

CHOOSING AN ADVISOR

is an important process that does not need to be stressful. Your relationship with your advisor is crucial for your success, their success, and the success of the whole research group.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT ASK YOURSELF:

- What style of advising do I prefer now? as I develop as a researcher?
 - micro-managing? hands-off? absent?
- What kind of reinforcement do I prefer?
 - positive? negative? no reinforcement?
- How do I prefer to receive feedback?
 - written? verbal? no feedback? spontaneous? planned?

Once you know your answers, find an advisor whose answers match.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT ASK POTENTIAL ADVISORS:

- What is the funding situation like?
 - will you be required to secure your own funding? on your own?
- Will you be required/encouraged to/prohibited from extracurriculars?
 - teaching? internships? outreach? popular writing?
- What is the publishing history of the lab?
 - will there be undo pressure to publish to keep the lab afloat?
- What is the mentorship style and ethos of the lab?
 - will it change as you develop? is it tailored or the same for everyone?
- What are the advisor's career goals and needs?
 - are they tenured? are they planning to leave the university? sabbatical?

This is a LONG relationship. Do your due diligence ahead of time.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT ASK CURRENT & FORMER GROUP MEMBERS:

- After graduation were they employable?
 - did they get their dream job or did they have to settle?
- Did they get support in their career aspirations?
 - were they encouraged to explore all avenues, such as outside academia?
- Did they easily get letters of recommendation?
 - did they need to ask multiple times? write their own letter?
- What was the group culture like?
 - was work-life balance encouraged?
- Is the advisor committed to social justice? How?
 - is there prejudice in mentoring? equity?

You can reach out to former group members - it's not weird!