UW Women Faculty Day: Managing Up as a Mentee

Elizabeth Buffalo, Ph.D
Professor, Physiology and Biophysics
Interim Associate Director for Research
Washington National Primate Research Center

https://buffalomemorylab.com/
@eabuffalo
About Me

1. Neuroscientist studying learning and memory mechanisms in monkeys.

2. Educator

3. Mentor to trainees in my laboratory, Associate Director of Research, Primate Center, Interim Department Chair (July)
The Peter Principle

- People are promoted to their level of incompetence, so everyone is bad at their job.

- Leaders in medical education may be excellent clinicians, researchers, and educators, but may struggle with leadership and management.
General Principles

- Have a good understanding of the other person and yourself, especially regarding strengths, weaknesses, work styles, and needs.

- Use this information to develop and manage a healthy working relationship – one that is compatible with work styles and assets, is characterized by mutual expectations, and meets the most critical needs of the other person.
Developing and Managing the Relationship

- Plan and set the meeting agendas
- Ask questions
- Actively listen
- Follow through on assigned tasks
- Ask for feedback
- Set goals and expectations
- Follow a regular meeting schedule with agenda
General Advice

- Take ownership of the relationship
- Know your worth and your priorities
- Use your boss/mentor wisely
  - Time, Resources, Political Capital
- Effective communication

Academic relationships involve mutual dependence between two fallible human beings.