

PHD SUPERVISION COURSE

Aarhus School of Architecture
January 22-23, 2019



“Bringing out the best
in your doctorates!”

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researcher, PhD

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Who am I?



Mirjam Godskesen

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Work areas

- Doctoral coaching >500 session
- Supervisor courses >700 participants in 6 different countries
- Writing Boot Camps for PhD students and experienced researchers
- Present research areas:
 - Doctoral supervision
 - Doctoral coaching

Background

- Engineering, DTU
- PhD, DTU (STS)
- Associate Professor, AAU in Learning and Philosophy
- Coach, teacher, consultant and researcher

Workshop program – day 1

09.00 – 10.15	Introduction & supervisor roles
10.15 – 10.30	Coffee break
10.30 – 12.00	Critical moments and active listening Group work on active listening applied to your experiences
12.00 – 12.45	Lunch
12.45 – 14.30	Clarifying expectations Cases: Canan & Dagmar
14.30 – 14.45	Break
14.45 – 16.00	The supervisor letter – a concrete tool for clarification of expectations Peer-feedback in groups

Workshop program – day 2

09.00 – 12.00	Writing and feedback Cases: Charlotte & Walther (A) Break included
12.00 – 12.45	Lunch
12.45 – 13.45	Product/process supervision Cases: Walther (B), Karen & Niels (parallel group work)
13.45 – 14.00	Break
14.00 – 15.45	Questioning skills - application of the dialogue model
15.45 – 16.00	Round off and evaluation

What determines quality in doctoral education?

- Research environment
- Supervision



(Herman, Wichmann-Hansen og Jensen 2014)

Supportive research environments

- Doctoral students take part in both academic and social meetings
- Frequent academic meetings with presentations (every 1-2 weeks)
- Constructive and appreciative feedback

Research environments

- Great differences between disciplines

Humanities & Arts

- Higher degree of ownership and independence
- Academic career
- Social and intellectual isolation
- Less supervision
- More stress and insecurity

Science & Technology

- Pragmatic reasons to start doctoral study
- Well-integrated in the research group
- Hands-on supervision
- Feeling of being exploited as cheap labour

(Herman, Wichmann-Hansen og Jensen 2014)

The apprenticeship model

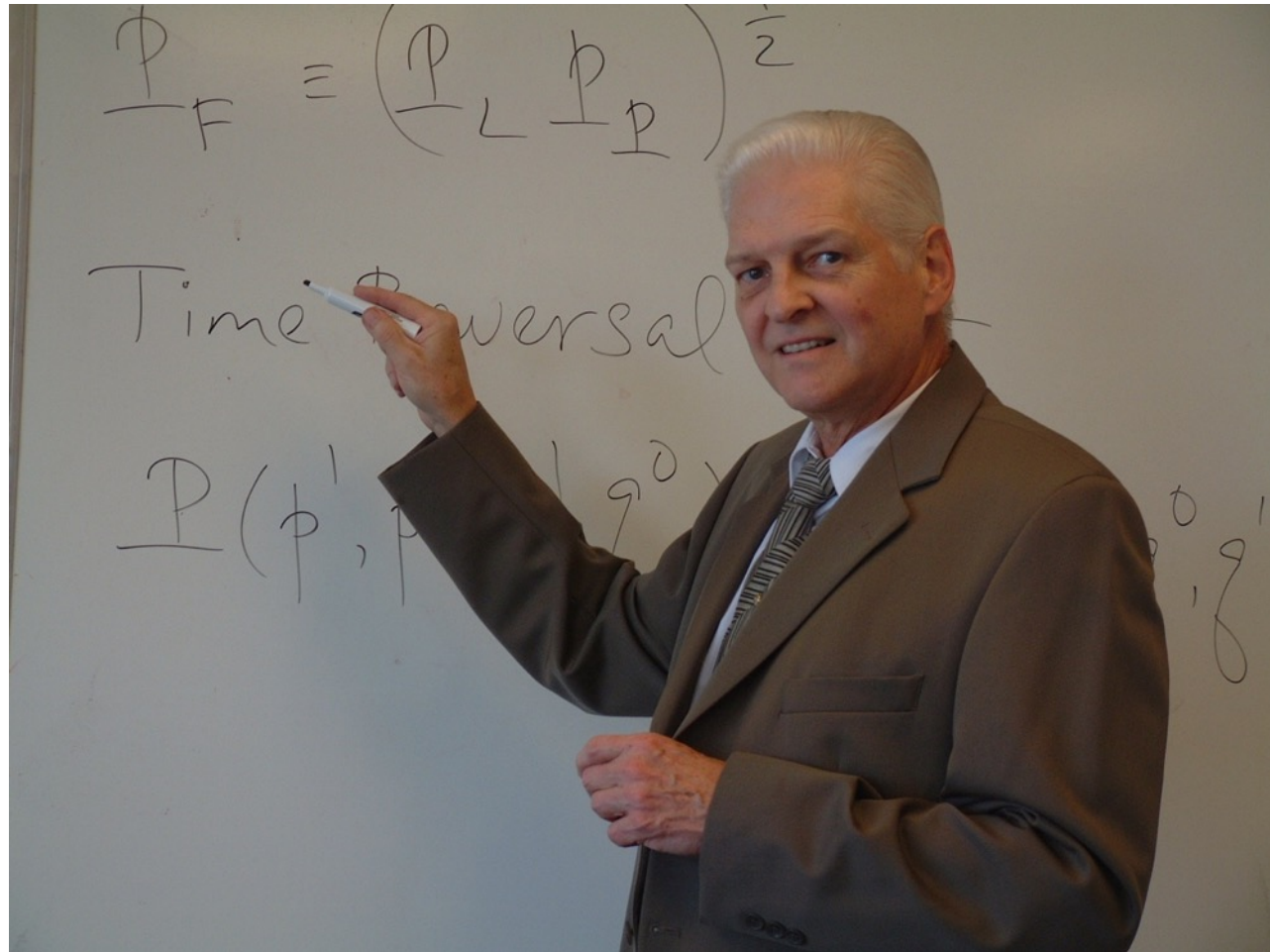
Learning through participation



Dysthe and Samara, 2006

The teaching model

Learning through explanation



Dysthe and Samara, 2006

The partnership model

Mutual responsibility and dialogue



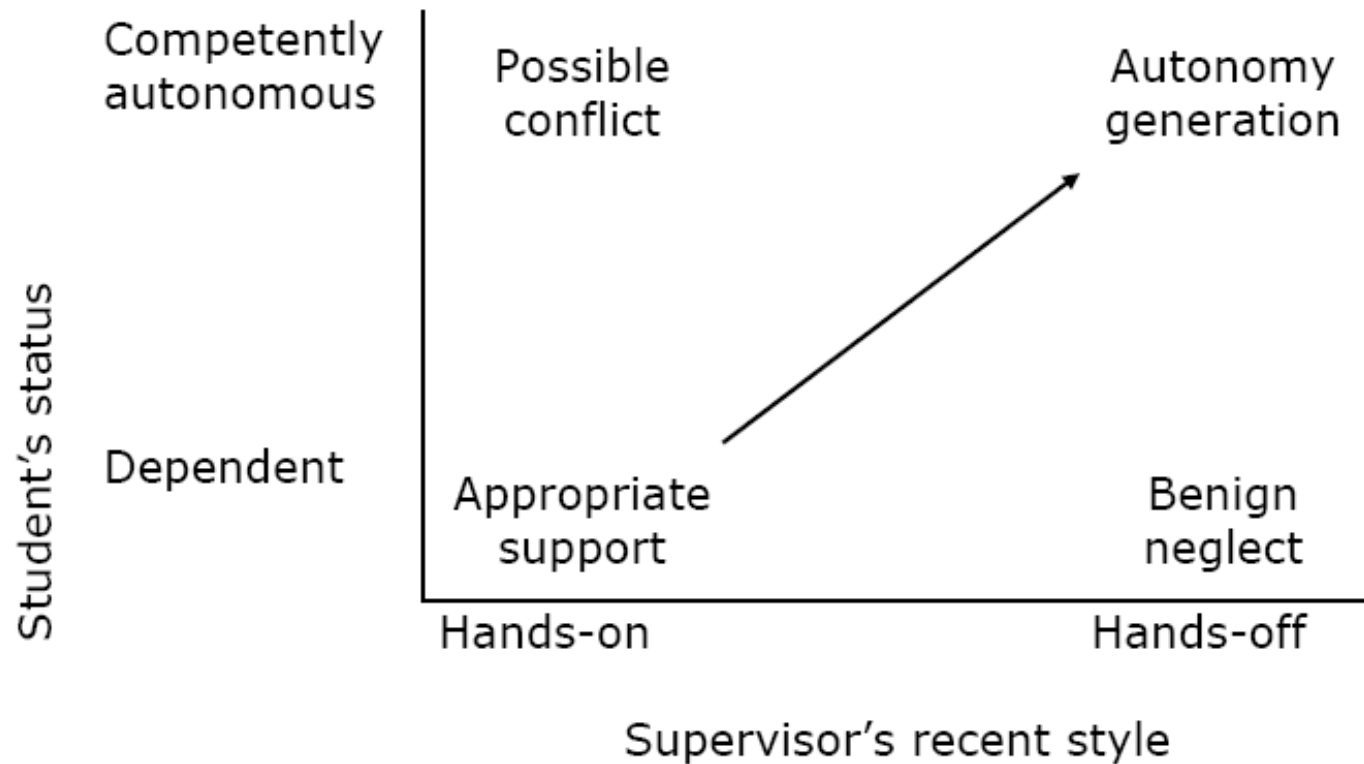
Dysthe and Samara, 2006

Complementary role pairs

- Teacher
- Project manager
- Mentor
- Guru
- Colleague
- Pupil/student
- Team member
- Mentee
- Disciple
- Colleague

The supervisory relationship

- hands-on or hands-off?



Gurr, G.M. (2001)

How can PhD students be proactive in an asymmetric relationship?

- Supervisor has more knowledge and experience
- Evaluates their work
- Can influence your career opportunities



Supervisors dominate dialogues



- Supervisors talk on average 75% of the time (297 videos, simple time count)
- Supervisors interrupt 38 times in a session, while PhD students interrupt 16 times (8 videos, simple count)

There is not *one* good way to be a supervisor

- Supervisors differ
- PhD students differ
- The challenges develop through the PhD study and so should the supervision

Flexibility is maybe the most important competence as a supervisor

“Warnings” about critical moments

“...in my experience you will also have periods of frustration and doubts. You will feel unsure about your problem statement, your methods and your results, but over time you will overcome these challenges and develop into an expert in your field.”

Jens Myrup Pedersen, Supervisor

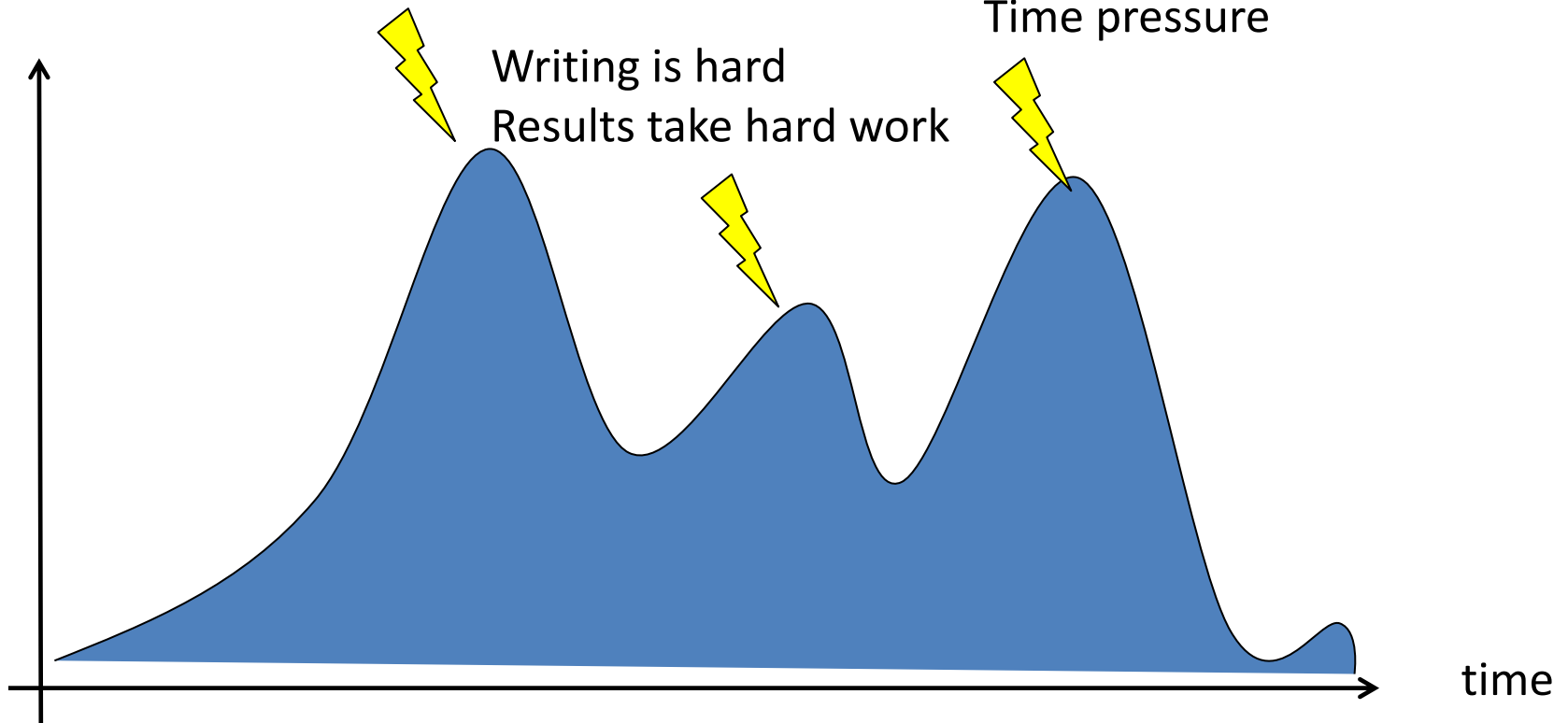
Examples of crises

Challenges

I have to focus

Time pressure

Writing is hard
Results take hard work



Early warning indicators (1988)



