I'M A PI
NOW WHAT?

BY: **David Bosch**
Financial Manager - Revenue and Grants,
Center for Research on Families

Maureen Perry-Jenkins, Ph.D.
Professor, Psychology;
Director, Center for Research on Families

Wendy Varner, M.Ed.
Associate Director, Center for Research on Families

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PRESENTED IN COOPERATION WITH:

The **Office of Research Development** and the **Center for Research on Families** at the University of Massachusetts Amherst

UMASS AMHERST

I am a PI: Now What?

Post-Award Advice for Principal Investigators

Congratulations! You are a Principal Investigator! You have achieved a wonderful goal. You have written a successful proposal which means your research questions have been recognized as significant, important and deserving of funding ...**BRAVO!**

So now it is time to get to it. As you are probably feeling right about now, grants and/or contracts are a big responsibility. You are ultimately responsible for conducting the research, meeting deadlines for reporting, assuring IRB/IACUC compliance, hiring staff, publishing results and managing all aspects of the grant. There are plenty of people around who will help you but you will need to develop a management plan early in the project that allows you stay on top of the budget, hiring, study details and reporting.

One of the *greatest* challenges to running a successful grant is remembering that it is really "all about the research". It is very easy to get caught up in the every day administration and personnel issues and put off the analyses and writing that are necessary to publish your findings.

We are hopeful that the following information helps you to wade through the administrative details, prioritize **first and next steps**, gives you a sense of **who to go to** when you don't know the answers or where to go next, and helps you to establish a **network of colleagues** as resources. Mostly we hope that this information and support network will be able to help you to manage your award while ***Keeping Your Eye on the Ball: the Research and Science!***

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NOTIFICATION

How do I find out whether my grant was funded?
The way that you are *finally* notified that you have received an award varies, depending on the funding institution:

You may hear that your grant was *awarded funding*:

- by email
- or you may receive a hard copy of an award letter
- or OGCA may hear *before* you and forward this information to you.

You may hear that your grant is *likely to get funding*:

- For example, you get a high priority score (NIH), or get word by phone from your program officer that things are hopeful ,or they may ask for a little more information at this stage (NSF) to expedite your review.
    - You still may not get *official* word for some time…and it may be just weeks before the actual start date of your project.

When you do hear *official and final word*:

- Call OGCA to check whether they have received the same communication.
- Notify your department business manager and Research Business Manager Liaison (RBML) within your college.

NEGOTIATING THE AWARD

What communication should I have with my program officer at this point?
Speaking directly with the sponsoring agency's program officer concerning your research project is appropriate and encouraged, but OGCA is responsible for contract negotiations.

- As the PI, you do need to know *generally* about how your grant contract gets established with your sponsoring institution.

OGCA will work on your behalf to negotiate and set up the contract with the funding agency. OGCA takes care of details including:

- Intellectual property terms; Reporting schedules; Publication; Publicity; Payment terms; Governing law; Indemnification; Confidentiality clauses; Personnel related terms; Termination; Ownership of research results; etc.

How am I involved in grant negotiations?
You are directly involved with talking to the sponsoring institution's program officer when your budget needs to be adjusted, which is *before final* contract negotiations.

- There is great variability in how funding agencies approach cuts**,** so talk with experienced faculty, your RBML, or OGCA staff about this process and what to anticipate.
- If you are required to reduce your budget, the sponsoring institution will request an updated research plan to describe how your project will change.

Don't hesitate to give OGCA a call if you've been wondering about the status of your grant.

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If you think it is likely you will receive funding, there are tasks that you could get started on (see: While you are Waiting).

Keep in contact with OGCA to ensure that you are involved as negotiations move forward.

Ask for help! If you need to cut by 10% or more, you'll need a new Internal Processing Form (IPF).

Ask yourself: Can I complete the original goals with these cuts? How will my objectives, specific aims or methods need to be adjusted? You don't need to promise the same project with reduced funding.

"I realized that the decisions of where to cut were up to me….talking to my program officer was helpful but I needed to really think through the implications to my project." New PI – NSF funding

Keep in contact with subcontractors or consultants, if their work and compensation will be affected by negotiations or re-budgeting.

Funders often check on other details as part of the negotiations.

- For example, funders may require a last minute check of all key personnel's effort. NIH calls this a Just in Time review (JIT). The JIT happens after the completion of the peer review process for applications that have a priority score range deemed potentially fundable. NIH requests JIT documentation (such as current other support, IACUC/IRB approvals, human subject training) from the PI via email and/or phone. (see addendum)
- NSF will likely check in with you and OGCA about your IRB status and protocols.

