Managing up (and in other directions) involves building positive working relationships with others so that these relationships do not impede your work goals. Two areas you can influence:

- Communication skills
- Contribution skills

**Communication Skills**

There are four different styles of decision making: analytical, conceptual, directive, and behavioural.

- Understand how your manager makes decisions
- Tailor your communication style to match their decision-making style
- E.g. if they are more analytical, you want to focus on data and provide evidence for your argument. If they are more directive, then consider using brief communications that focuses on the big picture

Also take note of your managers preferred communication medium (email, phone call, pre-arrange meeting, task-orientated apps, talking in passing) and try to use the correct medium appropriate for the message.

**Contribution Skills**

Demonstrate your contribution to your manager and/or research group

- Not just with your own research but through other activities as well, e.g., recognising manager’s blind spots
- Use your manager’s preferred communication style
- Link the blind spots to your manager’s priorities

**Dealing with problems**

**Phase 1**
- Reflect
- Write out facts vs reactions
- Talk out aloud to yourself or a friend – chance to practice how the communication comes across

**Phase 2**
- Take action (no action leads to ruminating/repeat venting)
  - Acceptance
  - Have the (difficult) conversation

**NB, For ongoing, potentially toxic, issues and situations managing up may not be enough. In these situations, your starting point would be to employ other support (friends, colleagues, HR, support services).**

**Additional notes**

Ask for regular meetings with your manager

- Take responsibility of the agenda to help manage expectations