

# Building a Meaningful Research Portfolio in Cancer Prevention and Control Research

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# Objective

- Provide advice on how junior faculty can create a sustainable and meaningful research agenda
  - Adapt research interests to fit funding priorities
  - Take advantage of opportunities to impact public health

# Overview



Clarify values, passions, and purpose



Identify institutional barriers & facilitators



Connect with successful potential collaborators



Engage with decision makers



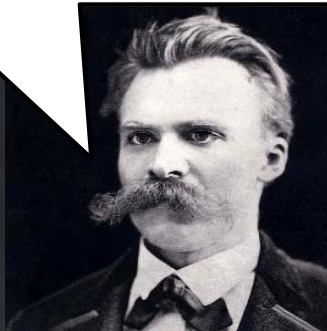
Diversify your funding portfolio



Stay open to research opportunities

# Clarity of purpose

*He who has a why  
can endure any how.*



*Nietzsche*

**Clarity of purpose**  
→ take risks & push forward, regardless of obstacles



## Values Clarification

Your values are the beliefs that define what is most important to you. They guide each of your choices in life. For example, someone who values family might try to spend extra time at home, while someone who values success in their career may do just the opposite. Understanding your values will help you recognize areas of your life need more attention, and what to prioritize in the future.

Select the 10 most important items from the following list. Rank them from 1-10 with "1" being the most important item.

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Love           | <input type="checkbox"/> Honesty      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wealth         | <input type="checkbox"/> Humor        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family         | <input type="checkbox"/> Loyalty      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Morals         | <input type="checkbox"/> Reason       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Success        | <input type="checkbox"/> Independence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge      | <input type="checkbox"/> Achievement  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Power          | <input type="checkbox"/> Beauty       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friends        | <input type="checkbox"/> Spirituality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Free Time      | <input type="checkbox"/> Respect      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adventure      | <input type="checkbox"/> Peace        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Variety        | <input type="checkbox"/> Stability    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calmness       | <input type="checkbox"/> Wisdom       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Freedom        | <input type="checkbox"/> Fairness     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fun            | <input type="checkbox"/> Creativity   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recognition    | <input type="checkbox"/> Relaxation   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nature         | <input type="checkbox"/> Safety       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Popularity     | <input type="checkbox"/> _____        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Responsibility | <input type="checkbox"/> _____        |

# Some questions on clarity

## 1. What research area do you find compelling?

- Connect to a cause that feels bigger than you
- Congruence with who you are, what you care about

## 2. What are your strengths?

- Skills, knowledge, experience
  - ASK: What do you do well that others find hard?
- Identification of other skills needed

## 3. Where do you add the greatest value?

- Awareness and “fit” of your skills, knowledge, and experience in an existing or potential research team
  - Identify opportunities, roles, and career paths where you are most likely to succeed & feel accomplishment



# Countries with prominent health warning labels on cigarette packs



Countries with the highest level of achievement: Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh,\* Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica,\* Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji,\* Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica,\* Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Namibia,\* Nepal, New Zealand, Niger, Panama, Peru, Philippines\*, Samoa,\* Seychelles, Singapore, Solomon Islands,\* Sri Lanka, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago,\* Turkey, Turkmenistan,\* Ukraine, Uruguay, Vanuatu,\* Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), and Viet Nam.\*

\* Country newly at the highest level since 31 December 2012.

# Institutional barriers & facilitators





# Institutional diagnosis

- Institutional culture
  - Norms at different organizational levels
- Capacity for team science
  - Department, School, University
  - External institutional relationships, existing & potential
- Connection to the community
  - Balance service with research
- Grant funding
  - Internal grants, funded (potential) collaborators



**Collaboration**

# Connect with potential collaborators

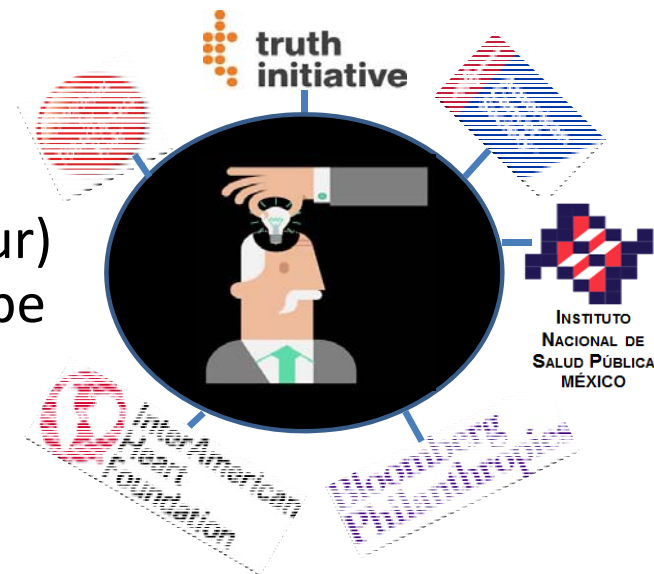
- Identify researchers you find compelling
  - NIH Reporter, PubMed, Lit reviews
  - Discuss with mentors, people who know them
- Meet with potential collaborators
  - Have ideas for collaboration (e.g., papers, grants)
    - Be open to other ideas
  - Recognize issues with timing / burden / incentives
- Network at regional conferences
- Participate in research society interest groups

# Engage decision makers



# Research → policy decisions → public health impact

- Identify influential people whose policies / decisions could be informed by research in your area
- Get to know public health advocates / organizations who influence decision makers
  - Volunteer roles?
- Be prepared to discuss how (your) research can help stakeholders be more effective
  - What are their goals?
  - Simple messages



# Diversify your funding portfolio



# Di... fund...



Other US Federal Funding



Foundations & Advocacy Groups



Non-US Federal Funding



State agencies



Universities

# Openness to new learning & research opportunities



- Personal skill building (research, leadership)
- Mentor junior scholars
  - They can make you more productive!
- Influence hiring of new faculty/researchers
- Consider international collaborations
  - Behavioral / social science & Global NCDs



# Conclusions



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# Advanced Nuts and Bolts: Challenges and Rewards in Conducting NIH and other Funded Research

August 10th, 2017

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