Whoever the funder is, you should keep in mind there is a limited turnaround time, and your availability will be important to speed up the process.

ACCEPTING & SETTING UP THE AWARD

Only OGCA can officially accept the award. Setting up the award takes time:

- OGCA will oversee acceptance of the sponsor terms and conditions, manage necessary award negotiations, and provide additional documents requested by the sponsor.
- Your job *now* is to be aware of where things are in the process.

What forms will I need to complete?

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
- You will be asked to read and sign a Principal Investigators Award Agreement (PIAA), sent via email with an attached contract. *(save copies for you and your business manager)*
- Other forms may be attached to complete (Conflict of Interest, Drug-free workplace, etc.)

Internal Review Board (IRB) or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approvals need to be in place before your contract is finalized for UMass AND for your subcontractors.

If you don't know why things are taking so long:

- Check Jordan Online (JOL)**.** The "warnings" column show missing items. The award will not be set up until all forms and approvals are in place.
- Call your OGCA contact person.

Once a CONTRACT has been made, there are two notifications that you will receive:

- An Award Letter/email from the funding agency.
- Official notice from the UMA Controller's Office, called a PIN (Project Information Notification) report, with budget totals and account numbers (*Project ID and Speedtype*), where you will charge all research expenses.

The normal process of award set-up can take weeks.

Read the contract closely. This is the time to ask questions and clarify everything.

If you have subcontracts, OGCA will only work on their contracts <u>after</u> the UMass contract is completed.

What does it mean to me to accept an award contract?

- ***It means that you agree to be responsible for the project management of the award, to carry out the project with the highest professional standards, and within the time period awarded.***
- ***You are also responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with all terms and conditions.***
- ***And, you are confirming that you will abide by University and sponsor policies, procedures and directives for the proper administration of sponsored projects.***

Review roles, rights, responsibilities, and obligations!!!

WHILE YOU ARE WAITING

Start a contact list: Include your department's business manager, OGCA representative, your grant accountant in the Controller's Office and your Research Business Manager Liaison.

Meet with your business manager/RBML to talk about next steps.

Get going on IRB or IACUC approval: These need to be in place before your award can be established *(see IRB/IACUC section).*

Review your proposal:
It's been awhile since you were in the depths of writing your research plan, so reread your proposal and remind yourself of exactly what you had proposed to do.

- Are your goals the same? Has the staffing changed? What's the start date and timeframe?
- How does the project affect other projects and teaching responsibilities?
- Take a look at your data management plan again!

Write a workplan with a timeline for each year or semester of the project.

- List *who, what* and *when* for each of your objectives.

Look again at the research space for your project:
Are renovations or construction necessary? What needs to get done? Do you need furniture or phones set up?

- Make sure to find out now how renovations are managed and who the person is to work with in your department.

Make Connections Now!

- Identify the colleagues that are the 'go to' people for you to ask questions, seek advice and even just vent.
- Keep their names and emails by your side. Alert them to your award and suggest that you will take them to lunch periodically.
- Connect with colleagues who have received similar types of funding to get their best advice on how to proceed and prepare for potential problems.

Ask questions, don't assume.

"I would contact your program officer right away and see if there is flexibility in the start date. It is worth a shot. If they say "no" then go into "problem solving mode" with your PO and ask for their advice on other options. Be ready to explain your timing challenges and creative solutions."
New PI – NIH funding

Trusted mentors and experienced colleagues can help you to problem solve and strategize throughout the life of your grant.

SUBCONTRACTOR / CONSULTANTS

Expect delays…and keep in ongoing communication with OGCA throughout the process.

Setting up the subcontract: Once the UMass contract is completed *(see Setting up the Award)* and the total grant award budget is established with the Controller's Office*,* OGCA will then turn to the subcontractors included in your grant proposal.

- OGCA reviews the subcontract with the same level of detail, including their budget, agreements, IRB/IACCUC and scope of work.
- Once approved by OGCA, a hard-copy of the UMass contract with the subcontractor is mailed to that institution, to sign off and return to UMASS.
- You will need to complete a Sole Source form for that particular subcontractor. You can find that form here.
- Once the subcontractor's contract is returned, OGCA will need to sign it.
- Only then will the UMass Controller's office approve monies to flow to your off-campus colleagues.

