Taking the reins: Transitioning from PhD student to Associate Professor

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You PASSED!!!
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Now What?!!
Where do I go from here?

- Post doc?
- Academia
  - More flexibility
  - Potential for longer term projects
  - Less available funding
  - Student training
Are you applying to the right place?

- Reflect prior to applying
  - Do the values of the institution match my values?
    - Are there sufficient resources in the department to do your job?
    - How big do you want your program?
  - What kind of colleagues do I want to have?
    - Happy
    - Interested in science
  - How will my research interests fit with those around me?
You landed the job!!
You landed the job!!
Now What??!
What makes a good program?

- **Good science**
  - If the science is good, people will be motivated
- **Good timing**
  - Prepare ahead
- **Funding**
  - Need to come up with ideas and sell them
- **Smart and enthusiastic people to work with in your program/lab**
  - Good people are a resource
- **A leader**
  - This is you!
My position

- 20% teaching
  - 2 formal undergrad courses/year
- 80% research
  - What was advised:
    - Average 3 peer review publications per year
    - One large grant- USDA or NIH
  - What I did:
    - 38 peer reviewed publications
    - 1.7 million in grant funds
What else goes into tenure?

Associate Professor

- Research
- Teaching
- Service
Tenure is just 6 short years away!

- Make a game plan— and WRITE it down!!
  - A renewed 2 year plan
    - What do you want to accomplish?
      - Funding
    - When are deadlines?
      - Grant
      - Abstract
      - Manuscripts— set these yourself!
    - What do you need to do when?
  - Look at it every month!
  - Share it with your lab.
6 tidbits that have helped me...

- Surround yourself with good people
- Motivate those around you
- Find a mentor
- Begin your PTE document on your first day
- Manage your time
- Having it all!
Surround yourself with good people
Surround yourself with good people

- Mistake #1
  - All I need is a warm body to help get this done...

- Mistake #2
  - Rush to get a position filled

- Mistake #3
  - Not meeting people face to face
  - Finding the right fit
Finding good collaborators

- Good collaborators
  - Have an invested interest in a project
  - Are engaged in the project
  - Are willing to take/give criticism

- Bad collaborators/collaborations
  - Don’t live up to their end of the deal
  - Are time consuming
  - Need to be ended – like a bad relationship
Motivate those around you

MOTIVATION
It's not that I'm lazy, it's that I just don't care.
How do you motivate?

- The hard part....
  - Everyone is different
  - Communicate what the program needs
- The reward
  - Outstanding data that gets everyone excited
  - When your people succeed, so do you!
  - Motivation for the next project!
Motivate those around you

- Communication is a must.
  - Students
  - Technicians
  - Herdsmen
- Celebrate the successes!!
  - No matter how small
  - Include the group
Find a mentor

- Formal mentors
  - Assigned to you
- Informal mentors
  - Programs that you admire
  - Programs that are successful
  - Listen to their success stories (and those that failed!)
What do you want in a mentor?

- Success
  - Expert in their field
- Connections
  - Politically savvy, aware of more than good science
- Caring
  - S/he should be interested in mentoring you
- Integrity
  - A character you admire
  - An added bonus: a similarity in personal lives
Begin your PTE document immediately!

- MORE PAPERWORK?! 
- The sooner you begin, the better. 
- WRITE DOWN EVERYTHING! 
- Keep a good calendar.
Manage your time

- This may be the hardest thing you ever try to master....

- Keep one calendar
  - Personal + professional

- Use every minute
  - 5 min
    - Update your PTE doc
  - 10 min
    - Answer an email
  - 15 min
    - Make a phone call
# STOP PUTTING OUT FIRES!

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Covey, 1989

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- **I**: Urgent and Important (Cov 1)
- **II**: Urgent but Not Important (Cov 2)
- **III**: Not Important but Urgent (Cov 3)
- **IV**: Not Urgent and Not Important (Cov 4)
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Covey, 1989
Having it all....

- Having a successful program and a family can be done
- Choose your partner wisely
Remember

- Your PhD program has trained you in the areas that will guarantee success
  - Excellence in your field
  - How to interact with different people
  - Ability to gather and analyze data
  - Organize your studies and time
  - Confidence to act on intuition, integrity, and resilience!
- Continue to hone these skills!
You’re TENURED!