

# How do I? Fredrik Ronquist & Big4 Students

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## Work efficiently/ accomplish a lot/ be known as SOMEONE?

- Work a lot of hours every day? → creates a lot, quantitatively
- But that's not all and too many hours can → lose focus, lose creativity
- find balance in both quantity and quality
- Make the most of your time, keep weekends for other things (work-life balance)
- Know about yourself: your strengths & weaknesses
- Make lists to keep track of tasks you need to finish & to prioritize
- Fred likes to work on several things at same time and shift between
- Keep track of time spent on different tasks

## Get a position

- Work on your citation-index and show that you are aware of those metrics
- With your publications, show that you know your basics but also have some that show that you can tackle difficult/ innovative questions - something that will make you stand out
- Have international experience

## Survive the Death Valley

- “There are many ways in which you can have a good life” and maybe life as a scientist is not the right choice for you
- Small jobs can keep you afloat until you find a postdoc/ tenure track/ first “permanent” position
- Be good in solving IQ-tests/ logical questions as such candidates have best abilities to solve problems in their job; be able to reason about a problem
- Establish a “bank of ideas” that you can use when the time is right

## Get the most out of my supervisor(s)

- Communicate with them in case you are unhappy
- Use their input/ experience to make good decisions that lead to better outcomes
- Best is to have real discussions, explore all options with your supervisor

## Publish papers & be a successful scientist

- Take modest risks and make sure you get 4-5 papers, so that you have enough to get the thesis done
- Write a lisentiate thesis half-way through your PhD
- Try to publish high-impact papers: don't put too much/ too little into a paper; don't be a perfectionist when writing papers - there will always be something to improve
- Don't take negative/ critical reviews personally, they are judging your work, not you

- Make clear statements in papers, trust your data and be a bit daring. Rather let someone else prove you wrong than not making a clear statement
- Be critical when reading other people's papers and don't forget that scientific progress is a continuous discussion/ ongoing debate
- You will never have ALL data that is possible to collect, you will always only work with a subset and hence results won't be perfect
- Prepare an outline with tables, figures (results) to your supervisor and discuss it. This is a solid basis to start/ write a good paper.
- Establish your independence and show that you got what it takes to develop your own research line with your own research group
  - This means "standard" taxonomic papers will probably not be good enough
  - Publish something that stands out among others/ is innovative
- Don't ONLY write papers with seniors/ famous scientists as co-authors

## How to be creative

- Work very hard on a problem, put it aside and then go for a walk/ holidays/ gym/sleep and you will come up with the answer
- If you have a problem, you are stuck with it: explain it to someone smart and this can help you to come up with the right answer by yourself
- OR explain your problem to someone who does not know what you do and explaining it in a super simple way will help you to solve the problem/ questions can help, too

## Women in science

- Women who take maternity leave compared to those that do not are more successful in their science careers
- You become more efficient
- You do something completely different which can help to stay creative

## How to attract funding

- It can help to review grants
- Very often, if people review grants they are not in their area of expertise and they have only little time to review - often not even paid:
  - the abstract should be written perfectly: concise, interesting
- Put yourself in the mindset of the people in the review panels and think about what they will like and not like
- Images work well, don't just use text
- Be effective, concise, use tables & figures, 1.5 line space for better readability, highlight important sentences
- If you use all spaces/ words and decrease font size/ line space then your proposal is not well written
- Summaries/ abstracts are most important as they will be read first!
- Have 1st sentence in each paragraph explain what this paragraph is about
- Market your research idea but don't overdue it - write it in a way that you would enjoy reading it if you were a judge

- Always reference the call of the proposal and answer any questions that are posed in the call; do not forget to answer any questions.
- If there are any instructions on how to structure the proposal then follow those instructions meticulously
- Call/ contact the funding agency and ask them what they are looking for

## **How to identify funding sources**

- Start with local/ governmental funding sources
- Try online data bases
- Your university probably has an office with a data base with different funding sources
- People at that office can also give advice on how to write a proposal
- Talk to them even if you do not want to apply to anything at the moment so that they know you and can forward information to you
- Be well connected to established seniors as they can often get better/ other grants → networking
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