Paying a Subcontractor:
Your subcontractor will need to be set up in the UMass financial systems (Peoplesoft) as a vendor.

- Contact your business manager to have them set up as a vendor.
- They will process a Purchase Order in order to pay the subcontractor.
- Copies of this Purchase Order along with payment will be mailed to your subcontractor.
- This process can take 30-60 days.

Paying a Consultant:
Two forms will be required in order to set up a consultant that is not affiliated with UMass.

- Your business manager will complete a "Contract for Service" form and a "W-9" form for your consultant (additional paperwork is required if their payment is greater than $5000).
- You will need to ask your consultant to provide an invoice.
- Once your business manager has this paperwork payment should be processed within 30-60 days.

Approvals (IRB and/or IACUUC):
Each subcontract(s)' PI will need to get IRB/IACUC approvals for their component of the study.

- Make sure to obtain copies of these approvals from each of the co-PI's participating universities and give copies for each subcontract to the respective office at UMass Amherst as well as *keep copies on file.*

Talk to the UMASS IRB/ IACUC office for guidance.

WORKING WITH SUBCONTRACTS AND CONSULTANTS

A few things to keep in mind:

Communication: Once you have received confirmation of your award, you should contact everyone who is funded through a subcontract or consultant fee and let them know the project will be starting.

Regular communication with your subcontractors and consultants is key to a smooth running project.

Review: Discuss what was agreed to in the original grant proposal, what adjustments might have been made in negotiations, and review responsibilities, timeframe and expectations.

- The consultant's or subcontractor's responsibilities can sometimes change over the life of the grant. This can be a function of changing grant specific aims and/or project scope.

Consider hosting weekly meetings using Skype and setting up shared folders in the 'cloud' (i.e. Dropbox) .

Performance: As PI, you are responsible for monitoring the subcontractor's performance and expenditures.

- Your signature is required on all forms given to the subcontractor.

Budget oversight: Figure out early, who the budget manager is at your subcontract site and either make direct contact with this person or make sure your business manager is in direct contact.

- If at any time you re-budget your original grant or change categories of spending, assess how this impacts your subcontract and convey this information to them directly.

International collaborators: When your project involves working with foreign collaborators there are strategies that may be helpful:

- Keep in frequent, informal contact by phone or email.
- Set-up regular times for communication to build and maintain the relationship. Tell them they can call/email you anytime.
- Listen for signs of progress or red flags and make sure everyone understands your expectations.
- Give positive feedback to emphasize priorities of the project.
- Examine invoices and consider whether they are spending funds differently than what was planned.

Keep up with what is going on with your subcontractor and obtain regular updates.

Trouble shooting: At times consultants and/or subcontractors are unable to fulfill their responsibilities – *what to do?!*

- A good strategy may be to first talk with a respected senior colleague about your concerns. Ask them their advice on the best way to address this sensitive issue.
- It may be possible to switch consultants, if necessary, but it may just be that the consultant needs to understand your timeline and needs.

Contact OGCA and your funding agency if there are any changes necessary.

IRB - IACUC

When should I work on the approval process for the Internal Review Board (IRB) or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)?

Now….It's important to know that the work cannot begin until protocols are approved. Depending upon the type of study, this could take some time and is something you should submit as soon as possible.

- IRB guidelines can be found here. http://www.umass.edu/research/primary/institutional-review-board2-irb
- IACUC guidelines can be found here. http://www.umass.edu/research/iacuc

While awaiting approval, you could begin the training required for you and your team.

- All UMass Amherst researchers who use human subjects must complete an online training program called the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Program.

The Controller's Office will not set up account numbers until this IRB/IACUC process has been completed.

RESOURCES

Resources on campus:

The Office of Research Development has ongoing workshops geared for PIs throughout the year.

- Workshops: http://www.umass.edu/research/research-development-workshops
- CRF seminar series for new PIs: www.umass.edu/family
- Writing retreats, workshops and fellowships through the Center for Teaching and Faculty development -- http://www.umass.edu/ctfd/scholarly/index.shtml

The Research Business Manager Network (RBMNet) is a network of helpful and skilled staff housed across campus who will assist you with project administration for sponsored research.
http://www.umass.edu/research/research-business-manager-network

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Although few of us are trained in the art of running a small business, many aspects of running a successful grant are similar to managing a business. You must keep track of the budget, hire and supervise staff, maintain quality control, stay on a timeline, produce high quality products all the while keeping your colleagues, staff and students motivated and happy. This can be a very tall order.