- Postponing supervisions
- Making excuses for unfinished work
- Focus on next stage, not current task
- Frequent changes in topic or method
- Filling time [with supervisor] with other things
- Resisting advice or criticism
- Blaming others for shortcomings

(Brown & Atkins 1988)

Early warning signs 2005

1. Constantly **changing the topic** or planned work
2. **Avoiding all forms of communication** with the supervisor
3. **Isolating themselves** from the school and other students
4. **Avoiding submitting work** for review

Awareness is the clue

“Highly effective supervisors remain alert for particular cues that their students may be experiencing some difficulty that could potentially limit their ability to submit their theses on time.”

- Build trust
- Regular supervision
- Scaffolding – breaking down tasks
- Provide access to research culture



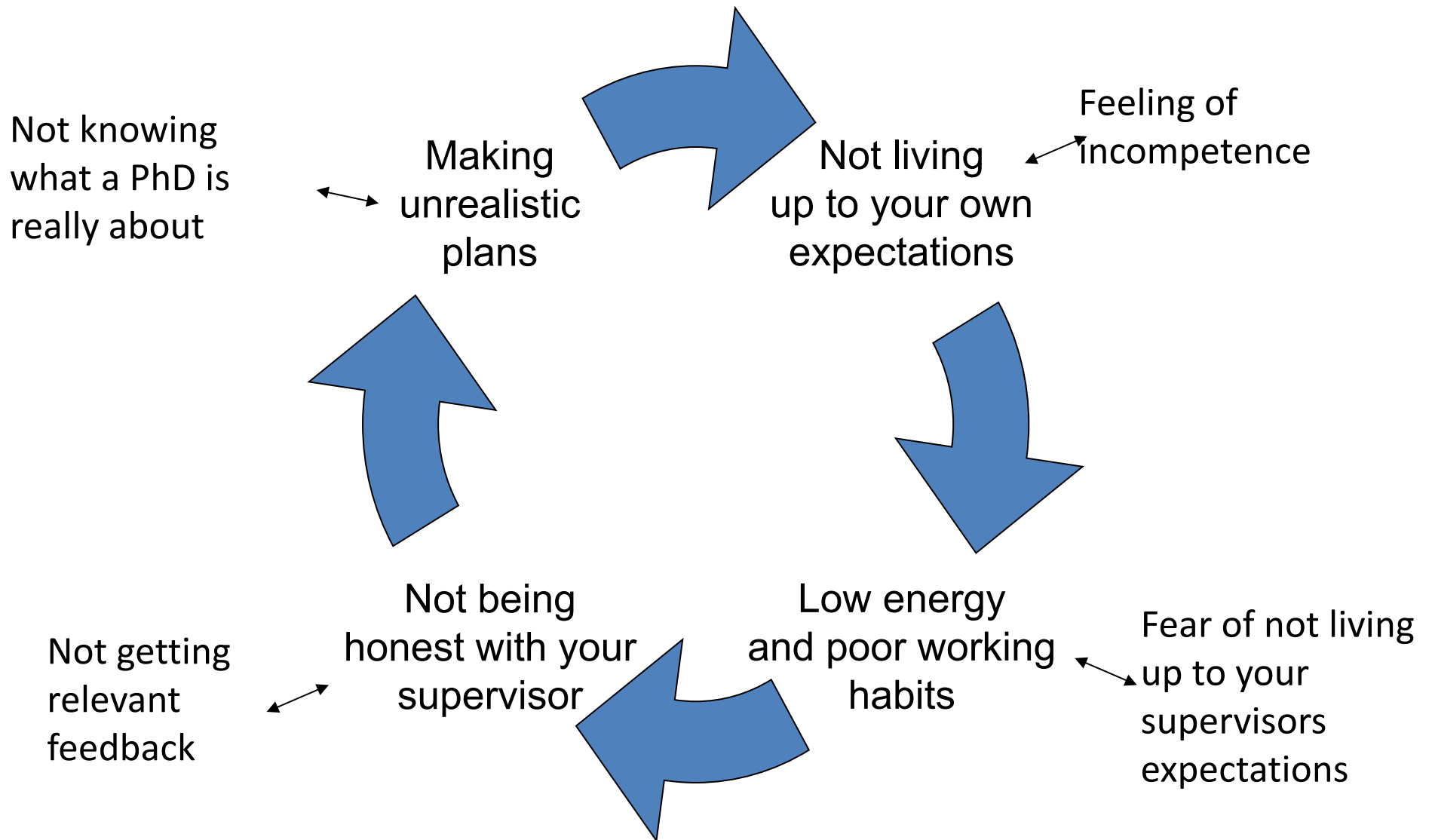
(Manathunga 2005)

‘deep down we want to
impress the supervisors’

”As a result, many students did not want to admit to their supervisors that they did not understand how to do a literature review, start writing or perform other research tasks”

Manathunga 2005

The vicious circle



Can be broken through honesty, accept, understanding and support!

Active listening

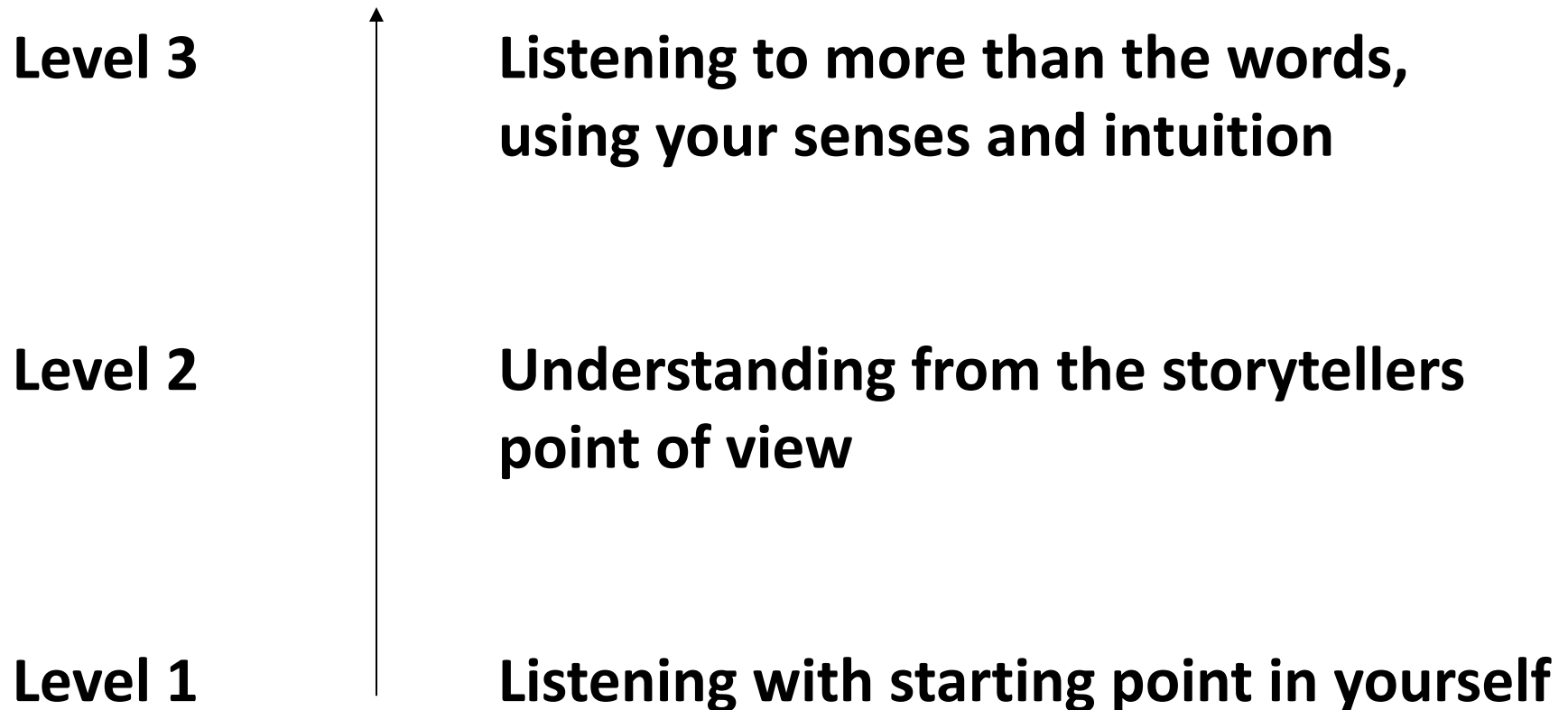
“Learning active listening can change interpersonal relationships positively – and thereby reduce stress”

(Kubota, Mishima and Nagata, 2004)



Are you genuinely
interested in
understanding your PhD
students, their interests,
the motivations behind
their behaviour and their
emotional state?

Active listening



Listening vs active listening

Just listening

- Your attention is elsewhere
- You are thinking of what to say next
- Waiting to tell your own story
- Interrupting

Active listening

- You focus on the other person
- Curious (like a child)
- Empathic understanding
- Allow the person to finish before you talk

Example



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=65GbpVZTgAk>

Focus in active listening

The aim is a deeper understanding of the other person's story

- Spend more time listening than talking
- Focus on what is being said
- Ask open-ended questions
- Paraphrase (repeat what you heard)
- See things from the speaker's world view and respect his/her opinion

Do not give advice!

Exercise in active listening



Individually:

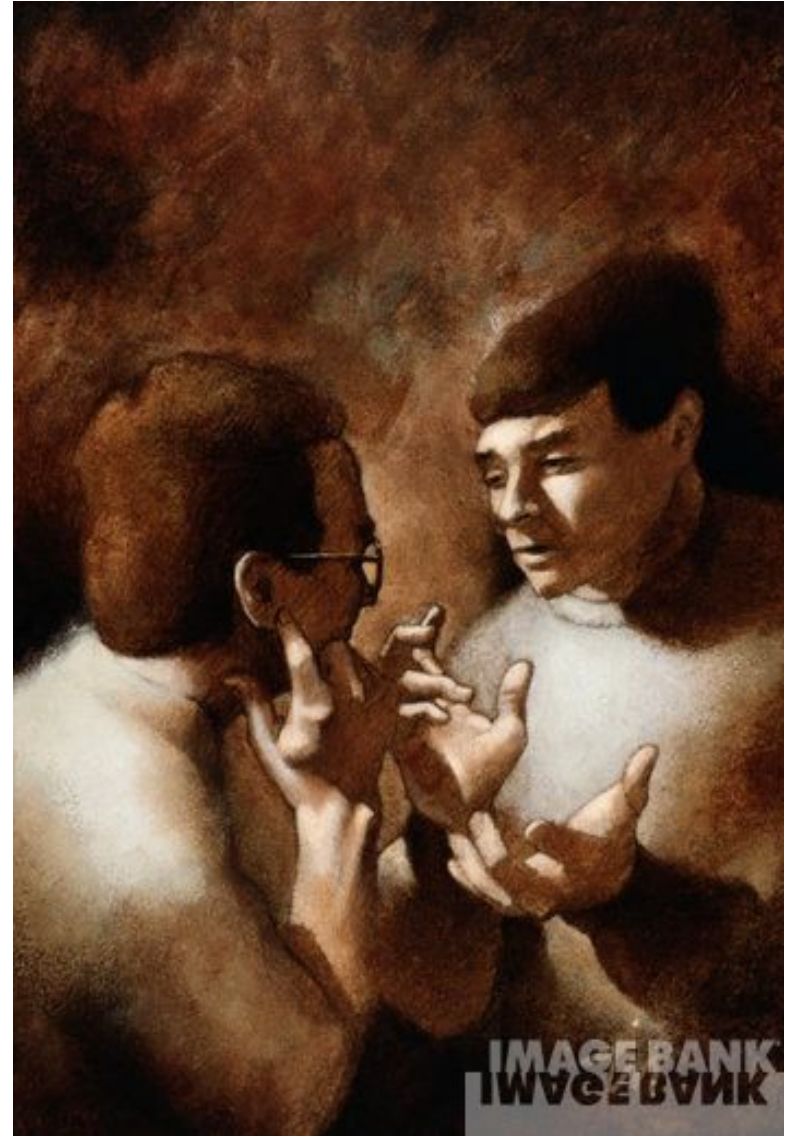
Think of a specific, challenging situation you experienced as a supervisor

Work in groups of 3-4:

One participant tells his/her story, one is the active listener and one/two observe. After 10-15 min. the observer gives feedback and you change roles.

