Building Your Research Team

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NIH Early Career Investigators Meeting, Bethesda, MD
August 10, 2017
Goal

To identify strategies that will help early career researchers build a research team that will help them get funded to do innovative and important health-related research.
1. Find Your People

- You are often starting from scratch, with limited resources
- Expend your startup funds (staffing/data), beg Center director or dept chair...
- Recruit junior people by giving them valuable grant experience

The Team
- You
- Senior/funded PI
- Co-investigator
- Stats/Methods person
- Grad student / postdoc (n=1-2)
- Project director?
- Grants manager
- Program Officer (for input on Aims)
2. Start Very, Very Early

- Quality and rigor derive from many iteration cycles (n=20-40 drafts)
- People don’t like last minute requests
  - Esp. your statistician (see #3)
  - Talk with people 4-6 months prior to deadline
- Complete several sections at least 1 month before grant is due (so you can focus on the Science)
  - Biosketches (ensure new format, PMCID #’s, 4 max articles)
  - Budget & narrative
  - Facilities
3. Covet a Great Statistician

- A great statistician is very hard to find
- Woo your stats person
- See if there is a BIOS or STATS Core at your institution
4. Collaborate With Many People (Early on)

- Don’t be afraid to ‘cold call’ people as collaborators / consultants or Co-I
- Find your type of person
- You will find some people who you are NOT compatible with and that is OK
5. Find Worker Bees

- Identify key people who will get things done
- Not everyone excels at getting work done
TEAM BUILDING

Sometimes, the most important lesson you can learn is that you’re not a very good team.
6. Learn to Delegate

- You can’t do it all
- Aims – don’t outsource
  - Iterate a LOT
- Significance (1st draft) → grad student / postdoc based on your detailed outline
- Innovation – trainee – based on your outline
- Research Plan/Methods (you + input from your mentor + statistician)
- References (Endnote – admin or trainee)
- Budget/narrative – Project Director?
7. Reward Your Team

- Rewards work
- Give people food, praise, $
- Tout experience they will get
- Example: Tom Brady
Assemble a Tough Review Panel

- 3 Weeks before Proposal is due