Finding effective mentor(s) as a trainee

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My journey from the Carolinas to SoCal

3. Univ. of CA Riverside, CA (2015-present)
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Step 1: Flesh out your career goals

- What type of work makes you happy?
  - Invest time in some serious soul-searching
  - Test out a variety of work activities/environments

- Research- or non-research-based career?
  - Talk with scientists within/outside of research

- Where do your interests and values align?
  - Talk with scientists across sectors and institutions

- Where do you see yourself in 5-10 yrs?
  - Technical or management ladder?
  - Within or outside the United States?
  - What type of work-life balance is desired?
Step 2: Align goals with the right mentor

- **What is the role of your PhD/postdoc advisor?**
  - Help guide projects, experiments, analysis, etc.
  - Provide funding/resources to push the envelope
  - Provide support to attend/present at meetings
  - Review/edit papers, abstracts, presentations, etc.

- **What is the role of your mentor while a trainee?**
  - Raise awareness about opps that align with goals
  - Provide candid advice about steps to achieve goals
  - Advocate and connect you with potential employers
  - When needed, provide guidance and support
A few tips as you move forward

- Stay focused and build a solid reputation
- Publish quality papers in reputable journals
- Be professional and don’t burn bridges
- Don’t be afraid to explore different career options
- Be flexible and open-minded (don’t be too picky!)