

What Have You Done For Me Lately? The Role of the Associate Program Director Association of Pediatric Program Directors Spring Meeting, May 4, 2007

“WHO CREATES YOUR JOB?”

Tracy is currently the Associate Program Director at a medium size residency program with 12 residents each year. She has been in her position for three years and is interested in negotiating more administrative time for curriculum development and design. Her division chief and chairman have been very supportive to date of her career strategies and accomplishments but now are encouraging her to development a new clinic for foster children and infants of substance abusing mothers. In addition, the Program Director is no longer interested in organizing the outpatient subspecialty clinic schedule for the residents, and the Program Coordinator is asking her to review the clinic schedule monthly. In the meantime, the chief resident has decided his position is not as “fun” as he thought it would be and is no longer responding to phone calls from the faculty - especially when it involves a complaint.

1. What are the main issues for Tracy at this point in time?
2. What specifically should she negotiate with her chairman?
3. Does she appear to have a job description?
 - a. If not, what should it look like?
4. Who appears to be responsible for her administrative time?
5. Who should be responsible for the chief resident?

Take Home Points:

- 1) A job description in and of itself can be limiting. Don't get too crazy about the details. Define it as a means to an end.
- 2) Delegate some things and do it in such a way that it is a win-win for all.
- 3) Remember to reevaluate your numerous responsibilities often. Prioritize and reorganize your goals at each milestone in your life.

“A Word to the Wise: Academic Mentors”

A 35 year old female finished a General Academic Pediatric fellowship 2 years ago and just became the Associate Program Director for the Pediatric Residency Program at her hospital. She is an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at a medical school that has a traditional approach to climbing the academic ladder. She is married with one child and would like another at some point. She feels that her time is torn between her clinical career, education career, research career, and her family. She is interested in finding an academic mentor, but has not had success with mentors in her residency or fellowship and is hesitant to ask for help.

- 1) What are the benefits of mentors?
- 2) What are some of the problems with the traditional “Dyadic” form of mentoring?
- 3) What options exist for mentorship?
- 4) How do you approach a mentor for the first time?
- 5) What are some things this woman can do to enhance the benefit she obtains from her mentor(s)?

Take Home Points:

- 1) The prospect of entering and maintaining a relationship with a mentor can be overwhelming, but the benefits in career satisfaction and advancement well outweigh the up-front concerns that many junior faculty have.
- 2) Having multiple mentors and distance mentors increased the likelihood that you will get both helpful advice and career advancing opportunities from your mentor
- 3) Peer mentoring and collaborative relationships can be as helpful as the more traditional mentoring models

“The Path to Academic Success”

Lauren has recently been appointed as the Associate Residency Program Director at a medium-size residency program after spending the last 5 years as a faculty member in the Section of General Pediatrics at Best Hospital. In her previous position, she was the Continuity Clinic Director where she spent a significant amount of time helping to develop curricula and evaluation systems for the outpatient general pediatric rotations. She is the most popular resident advisor in the residency program, and she spends many hours a week meeting with residents. Lauren was a resident and chief resident at another residency program prior to starting as a faculty member at Best Hospital. She is currently an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics.

In her new role as an Associate Program Director, she has been given many administrative responsibilities, but she is most interested in developing new curricula. She has .25 FTE allotted for her position. The Pediatric Department Chair at Best Hospital has told Lauren that she is expected to “work toward promotion” while in her new role. Lauren is overwhelmed by this expectation and calls you for help.

1. What first steps for would you recommend to Lauren?
2. What barriers does Lauren face in making a successful academic promotion plan?
3. What resources (human, financial, time, etc.) does Lauren need to be successful?
4. What strategies can you give to Lauren to help her get “academic credit” for her work?
5. What recommendations can you make to ensure that Lauren has time to work on her academic projects?

Take Home Points:

- 1) Identify criteria for promotion at your institution.
- 2) Commit to an academic promotion plan and review that plan every 3-6 months. Use your mentors to help make and revise your plan.
- 3) Make your work count twice. Get “academic credit” for what you already do by presenting your work at the APPD!

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