Managing your award means juggling a million things at once -- it may be helpful to break those million details into three general areas: **ADMINISTRATION, LEADERSHIP AND DISSEMINATION**

ADMINISTRATION

MANAGING YOUR BUDGET

One of the most challenging tasks for a new PI, and for all PIs for that matter, is keeping track of all aspects of your budget. Monitoring the budget activity from day one is ultimately your responsibility but there are people around who can help, so meet with your RBML or business manager from the get-go.

When does the money arrive?

You will most likely want to apply right away for a pre-award (UMass calls them 'Pre-establishments') which provides bridge funding until grant monies arrive.

- OGCA must already have confirmation of your award from the sponsor, the anticipated start date, a budget amount, all compliance approvals, and a pre-estab form in order for you to get a pre-award.
- Talk to your business manager to get this going and to make sure you are following their process. Here's the link.

What can I spend money on?

It's critical you know what you can and cannot buy on your grant.

- There are strict guidelines and there's no getting around them.

Guidelines for Charges to Sponsored Projects Funded by Federal Agencies

<u>Keep Excellent Financial Records:</u>

- Study your grant's budget, the justification and budget details, and any revisions required for the award.
- Review and highlight important budgetary requirements in the funding agency's guidelines.
- Make sure you are allowed to buy the things you want to buy before you buy them! Ask your business manager or RBML if anticipated purchases are allowable, even if you had put them in your budget justification – it's always good to check again.
- All faculty have access to SUMMIT (the university budget software). SUMMIT allows you to *easily* view all financial transactions electronically and provides basic statements of expenditures.

The pre-award process doesn't usually take long BUT start as soon as you can. Tell your subcontractors to consider seeking a pre-award within their own institution.

Many PIs get snagged on buying items they shouldn't – such as office supplies, magazines, or an unbudgeted item. Don't let this happen to you! Check first before spending on anything you haven't described in your proposal.

Your business manager can show you how to use SUMMIT -- it's a really helpful and up to date tool for seeing the $$!

Money Meetings:

Meet with the business manager and/or the RBML assigned to help you with your budget in your department or college.

- They should be a great source of knowledge about the intricacies you will face, in terms of spending, hiring, etc.
- Bring a list of questions to the meeting and learn what your responsibilities are versus their responsibilities. There is variability across campus, so it is important at the outset to be very clear on expectations.

Monitoring Expenses:

Convene regular ongoing meetings with your business manager to compare expenditures with projected expenses for your grant.

- Some issues that may come up are: moving previously budgeted items between categories; changes to indirect or fringe rates; changes to student fees or hourly compensation, etc.
- If you have a multi-year project, you will need to periodically review and re-budget for the subsequent year.

PROGRESS REPORTING:

All funding agencies (federal, state and private) require an annual progress report on their grant award. The guidelines and forms vary. In general, you will be asked to describe scientific progress, identify significant changes, report on personnel, and describe plans for the next period or year.

Progress reports can sneak up on you.

- They are often due two-to-three months *before* the yearly end date.
- OGCA will contact you when your progress report is due. They will also provide figures that will be needed for your IPF routing and GAMS submission.

Print out the sponsors award documents or guidelines at the very beginning of the year and bring these to your first project meeting.

- Discuss with your team what goals you want to achieve this year and what your specific aims are to be reported on your progress report.
- You may want to use your **WORKPLAN** to develop the areas you will be reporting on including:
  - ✓ annual goals
  - ✓ dates they should be achieved
  - ✓ names of those working on each goal
- **Check in regularly on where the goals stand and document.**

Other types of reporting, specific to the funder, may also be requested.

- For example, NSF requires a reporting on their data management plans, which describe how research results are shared. Go to library page.

- ✓ ***What's important to keep in mind when using pro-cards or corporate travel cards?***
- ✓ ***How do you go about purchasing supplies and/or equipment for your awarded grant?***
- ✓ ***What's the process for hearing about what you have spent? How often do you get financial reports?***
- ✓ ***How do you learn SUMMIT to access your financial activity?***
- ✓ ***What information do you need to begin to hire your students and other personnel?***
- ✓ ***Are you clear about consultants and subcontractor payments and agreements?***
- ✓ ***If you are planning to travel, how is that handled?***
- ✓ ***Review the award letter and confirm amounts, and that the awarded amount matches the UMASS post award financial systems (SUMMIT).***
- ✓ ***Also, you may want to meet/talk with post-award personnel in OGCA and your Grant Accountant to review your grant and the university's financial practices.***

ECRT (EFFORT REPORTING):

Every year you will be required by the university to fill out a form indicating the "effort" on your grant. Principal Investigators sign and certify effort for themselves and employees on the grants in accordance with the University's Time and Effort Reporting Guidelines.