Do 3-4 rounds. You have 1 hour.

Clarifying expectations



To find each other

If One Is Truly to Succeed in Leading a *person* to a Specific Place, One must First and Foremost Take Care to *Find* Him Where He Is and Begin There ...

Søren Kierkegaard

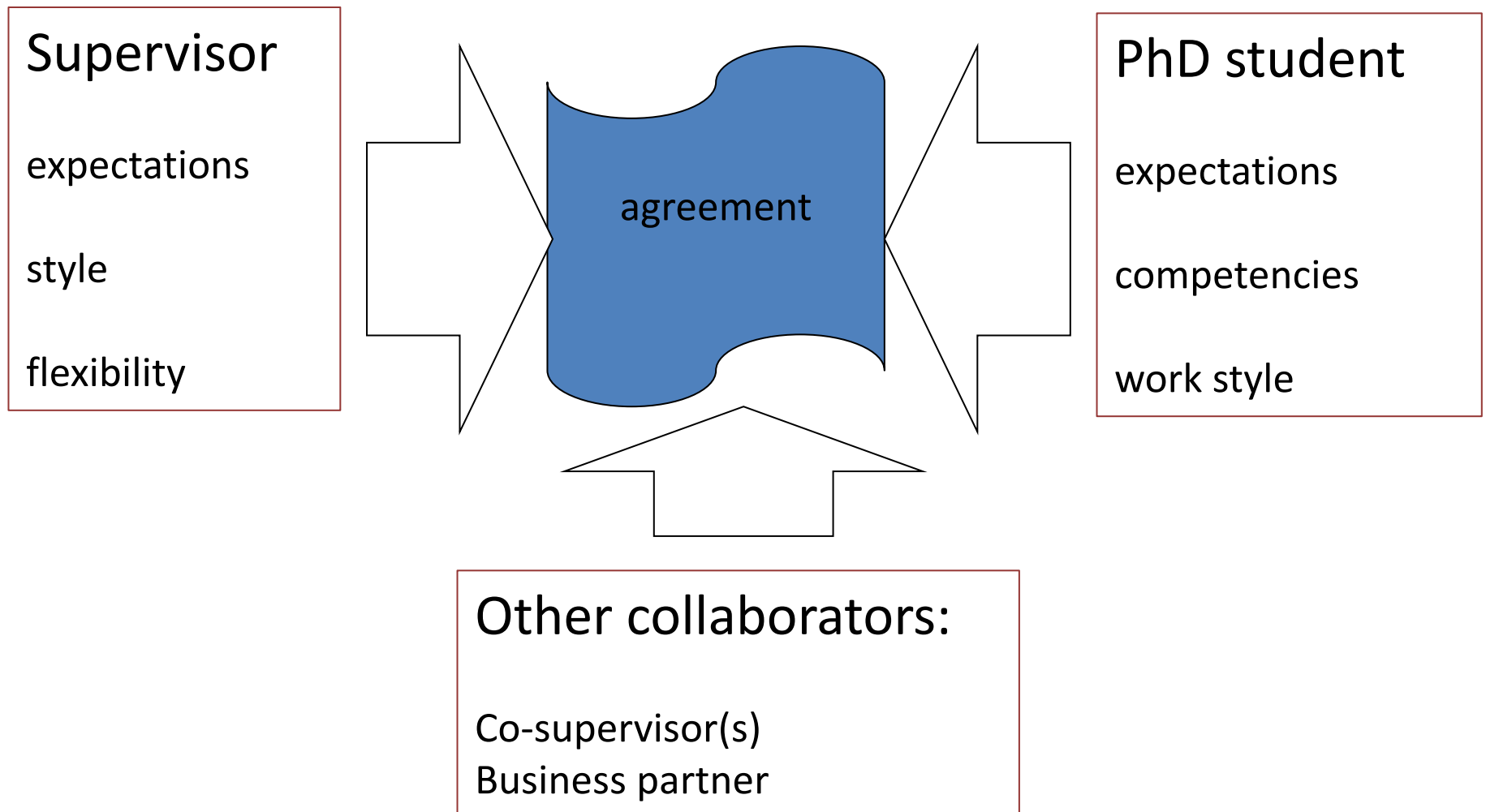


Tools to help align expectations

1. Collaboration agreement based on a questions-mediated dialogue
2. Contracts (PhD plan)
3. Toolkit to clarify the relation:
focus on control og autonomy (Gurr)
4. Supervisor letter



Collaboration agreement



Benefits/characteristics of the collaboration agreement:

- Facilitates discussion of 'difficult' topics
- Makes expectations explicit
- Negotiated – co-created
- Can be detailed or relatively broad

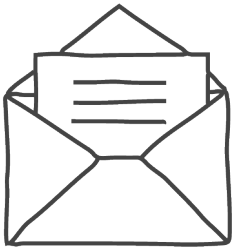
Personalising the questions sheet

- what is it important for you to clarify?
(15 minutes)

1. Read the questions
2. Which ones do you already clarify?
3. Which ones do you want to start using?
4. Share with your neighbour (to the other side)



Supervisor letter : A tool for aligning expectations



Potentials

- Explicate institutional and individual expectations
- Ensures better preparation of meetings
- Obligates

Barriers

- Top-down communication (one-way)
- Risk of asymmetrical power-relation
- Inflexible (?)

How to use it

- In the beginning of the process
- Invite student to read and comment on it → dialogue
- Revert to the letter in case of conflicts

Process – 1 hour

- Groups of 4-5
- Read each others letters
- Give feedback on one letter at a time:
 - **How would you react to this letter if you were a PhD student?**
 - **Ideas to develop the letter**

Reading

prioritise and make a strategy

What you plan to
read this week

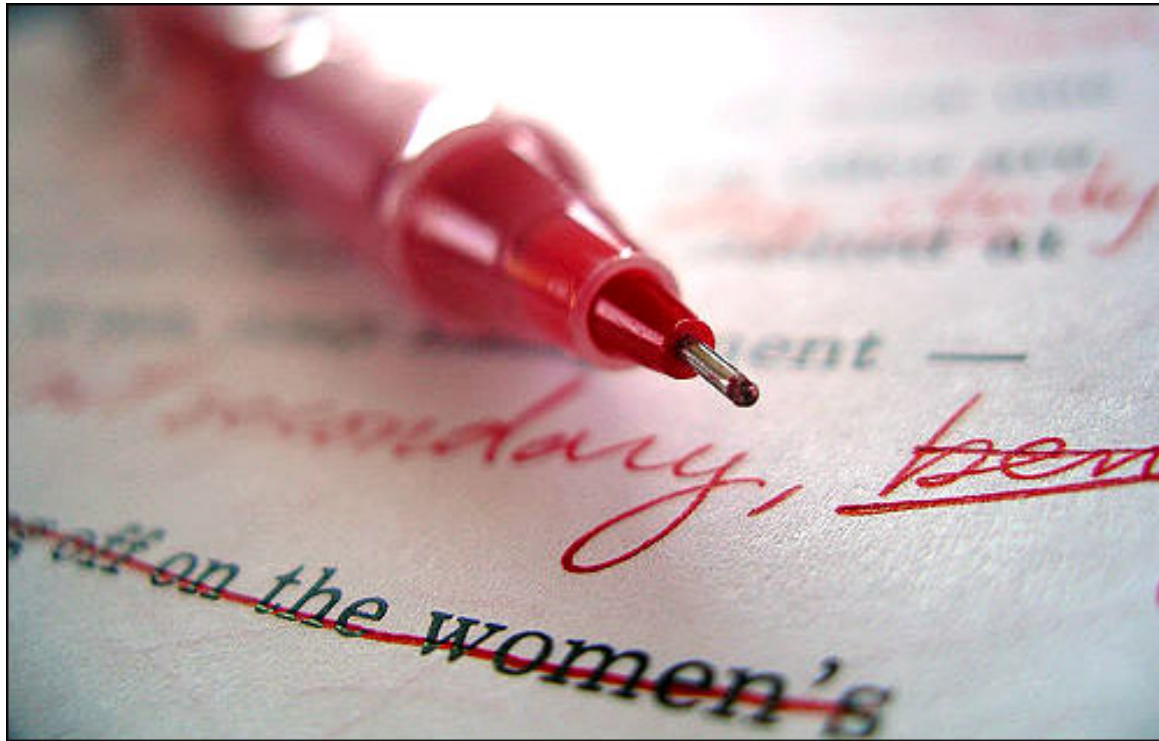


What you'll actually
read this week



Rhetorical reading





How to support the writing process

Writing is a competence that
we are expected to have...

“Although there are many courses, books
and so on about writing, it is generally
assumed that people will somehow work
out how to manage themselves to write
productively and ***well.***”

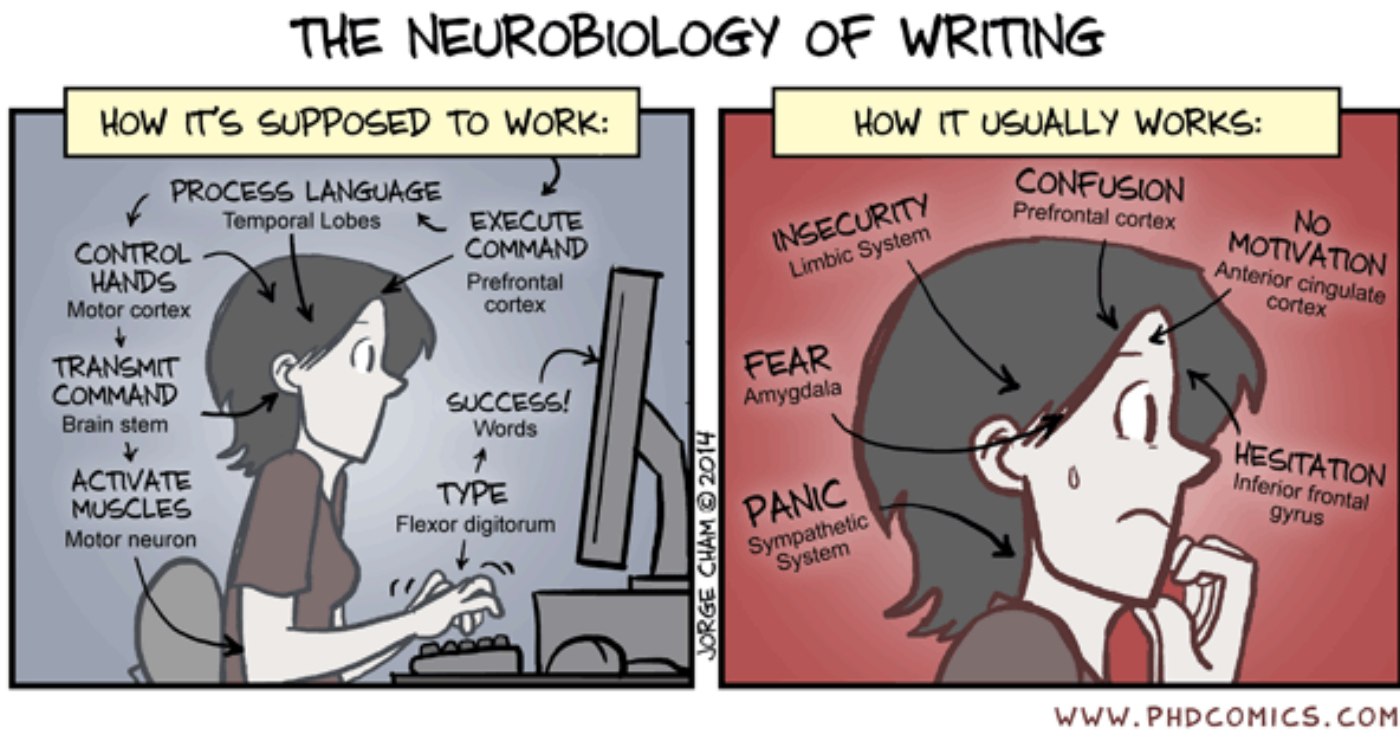
(Gardiner & Kearns 2012)

How do I get started?



