Recruiting, Selecting and Supervising Graduate Students

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Student Recruitment

• Spread the word: advertise your science widely – create a buzz

• Websites critical (search optimization; attractive and easy to navigate; international)
  • Campus visits – Open Days: Promote the program
  • Personal contact by phone or e-mail

• The top applicants will have multiple offers – need to have exciting project and competitive financing

• Focus on developing a reputation as a good mentor
Student Selection

• The best student on paper is not necessarily the best student for you – interviews and letters can be key

• Beware the ‘institutionalized’ student – try to understand motivation

• Know what you are looking for (numerate, skilled in lab, expertise)

• Letters of recommendation very important BUT be beware of hyperbole and learn to read between the lines (damning with faint praise)

• Look for evidence of a student's ability/willingness to do what it takes to meet/exceed a set goal (GRE results; undergraduate project; internships)
Student Supervision

• Students are a big responsibility – you are incredibly important for their future careers
  • Students have a big responsibility to you – they are important for your career
    • Start each new grad student with a 'training project’ – proving ground
      • Engender independence but keep your eye on the ball
    • Have a clear route to an endgame – where is this leading?
  • Don’t pander to students – bring them along but don’t do the work for them
    • Treat students as colleagues and not slaves