

Learning to Navigate the Professional World: Soft Skills Teaching Scenarios for Graduate Students Part 2

Introduction

Students enrolled in the fall 2022 sections of Graduate Student Professional Development (ALS 5934) at the University of Florida decided to create new discussion scenarios on an expanded set of topics that adds to a set of activities reported previously (Anderson et al., 2022). For example, discussion scenarios and role play activities offered by Anderson et al. (2022) focus on soft skills such as confronting bias, having difficult conversations, conflict resolution, leading with emotional intelligence, empathy, and effective listening. The current group of students increased the number of case studies focused on understanding bias which is highly relevant given recent global data describing discrimination and bias in graduate school (Woolston, 2022; Nature Research, 2022). They also developed original scenarios related to acting decisively, being assertive, learning to say no, communicating across generations and cultures, performing under pressure, failure as growth, setting team goals, motivating others, being a good mentee, activating your professional networks, navigating change, and thinking strategically.

Students in the fall 2022 class, like students the previous year, digested relevant videos from topic experts before coming to class. A complete list of video topics can be found in Table 1 of Anderson et al. (2022). These videos provide a wealth of tools and advice for navigating the various scenarios. The students also received guidance on how to create discussion scenarios (Anderson et al. 2022). Students integrated this content and their experiences to craft the new discussion scenarios.

The curated set of discussion scenarios was created exclusively by students. One can access all student-generated activities by visiting: <https://go.ufl.edu/ao40poe>. Our goal is for these scenarios to be used or adapted in other graduate student professional development courses.

References

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