Lab Management
SOM New Faculty Orientation - 2017

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Lab Management

- Hiring - Firing
- What standards do I need to set?
- How do I organize my Staff
- How do I monitor my staff?
- How do I motivate my staff?
Lab Personnel

- The most important person in your lab is…
- Do not under estimate the fact that you need to be in the lab
- Set up your workspace
- Plan you own experiments
Hiring

- Who should you hire first?
- How should you go about the process?
- How big should you lab get?
Interrogating people for your group

- Did they understand the science that they did in the last job?
  - What were the goals of your last set of experiments?

- What can they really do?
  - What technologies can you do without supervision?

- Will they like / hate what we do?
  - What things in the lab do you like and dislike doing?

- What were they best at?
  - What did you do the most?
  - What experiment are you most proud of?

- What is their overall motivation
  - Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

- Is this a viable hire?
  - Do you object to working with mice, radioactivity, Ebola?

- Can they enumerate their qualifications?
  - What do you think makes you the best fit for this position?

- What do they expect from me?
  - What do you expect from a supervisor?

- Are they interested in what I do?
  - Do you have any questions about my science?
  - Do you have any questions about the job?
Avoid yes / no questions. They need to talk, not you.
CALL THEIR REFERENCES!
What do you want to know:

- Did the reference match the interview?
- Will they (the recruit) require more guidance than you can give?
- Did they get along with others?
- Did they listen to what you said?
- Were they high maintenance?
- Is the reference fully disclosing their view or just being nice (most of us) ?
- Are they right for you?
Unhiring

- You are the guardian of the funds that you have been given (institutional, grant, etc). It is your fiduciary responsibility to use them wisely.
- Be fair! Be professional.
- Can sometimes – simply set a date that you are willing to support them for (postdocs, etc).
- Need to document performance clearly and accurately.
- Need to go through channels – seek help from administrator.
- Sooner than later....
Group Organization

- The Solo method
- Mini-group
- Assay based
Three modes

- Solo mode – Each person has their own project
  - Ad – project ownership, no authorship issues
  - Dis – project is in one person’s hands, if it gets stalled…

- Assay mode – People are responsible for tasks/assays
  - Ad – expertise, progress, team play
  - Dis – no one but you puts it together, can lose science involvement, no ownership
  - Good for high volume projects involving simple data collection

- Mini Group – Project goals are shared
  - Ad – multiple owners/partners, increased productivity, increase breadth (science/skills), requires less of your time
  - Dis – ownership, authorship struggles(?), requires high level management skills
  - Must have individual gains – shared authorships, team play
  - Good for large projects/aims of grants
Team Meetings

- Group Meetings - Weekly
  - Formal presentations?
  - Round Robin?
  - Journal articles?

- 1-on-1 meetings - Weekly
  - To do lists
  - Hypotheses, questions, progress
  - In results section format?

- Mini-groups?

- You must see the raw data!
What everyone needs

- Clear directive and goals
- Clear overview of project
- How they fit in
- How they get to be an author
- Accurate Feedback and Praise
Treating Your Team Right

- Be FAIR to ALL
- Reward good work
  - Stars
  - Figure of the Month
- Have the Team over to the house
- Celebrate LAB achievements
  - New Grant
  - Paper submission/acceptance
- Celebrate People
  - Graduation
  - Leaving the lab
  - Birthdays
MENTORS

- Determine what your department does
- Keep your ears open for who would be a good mentor
- Multiple Mentors
  - Someone for everything....
- Network with your peers
  - Go to lunch (but not too long and not everyday)
  - Organize a small research group with peers or others in field
- Find colleagues who are editors, study section members who are gracious with their time.
  - Listen to what they say!

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AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Amazon.com

At the Helm
Kathy Barker
CSHL Press
Good Luck