Individual Development Plans: Charting your own course

Stephanie House, MA
Research Program Manager, Mentoring Initiatives

UW Institute for Clinical and Translational Research
UW ICTR
Goals of this Session

1. Understand the correlation between IDPs and Mentoring
2. Learn to engage in self-assessment
3. Begin to develop a preliminary IDP, using myIDP
4. Develop strategies for implementing, sustaining & sharing your plan
Benefits of Mentoring

Mentored individuals have:

• higher satisfaction with their careers
• greater intention to stay with their current organization and confidence in their advancement

Formal mentoring is highly correlated with research productivity:

– In separate studies, both clinical fellows and junior faculty who reported having an influential mentor were more productive in publishing and in obtaining grant funding as PIs than were colleagues without influential mentors.
This is all to say . . .

“I have two mentors. I have one who I don’t know what that person wants from me. I try to tell him what I want from him but he doesn’t – we don’t communicate.

Then my other mentor says flat out ‘These are my expectations of you. What do you expect of me? Let’s work together so that we can both reach our goals.’ That is a very productive, great relationship.” -Mentee, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
“As a junior faculty, you’re not quite sure what you’re entitled to. You don’t want to be a whiner. You don’t want to be needy. You don’t know how much is your own fault. You’re not sure what the mentor is supposed to provide. . . .” Mentee, UW-Madison
“This is about us and our career and where we’re going. We have to work within their schedules and within their labs, but this is our career that we are relying on them to help us with” --Mentee, UW-Madison
"I try to make a mental note of bringing up a big picture issue at least once a month...What is your expectation regarding this?"

"I think this is where it falls to the mentee to initiate those conversations . . . ."

-Mentee, UW Madison
Compared to peers without a written plan, post docs who begin their appointment with and IDP developed in collaboration with their mentors:

- Are 23% more likely to submit papers to peer-reviewed journals
- Publish first-authored papers at a 30% higher rate
- Are 25% less likely to report that their mentor didn’t meet their initial expectation
From the NIH

“We have just posted a notice to the NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts announcing that NIH encourages grantees to develop an institutional policy requiring an Individual Development Plan (IDP) for every graduate student and postdoc supported by any NIH grant, regardless of the type of NIH grant that is used for support.”

--Posted on July 23, 2013 by Sally Rockey in Rock Talk: Helping connect you with the NIH perspective
Why an IDP?

1. Helps you identify your strengths
2. Allows you to be responsible for your learning
3. Serves as a communication tool
4. Is motivating when you celebrate milestones and successes
5. Is personalized to reflect your goals . . . and flexible enough to reflect changing goals
It’s Not Rocket Science

For Mentees:
1. Conduct a self-assessment
2. Survey opportunities on own & with mentor
3. Write a IDP, revise with mentor
4. Implement the plan and revise as needed

For Mentors:
1. Become familiar with opportunities
2. Discuss opportunities with mentee
3. Review IDP and help revise
4. Establish regular review process

https://mentoringresources.ictr.wisc.edu/
Writing SMART Goals

- **Specific**: A specific goal usually answers the five “W” questions:
  - What: What do I want to accomplish?
  - Why: Specific reasons, purposes or benefits to accomplishing the goal
  - Who: Who is involved?
  - Where: Identify a location (e.g. specific lab setting, course, etc)
  - Which: Identify requirements and constraints

- **Measurable**: A measurable goal usually answers questions such as:
  - How much?
  - How many?
  - How will I know when it is accomplished?
Writing SMART Goals

- **Attainable**: An attainable goal can answer the question:
  - How: How can the goal be accomplished?

- **Relevant**: A relevant goal can answer yes to these questions:
  - Does this seem worthwhile?
  - Is this the right time?
  - Does this match other efforts/needs?
  - Am I the right person?

- **Time-Bound**: A time-bound goal can answer these questions:
  - When?
  - What can I do 6 months from now?
  - What can I do 6 weeks from now?
  - What can I do today?

Keeping your IDP Dynamic: The Periodic Priority List

List 1: Things I am doing that I want to **quit**
List 1a: Things I’ve been asked to do that I **don’t want** to do
List 2: Things I’m not doing that I **want to start**
List 3: Things I **want to keep doing**

**6 month plan** to shorten List 1 and lengthen List 3

**Goal:** to construct a list that, if realized, would lead to a set of research, teaching, clinical, leadership and community activities that would make it **fun** to go to work.

– Entries are about doing (research, writing), not about having (space, titles, income).
– No “cop-out” for “things I have to do” – tasks must be thought through until they can be allocated to either List 1 or List 3
Additional Resources

Self Assessment


The Postdoc Experience


Acknowledgments

UW ICTR Mentoring Team:
• Karin Silet
• Christine Pfund
• Pam Asquith
• Kimberly Spencer
• Christine Sorkness

NIH Administrative Supplement to UW Madison ICTR: CTSA Consortium Strategic Goals: Training & Career Development of Clinical and Translational Scientists (3UL1RR025011-03S1, PI: Marc Drezner)

NIH Administrative Supplement : Development of a Web-Based Legacy Resource for Research Mentoring (3UL1RR025011-05S1, PI: Marc Drezner)