

## Tips for Black Male Doctoral Success

1. Start with the end goal in mind. Identify opportunities that align with your future career interests and gain experiences in those areas.
2. Identify and connect with others (within your institution and outside) who are interested in the same research topics. Find ways to collaborate and share ideas.
3. Create writing accountability groups. Writing accountability groups can help with goal setting, creating realistic research timelines, and offering/receiving developmental feedback regarding writing.
4. When reading for class or for your own research, ALWAYS keep notes on your own reflections regarding readings. Attempt to make connections across readings or how information fills a gap or leaves a void in the overall literature
5. Ask For Experienced Help. The good thing about being a PhD student is that numerous individuals have been in your shoes, so seek out those individuals once you arrive. Ask 2nd year & 3rd year graduate students in your program including those in the dissertation process for their past notes from class, tips on how to interact with the professor, and help on how best to organize your papers.
6. Set a Personal Deadline to decide a Dissertation Topic within year One. Although you will not need your dissertation topic until the end of year two, I find it best to have decided no later than the end of year one. Knowing your topic will help you plan out your elective courses, avoid unnecessary research, and it allows you to begin the literature review and bibliography process early.
7. Guard your time. Understand intimately how you work best to get the job done. This includes workspace, groups, study habits, etc. The game changes at this level. Understand the art of saying “NO” to new projects when clearly your plate is already full. You will always have a full plate by the way.
8. Identify a mentor, and do it soon. This person outside of your major advisor or favorite professor will help with the crazy world you are in. Use this person as a confidant, sounding board, and support system. This person is extremely important because they will help you understand the outside academic world apart from your campus. They can connect you with other doctoral students, and faculty/administrators in the field.
9. Serve as a mentor to someone else. EACH ONE, REACH ONE, TEACH ONE. It may sound cliché, but serving as a mentor helps you with understanding your own path as well.
10. Take advantage of opportunities offered to you. You never know how the experience may advance your professional and educational career.
11. When seeking a mentor or colleagues to bond with, don't just look within those circles of people that look like you. Some of your greatest mentors and colleagues within the field can be people outside of your race.