforward language so that there is no ambiguity
 - e.g. 'We are here to discuss the quality of your presentations'

**KISS:
Keep it short
and simple!**

Tips to prepare for a difficult conversation

Check your assumptions (and avoid pitfalls)

- *I'm certain I'm right*
 - **Try:** I have a point of view, and might be missing something important
- *This is their fault*
 - **Try:** Both of us may have contributed in ways we can't fully see
- *I must avoid saying anything to upset them*
 - **Try:** Upsetting is not fun, but may be necessary for learning
- *Help them see it my way OR defer to them*
 - **Try:** Help us both learn and create shared understanding

Assume good intentions

Plan your actions

- **Create a mutual agenda**
 - Tell my purposes, and ask for theirs
- **Advocate fully**
 - State conclusion, explain reasoning, and illustrate with examples
- **Inquire**
 - For reactions to my views
 - For their views, reasoning and examples
 - To fill my blind spots
 - my contributions, my impact, their intentions, what they're up against
 - Paraphrase and check my understanding
- **Conclude concretely**
 - Ask for and/or offer help
 - Raise and ask for any lingering concerns
 - Agree on next steps for each to take

Dealing with difficulty?

Be professional

Avoid over-explaining

Solutions

Be comfortable with silence

Stop the conversation

Managing up

- Most people don't quit jobs they quit bosses
- Job satisfaction not normally workload, salary etc., actually relationship with 'boss'
- People promoted for technical/outputs, rather than 'people' skills
 - Also limited training often given – or some cases offered, but not taken...

Observe behavioural and communication styles

Think about the “what's in it for them?” each time you approach them

Be a proactive communicator: keep them updated

Keep a good/positive attitude

Stand firm

Help support their weaknesses

Try and keep doing a good job

Ongoing challenges

Short-term contracts

Mental health

Being an effective team leader!

Grant income

Managing expectations

Focus

H&S

Time management

Outputs

Team dynamics

Achieving the 'vision'

People taking advantage

Engagement

Difficult conversations

Managing exits

Rejection

Institute changes

Saying no

Data integrity