*Writing is 90% procrastination
and 30% panic.*

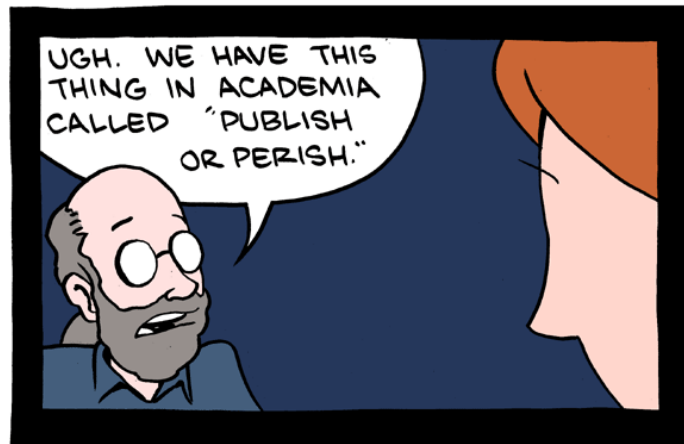
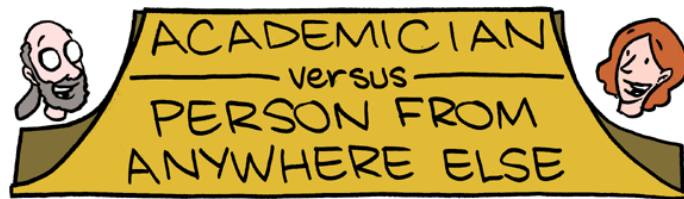
It is not good enough...



Connection between action and motivation

Figure 2: The relationship between action and motivation
(from Gardiner & Kearns, 2010).





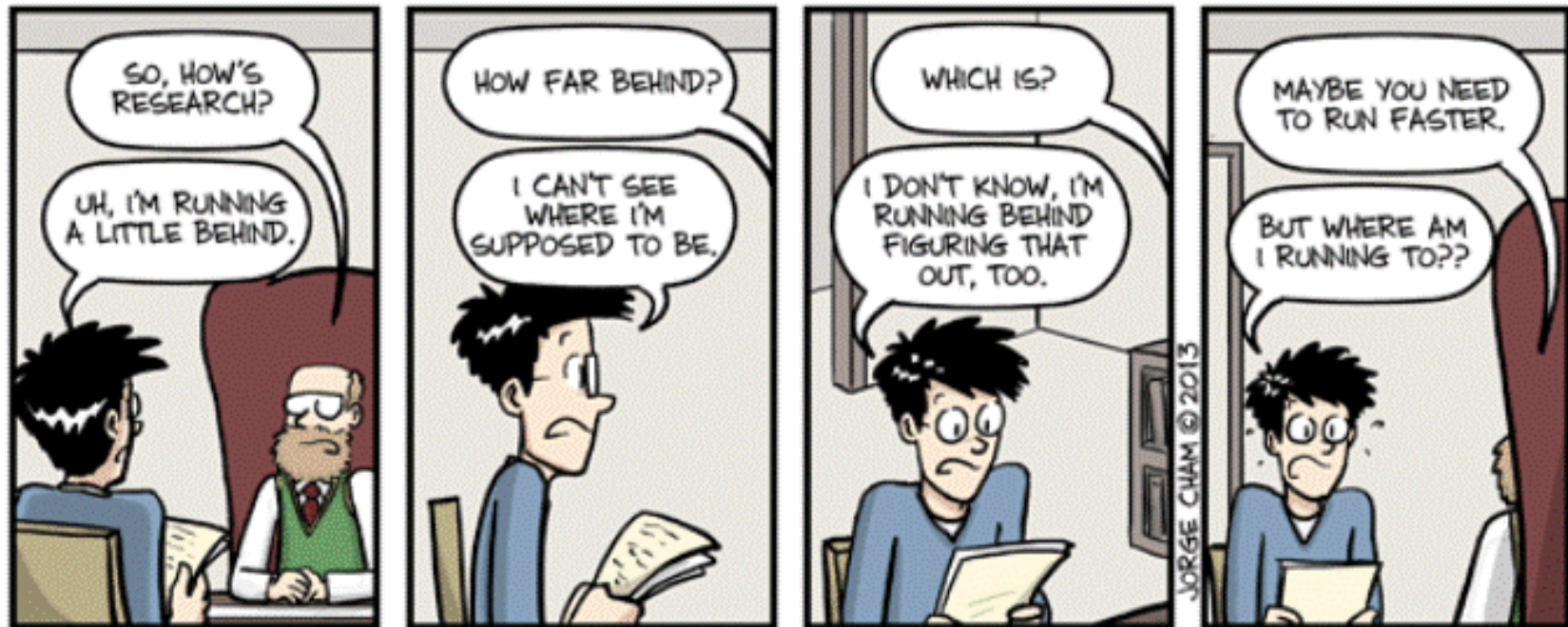
Could writing
just be a piece
of work?

How do you help students write their first paper/text?

Work in groups of 3-4 people for 10 minutes

- Explain to the group how you initiate/structure/mediate/inspire students that are starting to write scientific texts. Make a round.
- Summarize the best ideas on paper – share one idea in plenary.

Writing goals



Writing goals are about breaking down the task into smaller pieces...



“I want to finish the article before Easter”

Examples of writing goals



- I will write a paragraph of app. 1 page, explaining how I use the concept 'prototype'.
- The next hour I will write 10 lines describing the model.
- On Friday I will finish the paragraph on methodology for the article and send it to my co-writers.
- I will write the first section of the introduction (app. ½ page)
- I will spend 2 hours daily writing on my thesis (this strategy should be supplemented with more specific goals).

How to set writing goals



Decide which time span you are setting a goal for.

Decide what and how much you aim at writing.

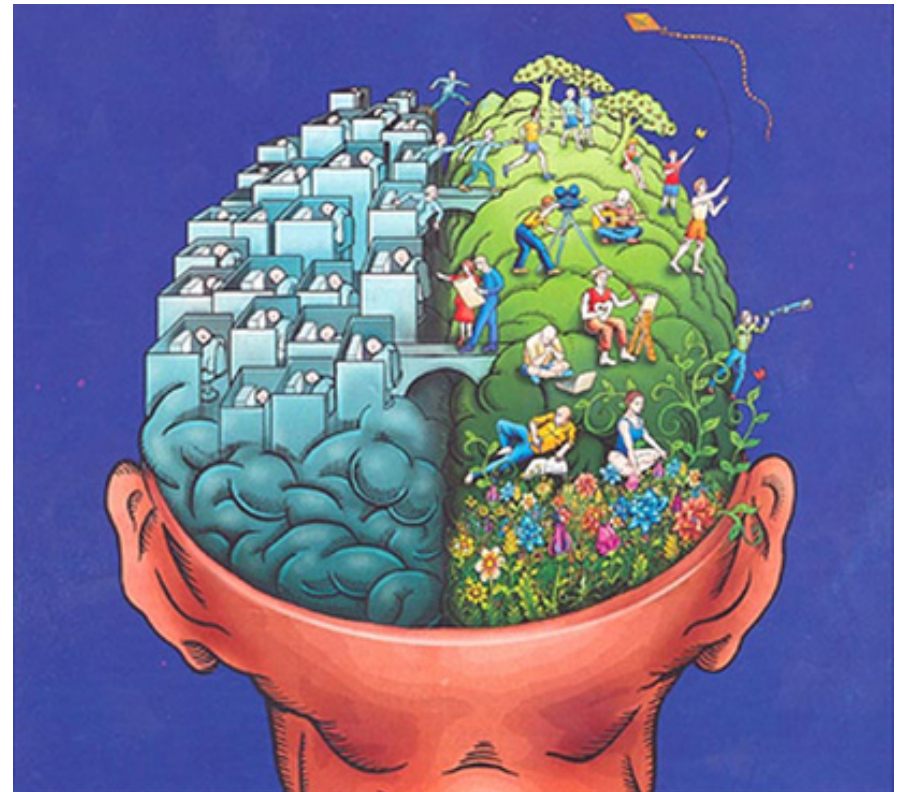
Set a timer and stop on time.

Take a break and set a new goal if you have decided to continue.

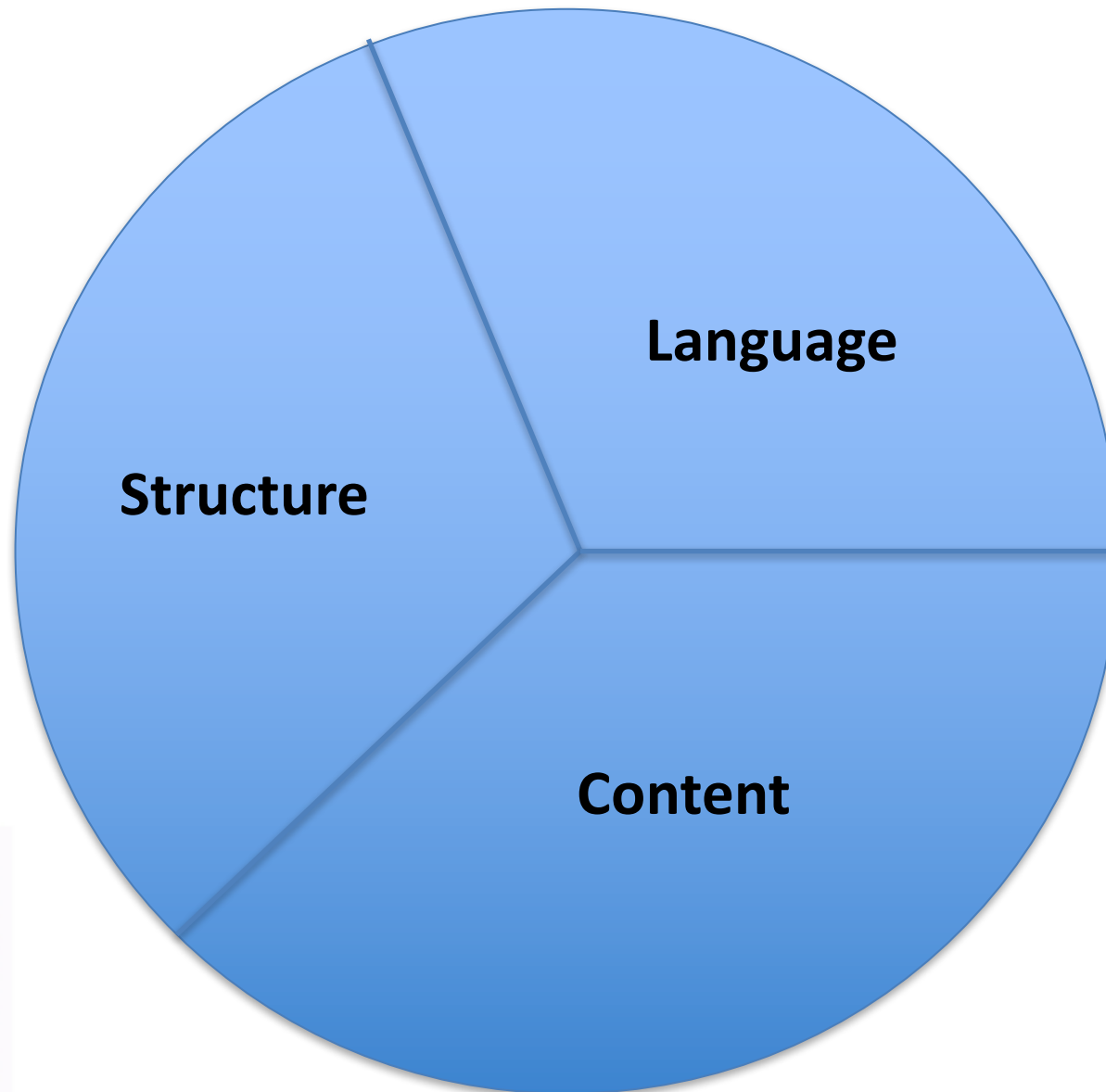
Distinguish between different phases in the writing process



