

David asks 'should I quit?'

August 2019

Hi John,

I went to your seminar for new PhD students earlier this year and thought it was really informative.

I think the looming "should I quit" question has been dancing around my head since then, and am now wondering if I have potentially just wasted nearly a year. I am still in my literature review which is in draft form in the truest sense of the word 'draft'.

My supervisor seems so disinterested in me and my work. The only time the engagement stepped up a bit was when I was shortlisted for a scholarship. After and before that I felt like the sessions were rushed. She had never reviewed any of my work I sent beforehand (even once reading a draft for 10 minutes of the session while I sat in silence) and just seems way too busy to have me as a student.

The University advised there is no work spaces for PhD students to use unless I had official funding. So I try to find space in the library when I don't work from home. But I feel more isolated every day.

I have attended any and all of the training available, tried to meet with other academics and even search out other PhD students best I can to stop feeling so isolated and ... useless.

My supervisor hasn't replied to my last two emails, and now I feel I have not made enough progress since our last meeting to ask again.

I realise deciding to quit or not is a personal question but I am more seeking some advice if there is anything I can do with the work I've done so far. Even if I drop out of the PhD program, it would feel better if there is something I can work towards or achieve after this time.

I started in January and have seen my supervisor 5 times. Once was just for 10 minutes to meet. I think this is technically within the university guidelines.

Oh and I am an international student. If you have any advice or can point me towards any of your resources that might help, I would be very grateful.

Regards
David