

Developing leadership skills and team building

Patricia Arean, Richard Jordan &
Ed O'Neil

Format

- Case based presentations, problem solving and discussion
- Leadership pearls
- Resources

Objectives

- Identify key skills needed for teambuilding
- Develop a core set of competencies to lead and manage a team
- Develop a toolkit of skills to assist with leadership challenges and problem solving

Goals

1. Define leadership and management in an organization
2. How to lead and organize a team
3. What is a mission statement and how to use it effectively
4. How to manage and share resources with other faculty and fellows
5. How to find, hire and keep good people (interviewing skills, tips for motivating groups)
6. How to lead productive meetings
7. Delegation strategies
8. How to establish grounds rules and culture for a lab/research group

Case 1

You are a mentor to a newly hired junior faculty member, who is to coordinate another faculty's research project as well as develop her own research interests. The new faculty person is replacing a previous coordinator. The previous coordinator and the new faculty person have different management/leadership styles, neither is better than the other, they are just different. However, some staff members are not happy with the new faculty member's style.

What advice would you give the mentee?

Case 1 Discussion points

- Confirm with the junior faculty member that this “coordination of a faculty’s research project” is useful for their career. What are the components that will advance the mentee’s career. Why did the prior coordinator leave? Did it advance their career to independence?
- I would recommend the mentee meet with each of the staff to discuss the projects and what the staff member felt are successful strategies. What is common ground and where do they differ?

Case 2

Your mentee is having a hard time finding and keeping good staff. Reviews indicate that your mentee is an "absent leader".

How would you coach the mentee about their style and the need to change it (or find staff who like that style)?

Case 2 Discussion points

- Mentee likely needs guidance on how to effectively lead. “Absent leader” vs “leader encouraging/allowing independence” can be confused.
- Is the mentee absent or engaged? Talk to the team to clarify expectations and roles of each member.
- Mentee may need to be more hands-on at the start but the investment in training, independence and confidence will pay-off

Case 3

- Your mentee complains that lab meetings in her research group feel unfocused and issues related to the project are never resolved. What advice would you give this mentee about leading meetings?

Case 3 Discussion points

- Plan ahead for the meetings and present organized discussion and plans.
- Prepare an agenda, if needed.
- Take charge and lead the group.

Case 4

- Funds have become quite tight in your mentee's research group and the mentee and his advisor are now having to share research resources, including staff, supplies, and space.
- What advice would you give the mentee to ensure resources are protected?

Case 4 Discussion points

- The definition of a lead mentor is sharing of staff, supplies, space, and resources.
- If the advisor is not acting in that capacity- perhaps a new advisor

Case 5

- Your mentee complains that lab meetings in her research group feel unfocused and issues related to the project are never resolved.
- What advice would you give this mentee about leading meetings?

Case 5 Discussion points

- Never attend a meeting without an agenda! Set an agenda, consider using a minutes format
- Stick to starting on time, finishing on time, and having approximate amount of time for each agenda item so you get through them all.

Case 6

- Your mentee is a new faculty member and has started her own research group right out of fellowship. Your mentee wants to be on equal terms/friends with the grad students and postdocs in the group in part because she doesn't feel that she has the authority to be a leader in a different style. However, she is finding that the students are not taking her seriously and the goals and needs of the research are not being met.
- How would you advise her to address this?

Case 6 Discussion points

- You and the mentee need to discuss setting boundaries
- Invite her to join you in your lab meetings
- Structure her lab meetings
- Appointments for staff

Case 7

- Your mentee is hiring two new grad students/postdocs at the same level for his research group. One of the new trainees has a family and the other is single. Your mentee wants to hire the one with the family at a higher salary because he feels that they will need more resources. However, your mentee's colleagues have suggested that this is not appropriate or ethical and may also lead to morale problems. Your mentee comes to you for advice.

Case 7 Discussion points

- Determine what is ethical and policy
- Discuss this with the mentee and the implications of hiring decisions and future impact
- Direct to resources on issue through institution

Leadership pearls - 1

1. Get the right people on board and the wrong ones off (most important rule above all else)
2. Have a clearly stated and transparent mission
3. Have a clearly stated business plan with definable benchmarks to help review progress Always have an agenda and anticipated outcomes for meetings, a time keeper, and someone to take minutes
4. Give feedback to team members often and frequently; start with the positive, use examples (rather than feelings)
5. Have everyone's role clearly defined, including your own

Leadership pearls - 2

6. Practice listening (don't interrupt, paraphrase, summarize, clarify)
7. Communicate effectively. Make sure that directions are understood
8. Balance advocacy with inquiry
9. Make sure that you get all the information to make a decision and it is not filtered
10. Sleep on important decisions

Resources

- The Free Management Library
<http://www.managementhelp.org>
- CORO Foundation for Civic Leadership
<http://www.coro.org>
- Harvard Macy
<http://www.harvardmacy.org/default.asp>
- Strategic Interviewing: How to hire good people
Richard R. Camp Mary E. Vielhaber, Jack L. Simonetti
- How to Hire, Train & Keep the Best Employees for Your Small Business by Dianna Podmoroff