Separate creative and critical
thinking when you write



The 3 rhetorical grips of the text



Online tools

Blogs on academic writing

Thesis Whisperer: <https://thesiswhisperer.com/>

DoctoralWriting SIG: <https://doctoralwriting.wordpress.com/>

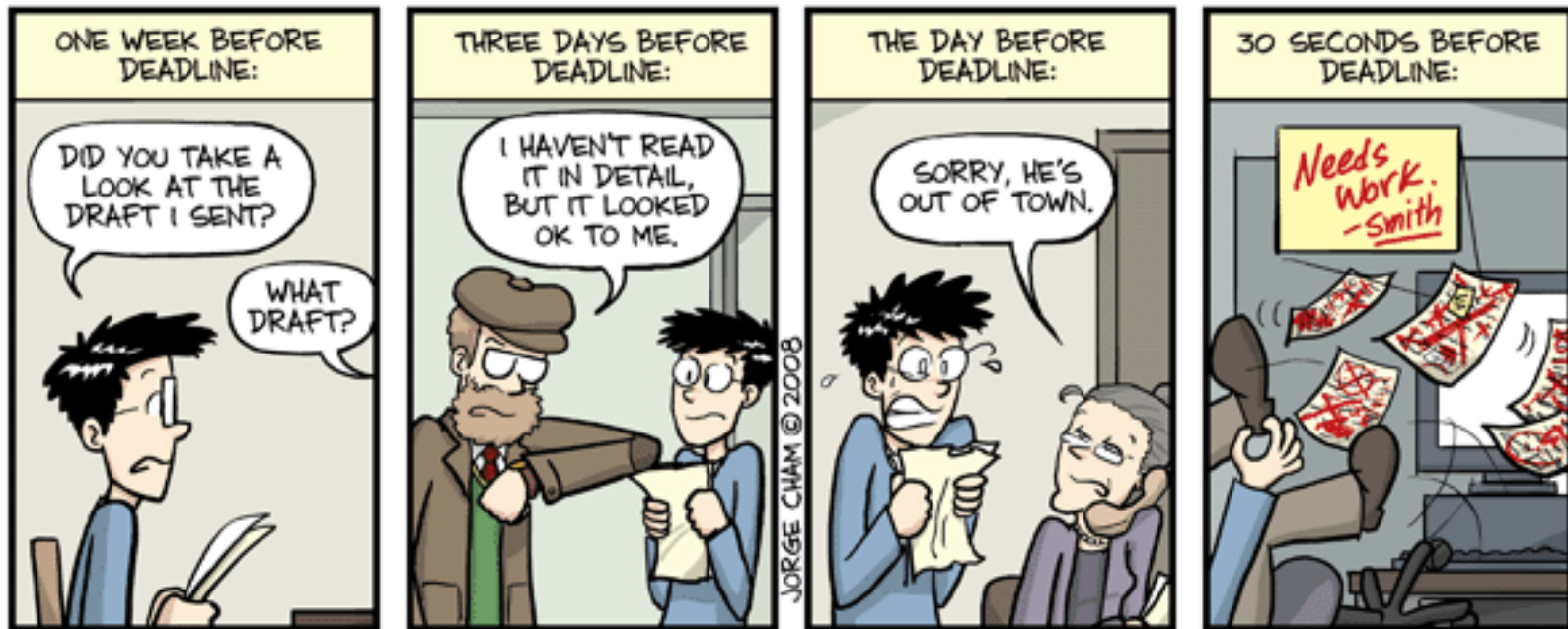
Phrasebank: <http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/>

Grammar

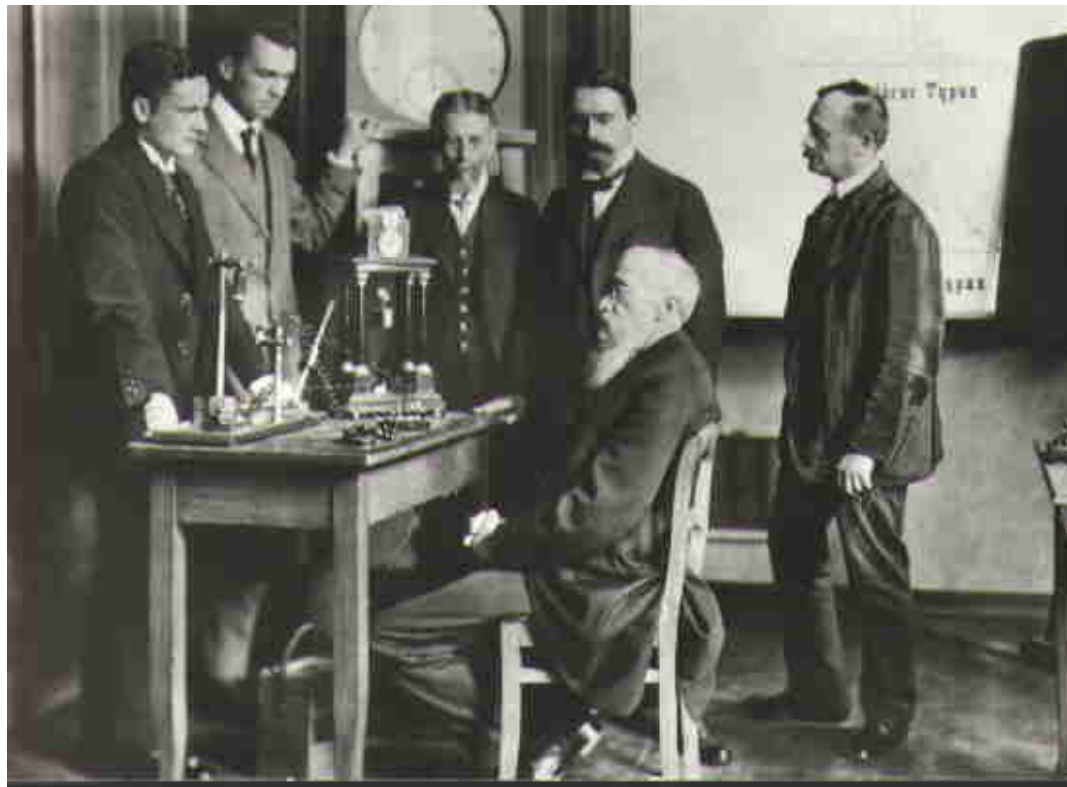
Grammerly.com: <https://www.grammarly.com/>

Writefull: <https://writefullapp.com/>

Effective text feedback



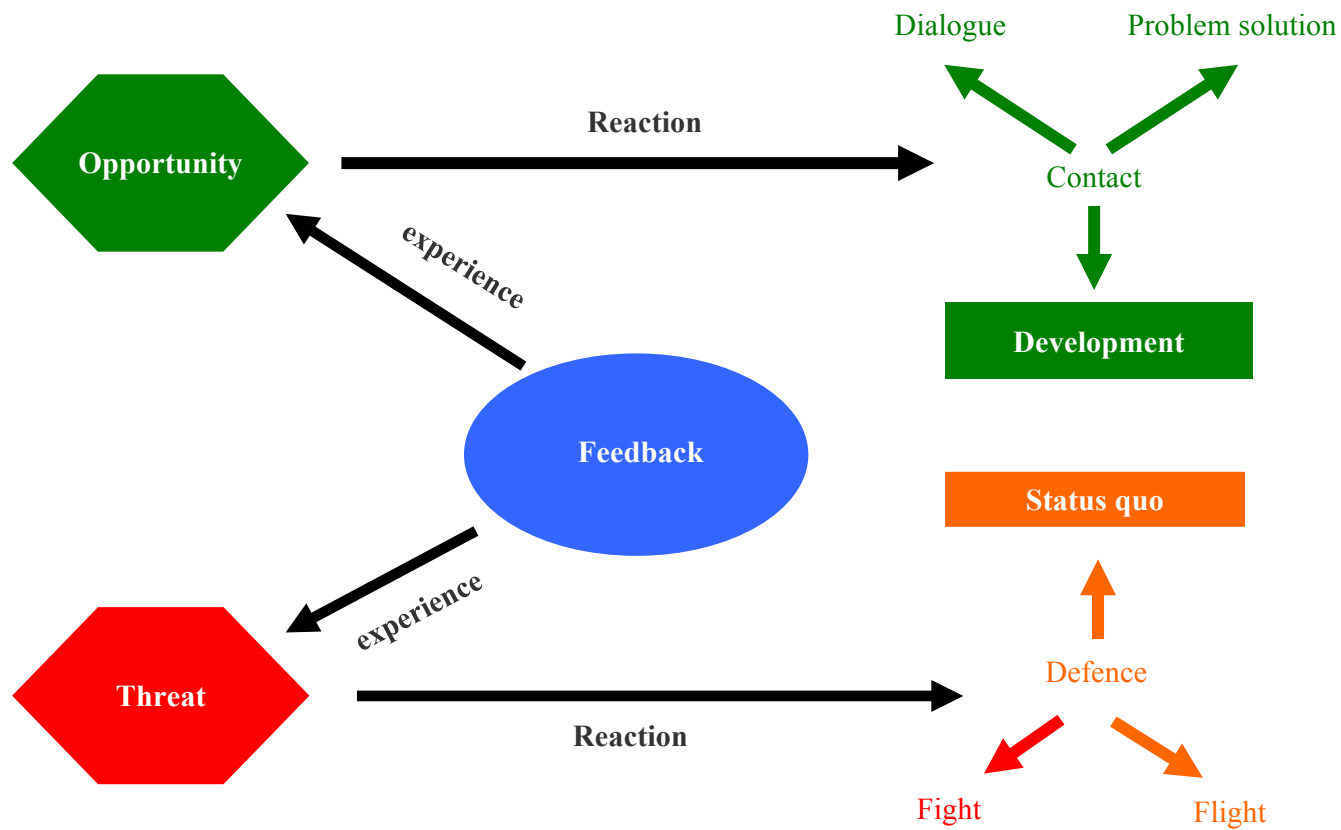
To help the PhD student
to develop academic
judgement



Different ways to develop academic judgement

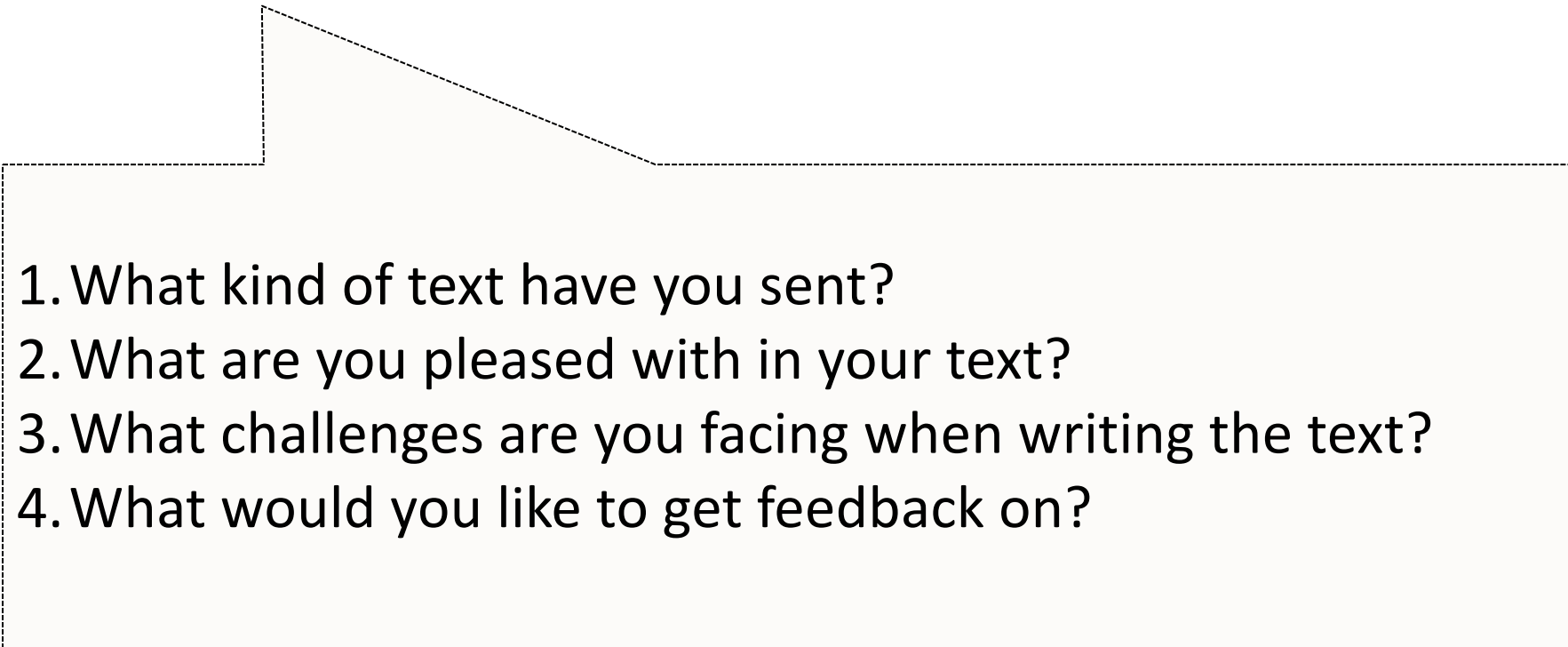
- Share your work-in-progress with the PhD student
- Let the PhD student help supervise master students
- Encourage the PhD student to read other students PhD thesis'
- Take part in conferences together and explicitly discuss academic levels
- Involve the PhD student in review-processes
- Individual feedback through supervision....

