

Tools for Better Mentoring: A Career Advancement Plan

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Opening Question

When is the last time you packed for a trip without knowing the destination?

How many of you have or use an individual development plan?

Objectives for Today

- Discuss the purpose and structure of an IDP/Career Advancement Plan (CAP)
- Discuss goal-setting strategies and formulation of SMART goals
- Using a CAP to guide a mentoring relationship

Mentoring and Relationships

- How many of you are currently mentors?
- How many of you are someone's mentee?
- Goal setting, mentoring and career planning
 - Having clear goals makes it easier to get feedback from mentors about your career direction

Invaluable tool: The Career Advancement Plan

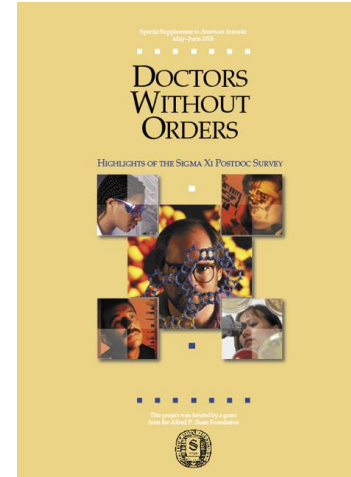
- Tool designed to aid in building a career and professional development roadmap
- Tailored to an individual's skills, interests, and values.
- Resource for initiating and sustaining discussions between mentees and mentors.
- When shared with a mentor and used as a tool for career progress, it is intended to develop mutual expectations of both mentees and mentors
- Provides structure for regularly occurring (every 6-12 months) career and professional discussions with mentors
- IT IS NOT meant to be rigid

IDPs and Career Planning Work for Mentees and Mentors

Sigma Xi Survey

22,000 postdocs contacted

7600 postdocs responded



Postdocs with a written, structured plan:

More productive than those without a plan

submitted papers at a 23% higher rate

published at a 30% higher rate

submitted grants at a 25% higher rate

Fewer conflicts with PI

More satisfied

How can faculty use an IDP/Career Advancement Plan?

- Having “a plan” is equally valuable for faculty across all ranks
- Provides an opportunity to reflect on the steps required to achieve professional goals
- Used as a tool to guide discussion and get feedback from mentors, peers and even faculty/staff more junior than you

Example Goal on my Career Advancement Plan

- Long Term Goal:
 - Become an “expert” in recruiting for population studies
 - 1. Produce a toolkit for researchers to use to develop recruitment strategies for enrolling traditionally underrepresented populations in research studies.
- Feedback from stakeholders of all ranks and titles is valuable
 - How does this position me at this institution?
 - Do my peers find this toolkit useful? What suggestions can they make to enhance the probability of success?
 - Do my staff think a toolkit would help us execute our studies? How do they suggest I make it useful?

Contemporary Goal Setting Theory

Feedback is key to effective goal completion

- Goal setting is the most popular **behavior change strategy**
- The strength of goal setting is that it demands a focus on a **clearly defined target**, and demands movement towards that target within a **specified time frame**
- **Feedback** is the most important component
 - *Feedback mechanisms are ideally both positive and negative, and continuous and intermittent.*
 - Track progress

SMART Goals

S

- Specific
- The 5 W's

M

- Measurable
- Can I track progress

A

- Attainable/Achievable
- Is this a reasonable goal?

R

- Relevant
- Is the goal worthwhile?

T

- Timebound/Timely
- What is the time limit for this objective?

My SMART Goal

- Long Term Goal:
 - Produce a toolkit for researchers to use to develop recruitment strategies for enrolling traditionally underrepresented populations in research studies.
- SMART Goal:
 - Within the next 12 months, I would like to conduct a survey in young adults to identify barriers to participation in research studies and publish 1 paper in a peer reviewed journal (preferably a methodology journal) and present my findings at the Society for Epidemiologic Research meeting

Specific

The 5 “Why” questions

- What do I want to accomplish?
- Why is this goal important?
- Who is involved?
- Where is it located?
- Which resources or limits are involved?

Tell me a specific goal

Measureable

Having measureable goals can help you stay *motivated*

- How much?
- How many?
- How will I know when it is accomplished?

Tell me a measurable goal

Achievable

- How can I accomplish this goal?
- How realistic is the goal, based on other constraints, responsibilities and roles?
- Ensure that achieving the goal is within your control and not someone else's

Relevant and Realistic

- Does this seem worthwhile?
- Is this the right time?
- Do I have the skills needed to reach this goal?

Time-Bound

- When?
- What can I do in the short- , medium- or long-term?
- What do I need to do today to achieve my goal?

Career Development Goal 1:

What is Good? What is Missing?

- Career Development Goal
 - To give 2 invited presentations in the next year
- Strengths
 - Time-bound
 - Realistic
 - (semi) specific
- Areas for improvement
 - Lack of specificity on what presentations will be about and to whom?
 - Goal may not be achievable for reasons that are outside of my control

Career Development Goal 2: *What is Good? What is Missing?*

- Goal
 - To earn an R01 on an intervention to reduce obesity in women postpartum
 - (My background: no prior NIH funding, but solid publication record, new to the institution)
- Strengths
 - Specific description of the topic
- Areas for improvement
 - Not sure it's achievable given my background
 - Not clear who my collaborators are to make it happen
 - No timeframe

Using the SMART goals to guide career development discussions

- With SMART goals on a CAP, meetings with mentors can focus on making goals as SMART as possible
- Together, mentors-mentees can identify resources to overcome barriers
- Regular review over time can ensure progress towards goals

Using a CAP as a mentor. . .

- Keep discussions timely and relevant:
 - Start early, re-visit at regular intervals
 - Coincide with pre-existing big-picture milestones & discussions
- Maintain flexibility as needed (format/process) while providing accountability for working towards goals
- Encourage mentees to share their IDP with others (co-mentors, peers, mentors outside the institution)
- Connect trainees and junior faculty to resources throughout the process

Conclusion

- A faculty professional development plan with review is going to be required of all regular track faculty this year
 - Faculty are required to state their goals and progress towards those goals on an annual basis
 - Chairs and chiefs will have to review these plans with all faculty
- Opportunity to jump start the habit of setting goals and reviewing them regularly
- NUCATS Center for Education and Career Development offers annual 3-hour mentor training workshops
- <https://www.nucats.northwestern.edu/about/centers-and-programs/center-for-education-and-career-development.html>

Fall 2019 Mentor Development Workshop Wednesday December 10, 2019

- Prentice Conference Room L
- 8am-11:30am
- Topics covered
 - Effective communications
 - Aligning Expectations
 - Professional Development

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