

Tips for Graduate Research Supervisors

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Tip Number 8 – Collaborative Research – Differences Between Academic and Commercial Objectives

	<i>Commercial Perspectives</i>	<i>Academic Perspectives</i>
(i)	Commercial/financial success	Individual academic excellence
(ii)	Converting ideas into functional products or systems is paramount	Testing the limitations of ideas is paramount - the objective is to see whether or not ideas can work
(iii)	Ideas that cannot be converted into functional products or outcomes are a failure	Ideas that cannot be converted into functional products or outcomes are an integral part of the research process - the research is to assess boundaries not to achieve a perceived "correct" solution
(iv)	Relative competitive advantage - shades of grey	Absolute solutions - black and white
(v)	Corporate excellence - individuals collectively work towards achieving an outcome for the corporate entity	Individual Excellence - individuals work towards achieving an outcome for the individual
(vi)	Team-based projects with knowledge vested over a range of individuals	Individual project with knowledge vested in one individual
(vii)	Propensity to keep developments confidential	Propensity to publish any new developments as a hallmark of success

(viii)	Projects are multi-disciplinary in nature and may involve marketing, science, production, sales, etc.	Projects are highly specialized in nature and focus on one particular type of expertise
(ix)	Financial indicators are used to measure success	Academic rigor takes precedence over financial considerations
(x)	Projects are successful if they can be rapidly commercialized	Projects are successful if they contribute new knowledge
(xi)	Concepts have little value relative to the overall process of development and commercialization	Concepts are the end objective
(xii)	An academic solution is only a concept and a starting point	An academic solution is the end-point of a research process
(xiii)	Commercial outcomes take precedence over process rigor	Process rigor takes precedence over commercial issues
(xiv)	Time-frames are backward scheduled from perceived market demands for products	Time-frames are forward scheduled from an original concept
(xv)	Professional time-frames are measured in days or weeks	Professional time-frames are measured in months or years