Feedback model



1. Use cover letters

Ask students to write a cover letter when they send drafts

- 
1. What kind of text have you sent?
 2. What are you pleased with in your text?
 3. What challenges are you facing when writing the text?
 4. What would you like to get feedback on?

2. Arrange a face to face meeting



Written comments are so easily misunderstood

3. Prioritize your feedback

- Decide what you find *most* important that the PhD student learns *at this point*
- Overcome your urge to correct everything
- Metacommunicate your priorities

What is the difference /
conceptual? = operational CS?

This anecdotal evidence illustrates well the transformation of CS towards a strategic tool, independent from industry, country of origin, and firm size. But even though CEOs and top management insist in public that CS practices and programs create value for firms, neither them nor researchers know much about how CS pays off (Husted & Allan, 2007). Just by looking at financial performance indicators is not enough and has its limitations (Kreuscher & Kleinmann, 2014). Clearer empirical evidences are needed in order to support claims about CS as a source of competitive advantage and value creation for the firm (Porter & Kramer, 2011). From a conceptual side, strategic CS has been acknowledged by a few scholars (McWilliams & Siegel, 2010; Burke & Logsdon, 1996; Husted & Allan, 2008; Aguinis & Glavas, 2013). However, it has been difficult to measure the added value of CS, because, first, the benefits of CS constitute intangible resources and capabilities, and, second, strategic CS is closely linked to production processes, product attributes or existing managerial practices (McWilliams & Siegel, 2010). A pioneering study in this context was done by Sharma and Vredenburg in 1998. They find that proactive environmental strategies are associated with the development of organizational capabilities in general. This study is highly cited not only in environmental management research, but also in CS and strategic management research. Since then no similar study or a study with a more in-depth focus on main strategic capabilities and a wider consideration of both environmental and social practices has been published.

io much anecdotal
However as anecdotal evidence shows, the meaning of CS for business has changed since 1998 and therefore we see benefits in renewing Sharma and Vredenburg's nearly 20 years old study with new data and new insights from currently developing strategic CS literature. More precisely, we follow the position the more CS is integrated and aligned with a firm's core business activities, the better developed are a firm's strategic capabilities. In this study we emphasize the integrative aspect of CS and develop the first empirical measurable construct of strategic or embedded CS, which also considers all three aspects of economy, environment and society. For this purpose we collect unique

What's ours?
Why is this needed?

? Why is this
relevant all of a sudden?

? No!

Wo! :-)

- Why clearer? You
made it sound possibly
as if we needed
some insights at all?

So? Why is that then
difficult?

What context!
This is not clear!

So what! Why is
this important?
Perhaps the topic
is just not worth
it!

A

? is strategic = embedded
also is
strategic the opposite
of embedded
or...

Direct- of
Causality?

? When do you
take this from?

CSR by firms. Therefore, we follow the call by Montiel (2008) and support the development towards only one term- Corporate sustainability.

CS becomes strategic, when it yields substantial business related benefits and practices jointly serve economic and societal interests (Burke & Logsdon, 1996). Strategic or also called embedded CS is a relatively new concept, capturing the creation of value for a firm by linking societal and environmental practices to a firm's core competencies and corporate strategy. The strategic aspect emphasizes the close integration of CS in a firm's daily operations, practices, and strategic decision-making. Opposite to peripheral CS, strategic CS is context specific and builds on a firm's unique core capabilities (Aguinis & Glavas, 2013). The relatedness to a firm's core business activities is at the heart of strategic CS and opens up opportunities for profit maximization and the achievement of competitive advantage through CS practices.

Strategic CS, or in particular the aspect of CS integration, bridges CS with the development of resources and capabilities. Further it conceptually takes up the recent transformation of CS in practice, illustrated by our introductory anecdotal evidence. In the following study we explore this bridge and offer a first and long-required (Burke & Logsdon, 1996) quantitative-based operational measurement. Such a measurement is needed, because it presents a more comprehensive basis to understand the link between corporate social performance (CSP) and corporate financial performance (CFP). The nexus between CSP and CFP is also referred to as black box (Klassen & McLaughlin, 1996) which we try to open in order to reveal the full range of CS related strategic behavior and opportunities.

The natural resource-based view and strategic capabilities

irrelevant
here!

The opposite of "periphery" would be "center"
=> not "strategic" / "strategic" would be it?

Is this a? Then any strategy
that does not yield
benefits is not
strategic!

=> The result defines
whether CS is strategic
or not?

That is anything
but not in line!

? What
relatedness?

=> This word is
used in a
different
context

Is the contribution
the development
of a measure?

We do not explore CFP
in this paper, do we?

4. Differentiate your feedback

Focus on the overall features of the text and subsequently on the details. Do not get lost in details!

(Burke & Pieterick 2010; Gulfidan & Walker 2014)

From global to local

From "comment boxes"  to "track-change"

Clarify expectations

“My supervisor doesn't like to read unpolished writing, whereas I don't like to waste time polishing my writing before I've had my supervisor's input on the ideas it contains and the way it is structured.”

5. Provide criteria based feedback

Substantiate your feedback in criteria, e.g.:

- Academic regulations
- Academic requirements for texts
- Genre-related requirements
- Orthography (correct spelling & grammar)

(Inspired by Hattie & Timperley 2007)

What is your opinion?

Discuss in groups of 3-4 people for 5 minutes

Supervisors must remember to give more praise than criticism when providing text feedback to students

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

Comment from a student

”I am very happy to get so many critical comments from my supervisor, because that indicates that she has read my text and has an opinion about it. That means that the supervision I get is not superficial. It had been very different if she just said: ”That’s OK, just go on” – but that has not happened.”

Cited from Lauvås og Handal (1998): Hovedfagsveiledning ved Universitetet i Oslo

6. Be specific

Applies to *both* praise and criticism (Hattie & Timperley 2007)



"Good!"

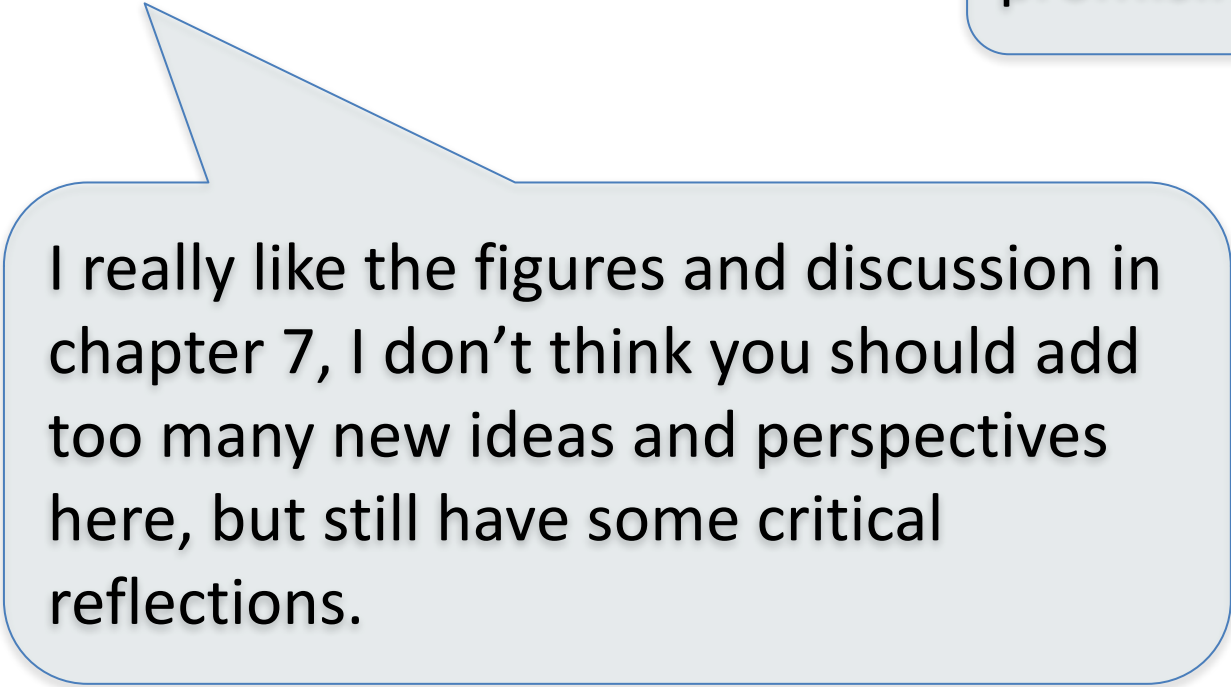


"Here on p. 9 you strongly support your claim when you write..."

Examples of praise and criticism



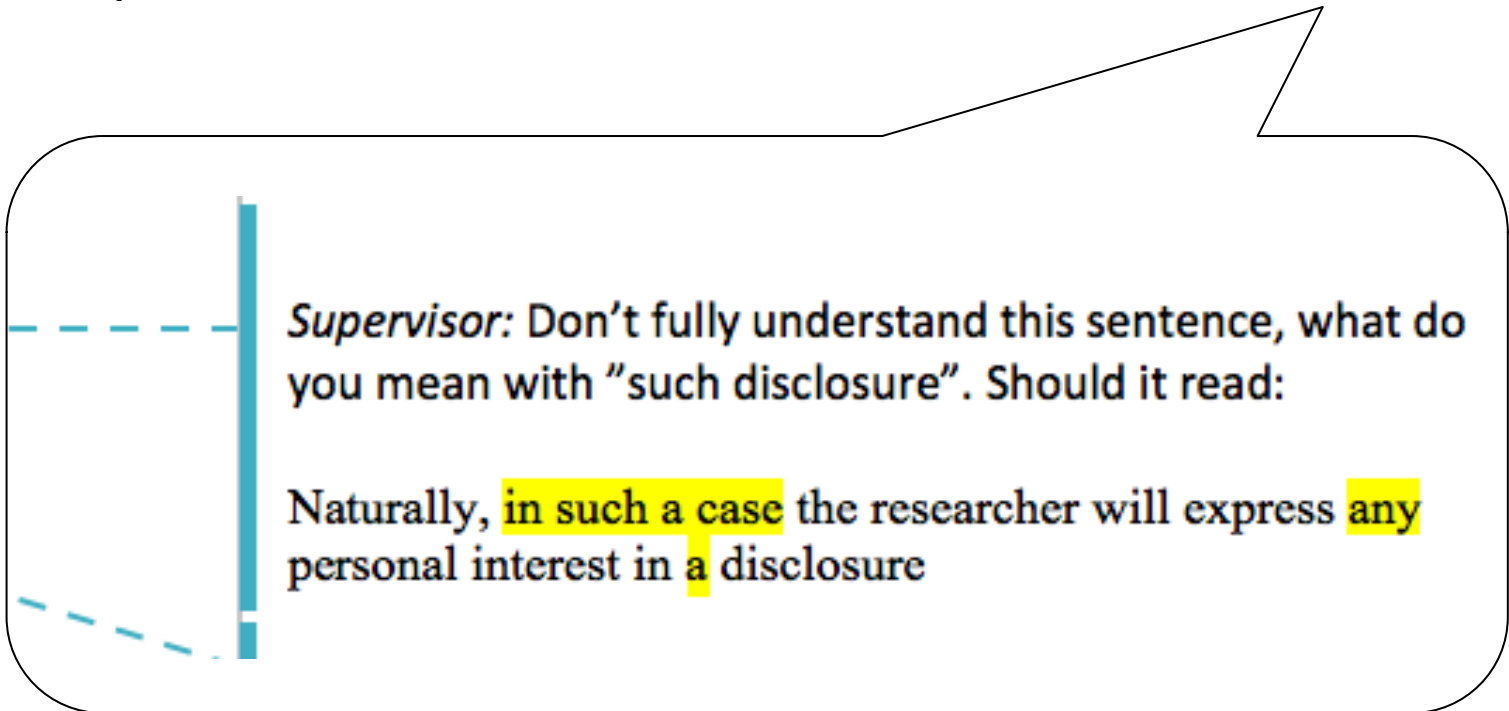
This is interesting and promising



I really like the figures and discussion in chapter 7, I don't think you should add too many new ideas and perspectives here, but still have some critical reflections.

