

ABC 891 Adelaide (Adelaide)
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Matthew Abraham & David Bevan

Abraham talks about staff and development at **Flinders University**, how **Hugh Kearns and Maria Gardiner** work with students who are advanced, particularly people doing PHD's, and how procrastination can hit a student. Abraham says yesterday they were talking about students who are written off by teachers who procrastinate but really they're perfectionists, that's what is gridlocking them. He reads an email from a listener whose assignments were late at university because she was a perfectionist. Hugh Kearns says he does a lot of work with people who are doing PHD's and has to constantly tell them it's that, not a Nobel prize. He says they won't hand their work in as they think the work isn't that good. He says it gets worse the more successful you get. Gardiner says some people were heading towards elite careers in football, and that's fallen apart as they were getting more successful, there was more pressure and couldn't cope with it. Kearns says you need to reassure people about their standards and how it's not a Nobel prize, they're not different from their fellow students. Gardiner says you need to deconstruct what the person is thinking, the term is cognitive behavioural coaching. She says there's high achieving women whose house needs to be perfect as well as their kids like Bree from Desperate Housewives. Kearns says it's good to have high standards, but the real part is what do you do with it then, whether you achieve them or not. Gardiner says true perfectionism will hamper your performance, you can be thorough and detail oriented without being a perfectionist. Peter talks about golfers who are never happy as they can't achieve perfection. Kearns says he's a golfer, and has flaws in his game, but the last thing he's going to do is get a lesson on how to improve it, as he enjoys just having a hit, and it's a hard game to be perfect at. Gardiner says it's about achieving excellent, high standards, without the negative consequences of it.

Interviewees: Caller Peter; **Hugh Kearns, Head of Flinders University Staff and Development Training Unit; Maria Gardiner, Clinical Psychologist, Flinders University**