

# 7 Keys to Success in Graduate School

## 1. Be proactive – taking responsibility for your grad school experience

- Be your own “project manager” – take **initiative** to get what you need from your program/supervisor/committee
- Look for (or create) **opportunities** to help you get what you want from graduate school
- Continue the mental **transition** from waiting for direction to charting your own course

## 2. Establish positive relationships with your supervisor + others

- Seek **regular contact** with your supervisor. Make your time together productive.
- **Follow up** on items discussed in meetings – keep your supervisor(s) informed of your progress and challenges
- Act as a “**junior colleague**” – ask questions, advance ideas, show interest and support for shared goals
- **Deal with problems** sooner rather than later

## 3. Embrace the wider academic community

- Don’t isolate – **reach out** within and beyond your program to find collaborators and community. Most research is global!
- **Get out there!** Look into research mobility grants; present at conferences (\$500 available to every grad student to present at a conference via [Graduate Student Travel Fund](#))
- Become involved with University activities **beyond** your own work – seminars, committees, events

## 4. Develop effective project management strategies

- Know your program requirements, and set a “Master Plan” for achieving milestones – revisit as needed. Set **deadlines**
- Structure your time and efforts – develop a **regular work schedule** that works for you
- Schedule **regular meetings** with your supervisor and committee to keep things moving along
- Stay focused on your **goals**. Reduce distractions wherever possible

## 5. Plan for various career paths

- There are (usually) **many options**...explore, then hone in on what seems most interesting to you
- Build both specific and diverse skills for possible careers. Watch for offerings through the [Graduate Pathways to Success](#) program, your department, and elsewhere
- Develop a **network** of positive contacts
- **Engage** with the wider UBC + Vancouver communities

## 6. Prevent + Deal with problems

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Prevent</b>	<b>Resolve</b>
Supervision	Clarify expectations early; develop shared goals	Good communications; seek help from Graduate Advisor or G+PS
Academic Progress	Clarify expectations early; set and stick to plan	Reflect on goals, seek help early from supervisor or Graduate Advisor
Financial	Plan ahead; make a budget	Seek help from program of ESP advisor in Brock Hall
Personal	Good self-care; connect with others; watch for early trouble signs	Reach out to those who care; Counselling Services
Academic Misconduct	Learn about plagiarism & research ethics, get support when feeling pressured	???

## 7. Seek balance + support in your life

- Stay connected to friends and family **outside school**
- **Eat** well, **sleep** consistently, **exercise** regularly
- Reach out to those around you – staff, faculty members, and especially students who can help you through the tough times
- Keep grad school in perspective – be a finisher!