7. Be action oriented

Can be formulated as suggestions or questions

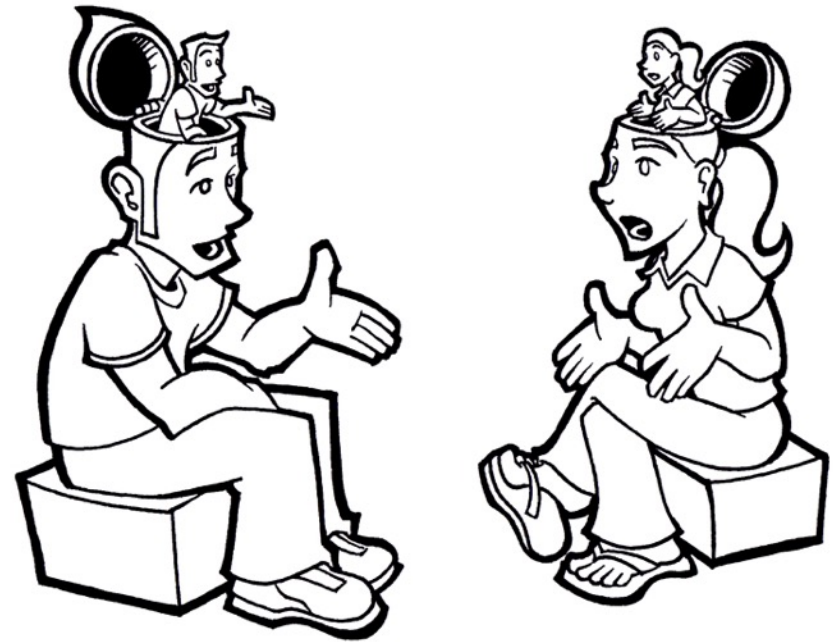


Supervisor: Don't fully understand this sentence, what do you mean with "such disclosure". Should it read:

Naturally, in such a case the researcher will express any personal interest in a disclosure

8. Assess feedback

- Meta communicate about the feedback
- Take an interest in how you feedback is received



Effective feedback

1. Use cover letters
2. Arrange a face-to-face meeting
3. Prioritize
4. Differentiate your feedback
5. Refer to criteria
6. Be specific – in both praise and criticism
7. Be action oriented
8. Assess the feedback



Process supervision and project management



The doctoral journey

“Degree completion and creative performance are closely linked to the doctoral students’ successful transition from ‘course-taker’ to ‘independent researcher’ ”

Lovitts (2005)



Doctoral study as a journey

- Traditional
- Apprenticeship
- Focus on process
- Curiosity as motivation
- Flexibility
- No division between work and leisure

(Hughes & Tight 2013)



Doctoral study as a work

- Professional
- Leader/employee
- Focus on product
- Results as motivation
- Project management
- Division between work and leisure
- Timely completion

(Hughes & Tight 2013)



The process/product dilemma

Case story from Walther (B)



Educate a researcher?

**Carry out a research
task?**

What is good supervision?

Students:

- Availability
- Frequent supervision
- Quick response
- Supportive
- Engaged



Process competences

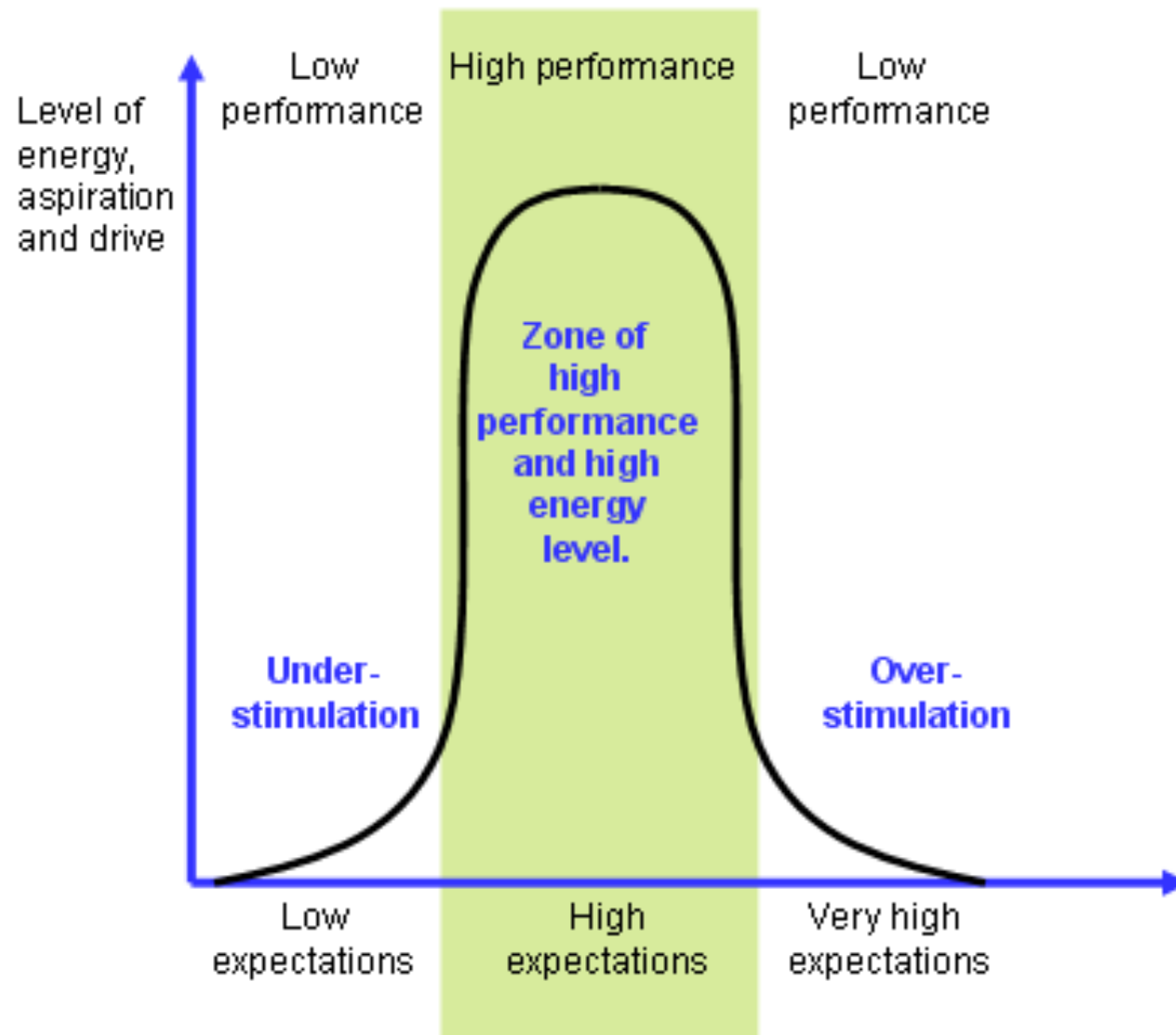
Supervisors:

- Knowledge
- "Craftsmanship"
- Network
- Financing
- A good project



Academic competences

Too many or too few expectations?

