



# Using Deliberate Innovation Methodologies to Enable Graduate Student Success

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# Advisor/Advisee: Educational Challenge

- The Graduate Advisor/Advisee relationship can negatively impact research progress
- Students might leave the program as a result of the negative relationship
- It is not good for the Advisor or Advisee if there isn't effective communication

# Problems with Educational Reforms

- There are problems with how changes are effectively implemented
- There are great research-based methods and suggested best practices, but they **fail to take root, grow, thrive, and flourish.**
- What is the difference between solutions that take root, and ones that don't?



# Educational Reforms that Thrive

- Solutions that stop working when resources run out are not sustainable
- We seek to have create solutions that are self-sustaining
- Example: Individual Development Plan (IDP)
- This shows up in many areas of Academia, including Educational Research





# Indifference and Non-indifference

- Not trying to understand what we're not noticing from the beginning
- This often leads to indifference to the reform
- The key is trying to understand non-indifference from the beginning of the project
- We're looking for situations where the people we care about **can't not act**

# WHO are we interested in?

- Ph.D. students and advisors in STEM
- Students still within their first two years of **research**
- Currently looking at Georgia Tech, but think this is more universally applicable to other colleges and institutions
- Seeking to confirm or disconfirm these are the right people

# WHY are we interested in them?

- Once the problem becomes obvious, often too late to fix the problem
- We think focusing on the first two years establishes the positive/negative patterns in the relationship
- This might be the place we can focus on being of service to Advisors/Advisees

# Method of Meetings (1)

- Contact individuals we care about
- Set up Meeting, via phone call or video chat
- **Pre-Meeting**
  - Write down what we think will happen, and specific behaviors that might show up.
  - Create a carefully worded and deliberate prompt or prompts



# Method of Meetings (2)

- **During the meeting**
  - Keep in mind our strong idea, weakly held that we're looking to disprove
  - Probe carefully into minute details of relevant specific situations
- **Post Meeting**
  - Write down what we got right, wrong, and what surprised us
  - Determine how to proceed with the next person

# What could be going on?

- **In general:**
  - Advisors and Advisees have misaligned expectations in their relationship, and they don't talk about it.
- **An example:**
  - 6th year graduate student says he knows what his advisor expects him to present in research meetings
  - He reveals that he “knows” this through having watched his advisors facial expressions during meetings

# Next Steps

- To see the situations Advisors/Advisees find themselves in more clearly, we're having a large number of these meetings
- We're looking for repeatable phenomena in which these cross-purposes show up
- At the next meeting, I hope to have a more fleshed out idea

# Thanks for watching!

**See also:**

PERC Poster Session : No. 2.H1  
“Using Deliberate Innovation  
Methodologies to Enable  
Graduate Student Success”

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