Transferable skills for Science leadership

How to manage the team to achieve your career goals, and the teams individual goals

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How do you balance personal and staff success?
Part of your job is to motivate people to work really hard for you
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It's easier if they are self-motivated to work for themselves.

This breakout session is on scientific leadership.
What type of leader will you be?

BOSS vs. LEADER
Leadership requires practice

• All career stages are an opportunity for you to hone your skills

Volunteer to train others

Test your style of leadership

Seek feedback
Leadership requires observation

- Observation of others and self awareness are highly valuable attributes

Observe styles of leadership in others
How do others perceive you
Seek feedback
Leadership requires planning

- Decide how you want your team to work, and set the tone

- What is your lab culture
- How will you staff your lab
- How will you manage your lab
What will your lab dynamic look like?
How to establish your lab culture

• What are your values?

• What kind of culture do you want to nurture?

• What do you want your reputation to be?
  – To your peers, trainees, and potential hires

• Your first employees need to agree to your lab culture
How do you establish and maintain your lab culture?

• Lead by example for behaviors
• State your expectations clearly
• Step in if your expectations aren’t met
• Accept that things (and your views) may shift over time

• Nurture independent thought and independence
How to manage your staff

• Be present
• Regular 1:1 meetings (or with lab member)
• Laboratory meetings and team events
• Annual performance reviews
• Observe and ask how they are doing
• Ask what their future plans are (they change)
• Provide feedback frequently (good and bad)
• When providing feedback, use examples
Supporting your staff goals

• There is not enough space in academia for everyone to be faculty

• Be open to and informed about other careers
  – Government, industry, policy, science writer, education, communications, development
  – Provide contacts or opportunities for conferences/workshops

• If an employee wants to be faculty, set them up for success
  – Improve their communication skills (lab meetings, conferences)
  – Resume build: Nominate for awards; suggest easy committees, co-author reviews, etc.
  – Send to them conferences for networking
  – Provide them manuscript and grant writing experience

• Be generous: their success is your success
Leadership requires self care

• Paying attention to others is not at the expense of yourself

Focus on your drivers of success

Saying no

It’s OK to seek help
Drivers of success

• What you aspire to be
• What is required for the job you have
• What the academic metrics of success are
• What you are capable of and willing to do

“Just because you’re passionate about something doesn’t mean you won’t suck at it.” – Mike Rowe

“Just because you can do something, doesn’t mean you should.” – Mike Rowe
When is it too much?

• Person specific (can’t quantify in time or task)
• When you can’t do your primary job
• When you don’t have any down time
• When the quality of your work is impacted
• When someone else tells you it’s too much

Note: women/URM are typically given more service/teaching, and measured less positively for their contributions = do more and get less recognition.
Should I say no?

• Will the tasks prevent you from fulfilling your primary job responsibility

• Will the tasks prevent you from fulfilling your personal responsibilities
  – Including being happy and healthy

• Would saying yes be good for your own personal/professional growth

• Do you really want to do it?
  – Imagine the task is tomorrow, do you regret saying yes?
  – Pay attention to how you feel doing the task, did you enjoy it?
How to say no

• Just politely say no
  – I’m sorry, I have a commitment for that time/day
  – I am unable to take this task on, but let me suggest someone else
  – I know this is important to you but I am unable to commit the time without impacting my already busy schedule

• Buy some time /defer to others/check for urgency
  – Let me discuss this with my supervisor/mentor/dept. chair
  – Let me check my schedule and commitments and get back to you
  – Can you provide me more information on the exact commitment/request
Are you working enough?

- Is your supervisor happy with your productivity?
- Is more needed for your career trajectory/goals?
- How do you accurately compare to others?
- Define success for you.

“The reason we struggle with insecurity is because we compare our behind-the-scenes with everyone else’s highlight reel.”
Questions?
Discussion topic?
Share an approach you use?