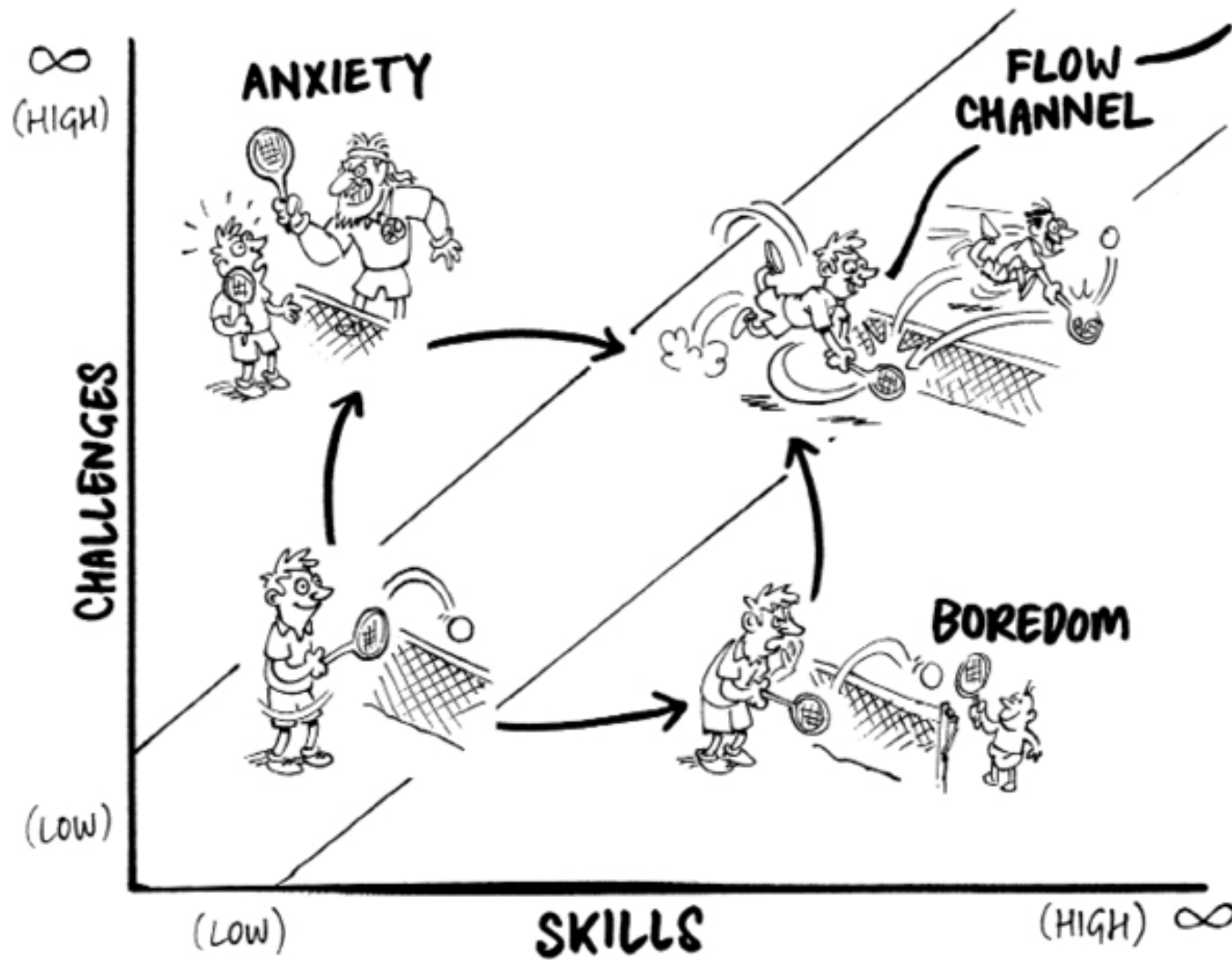


Own expectations

- FOMO: fear of missing out
- If I just work hard enough, I must be good enough

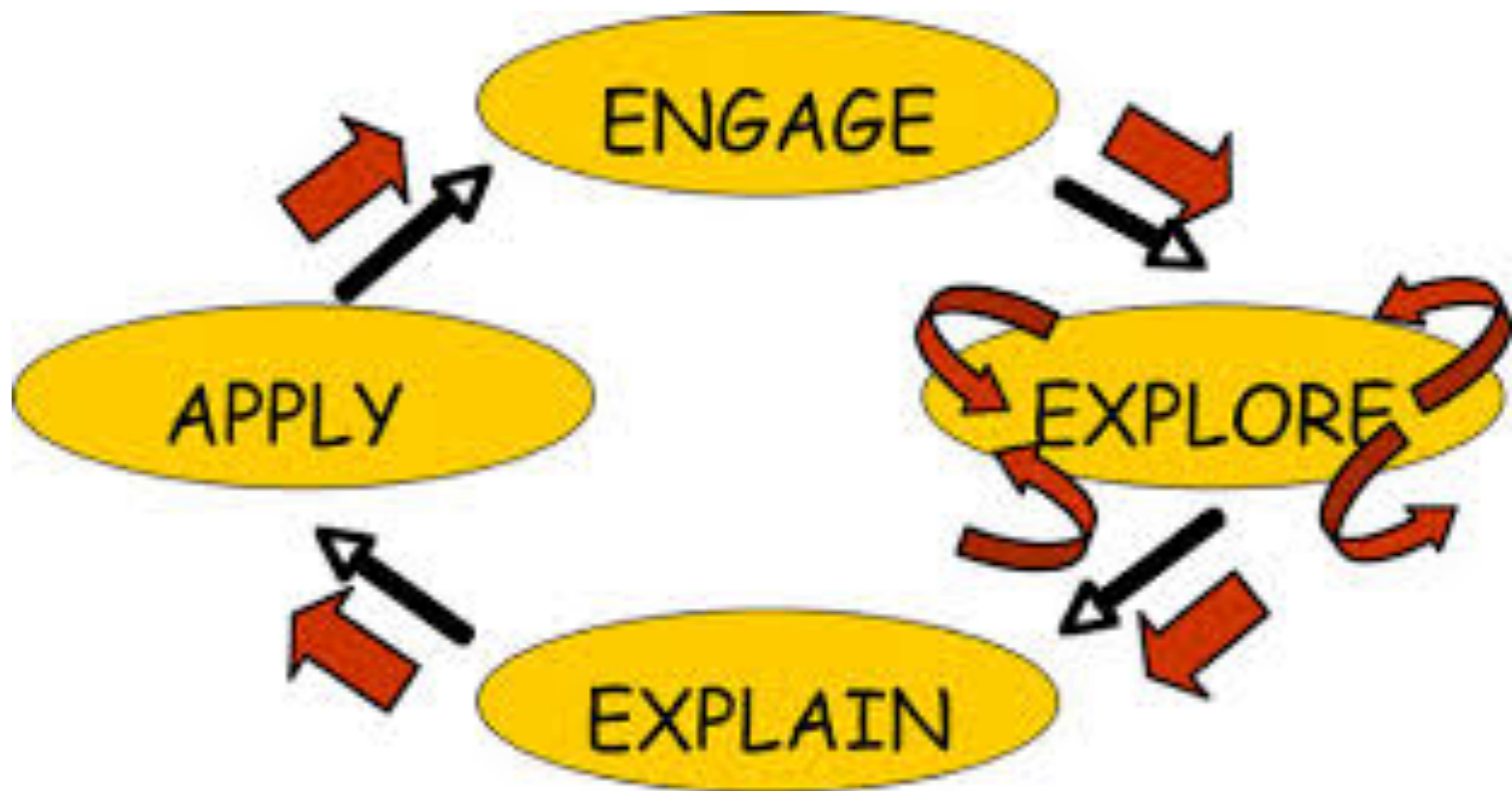


Flow



Picture source: <https://www.safaribooksonline.com/library/view/100-management-models/9781909652804/Text/Part-2-models.xhtml>

Focus on the PhD as a learning process



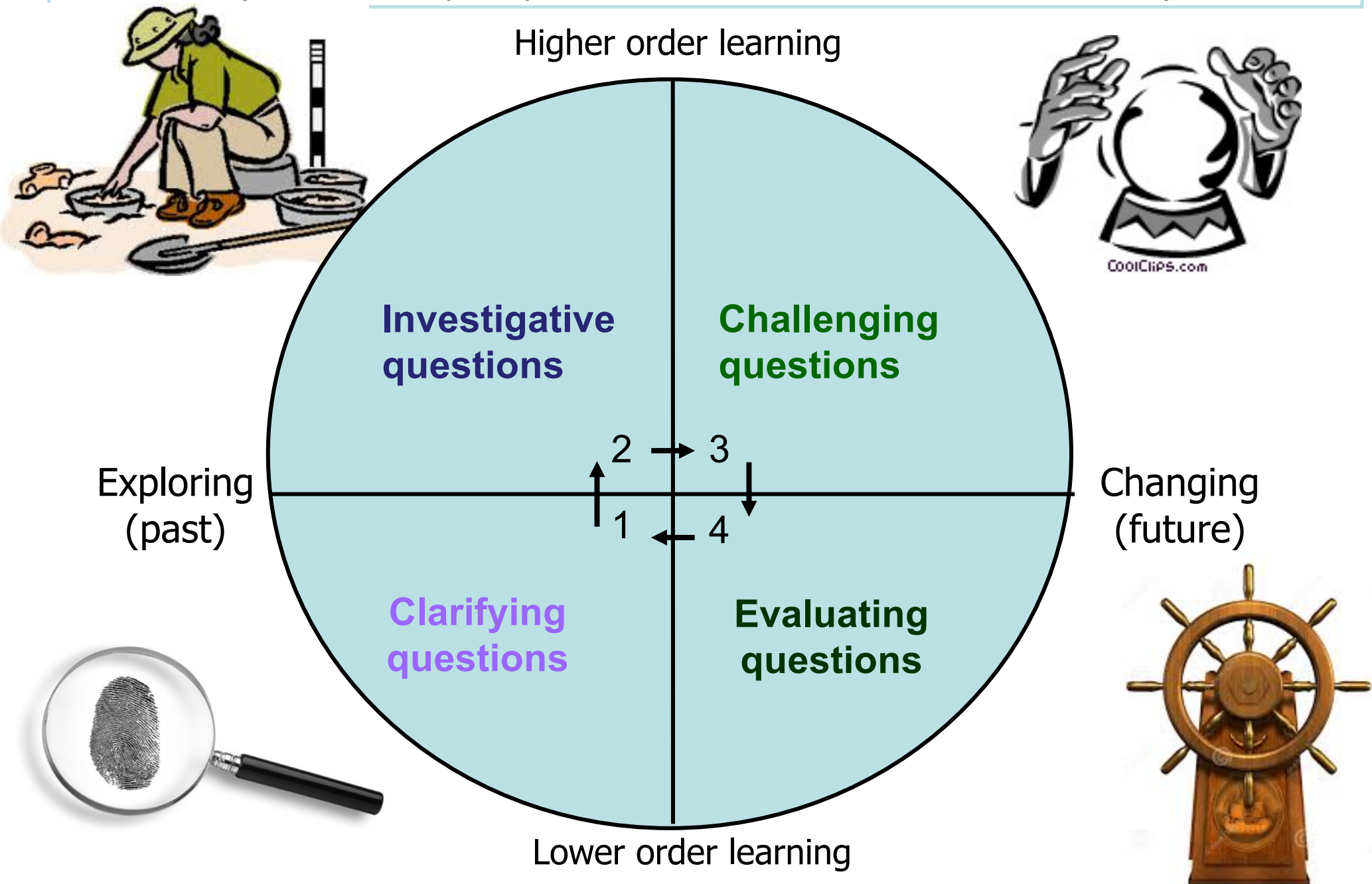
Four types of questions



How do questions
help us create
constructive
conversations?

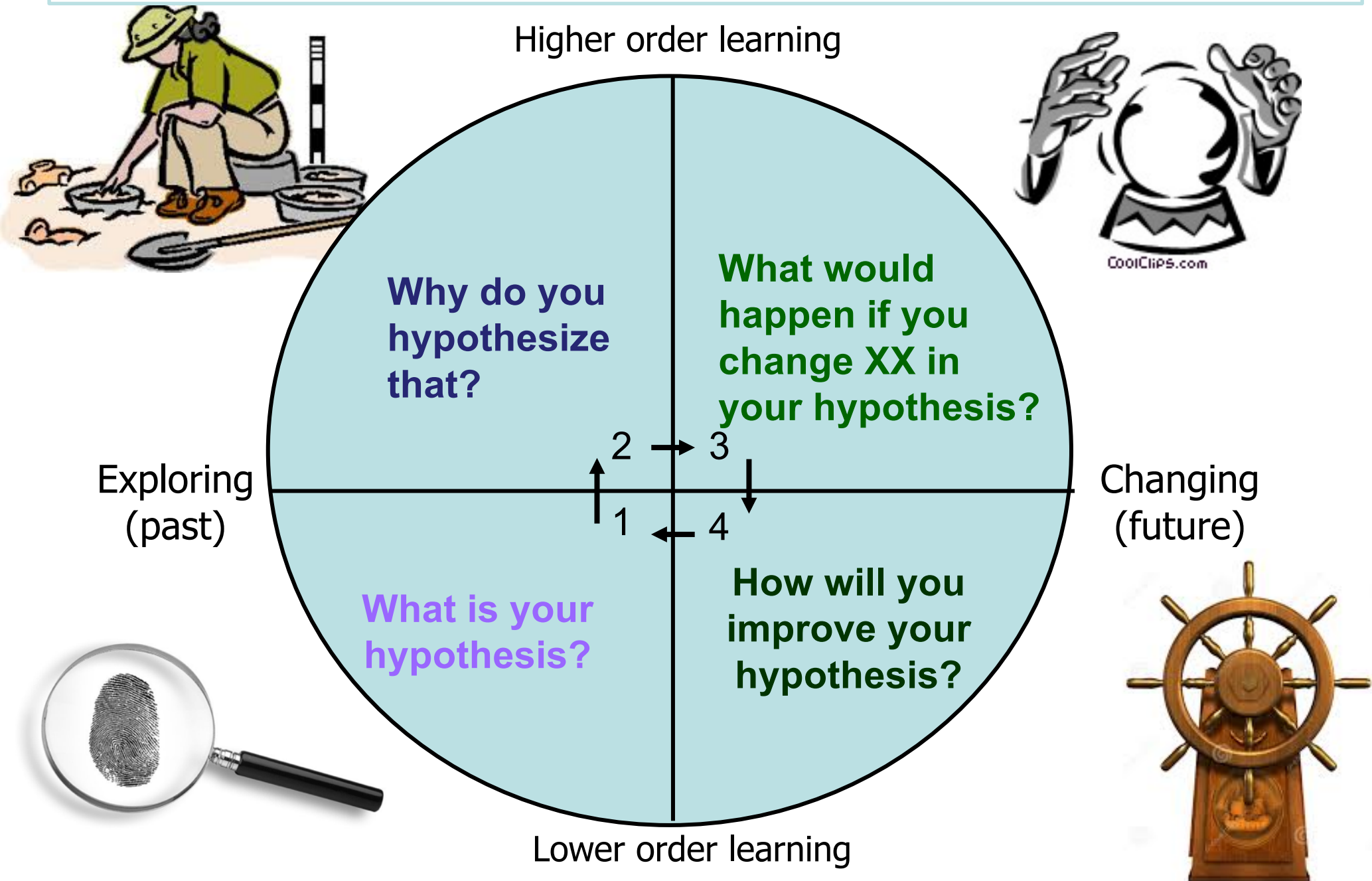
The Dialogue Wheel

(Further developed by Wichmann-Hansen & Wirenfeldt Jensen 2015)



The Dialogue Wheel

(Further developed by Wichmann-Hansen & Wirenfeldt Jensen 2015)



Process

1. Focus person tells the story
2. We make three reflecting teams

For each question type (the first 3 types)

1. Mirjam introduces the question type
2. 5 min where the group finds questions
3. A group member asks the questions
4. Questions that have not been asked?

Mirjam asks the evaluating questions if necessary

Clarifying questions

- What literature have you been studying in order to write the article?
- What databases and key words did you use?
- When do you expect to finish the pilot study?
- Who will you discuss the results with?
- -----
- What, who, where, when, which, how many,?

Investigative questions

- What are your reflections behind choosing to work with this concept?
- On what experiences do you base the plan you made for your empirical work?
- How did you reach the conclusion that this is not a good location for a windmill?

- What are your reasons for...?
- What thoughts do you have about...?
- How did you reach the conclusion that....?

Challenging questions

- If you had used the keyword x instead of the keyword y in your literature study, what do you think it would have shown?
 - I believe that this method is not applicable in this situation. Could you give another suggestion?
 - How valid is your basis of claiming that it is not beneficial for school children to do exercise?
-
- What are the consequences if...?
 - You say that...is this always true?
 - Are there situations where this theory is not valid?
 - I do not agree in this...what could be another way?

Evaluating questions

- To sum up I would like to know, what you take with you from our meeting today?
- What are your new insights?
- What is your next step?
- What is the plan until our next meeting?
- What should we follow up on next time?
- Is there anything that you need me to do in a different way...?