



Online Ethics Center  
FOR ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE

# Your Supervisor's Recommendation for a Job

## Author(s)

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## Description

A scenario meant to stimulate discussion about the ethical issues that arise in the supervisor-trainee relationship; namely, a student is worried about the recommendation his advisor will write given present setbacks in his research.

## Body

As a graduate student you have been working for Dr. Supervisor for four years. In the initial years the research went smoothly. But in the last two there were numerous problems and delays. You have spent a lot of time pursuing various hypotheses suggested by Supervisor and think the setbacks were due to the multiple avenues that Dr. Supervisor wanted you to try simultaneously. You are concerned that Dr. Supervisor now questions your ability.

Now it is time for you to graduate and you are worried that the recommendation that Dr. Supervisor writes will reflect only the recent setbacks. Also, Dr. Supervisor wants you to aim low. That is, he wants you to apply for less demanding jobs and positions. You want to aim high.

How should you handle the situation?

## **Notes**

Caroline Whitbeck introduced methods and modules for discussing numerous issues in responsible conduct of research at a Sigma Xi Forum in 2000. Partial funding for the development of this material came from an NIH grant.

You can find the entire sequence on the OEC at [Scenarios for Ethics Modules in the Responsible Conduct of Research](#). Some information in these historical modules may be out-of-date; for instance, there may be a new edition of the professional society's code that is referred to in an item. If you have suggestions for updates, please contact the OEC.

## **Contributor(s)**

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## **Parent Collection**

Scenarios for Ethics Modules in the Responsible Conduct of Research

## **Topics**

Mentors and Trainees

## **Discipline(s)**

Research Ethics

## **Publisher**

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