- Talk to your business manager about how these forms are completed and maintained. They have access to the system to review the data and add cost sharing information where appropriate.
- There are guidelines and a slide presentation on the OGCA website for general guidance. http://www.umass.edu/research/policy-procedure/guidance-effort-reporting-policies

ENDING YOUR GRANT:

When your grant or contract period expires and you have completed your project and utilized all funds, there are several final steps:

- Prepare the final (technical) narrative report. *Check the due date!*
- Prepare the final financial report.
- Include contributions by sub-recipients or collaborators. *Ask for these in advance of your deadlines*.
- Depending on your project, you may also have to provide reports on patents and licenses on inventions, and equipment to Property and Inventory Control.

But wait…..The end dates of the project may not always be set in stone. In fact, quite often, the PI will have funds remaining beyond the final date.

- Check award docs and sponsor guidelines for the project end dates. Sometimes you can extend the end date, depending on the sponsor.
- If you can extend the end date, you would apply for a no cost extension. This is very common and doesn't take a long time to process.

When you do close out of your award:
About two months before the close out date you will receive an email from the UMA Controllers office

- They will prompt you to make sure the final details of your award are taken care of prior to the final close-out. (For example, invoices, encumbrances, advances, telephone, etc.)

Meet with your department business manager and make sure you are clear on what other financial information or close-out documentation is needed.

- Remember that if you overspend, you will need to find those funds elsewhere. And, if you close with unexpended funds, the funds go back to the sponsor.

Review guidelines at the start of the project; talk to your business manager and OGCA staff about what to expect and when; understand what you or others are supposed to do.

If you see problems or changes along the way, tell someone… your program officer would be a good start!

All federally funded grants are now required to complete a Research Performance Progress Report, which is in a uniform format for use by all federal agencies that support research.

By keeping good records throughout your grant, your progress report will come together easier.

Check with your business manager about the process for requesting a no cost extension. And, then contact the grant accountant.

LEADERSHIP

What does it mean to lead your team? and to be a leader in your area of research? Here are some strategies and things to keep in mind:

FIRST THINGS FIRST:

Who is on the team?

- Make a staff list that includes everyone you know now will be involved in carrying out the research project. (Name, email, phone, and role on project)
- Make a list of everyone you think you will need to hire. Look at your work-plan to consider the timing of when to begin to advertise and hire.
- Make a list of everyone who is involved with managing your budget (business managers, post award accountants, and the comparable staff at subcontracting institutions).

Who should know what, and when?

- If possible, **now** is a GREAT time to bring your project's key personnel together for an introductory meeting (CoPis, co-investigators, consultants, subcontractors, etc.) to review the goals of the grant to build some excitement about the project ahead.
- **Also, meet with all support staff:** your department's post-award business manager or RBML/business manager is the person to help you navigate the UMass system. Make sure to have a meeting early on and learn about the procedures specific to your department. *Bring chocolate.*

BUILDING YOUR RESEARCH TEAM

Hiring the right people -- Suggested steps:

1. Using your **planned staffing list** begin to write detailed job descriptions for everyone on the team. You've probably already thought a lot about this when you wrote the proposal, but now is the time to dig deeper, with a detailed outline of the tasks, responsibilities and expectations.
   - What do you need to get done and when?
   - What skill sets do they need and how can you assure they have the skills?
   - What kind of hours will they need to work and what will their work schedule be (e.g., will there be weekend and evening work involved)

- **UMass Hiring process**: Each type of position requires a different approach to hiring: students, post docs, temporary positions, or benefited positions. The process to hire and advertise (non students) may take a long time (especially if they are benefitted) *so the sooner you begin on this the better.*
    - Your department will have a person that handles H.R. and completing the necessary forms and hiring in your area.

Nothing is more important than hiring the right people to get the job done.

You should develop 2 job descriptions: one for hiring and the other, an expanded job description for each employee that is specific to their duties on your grant, with timeframes for completion, etc.

Remember: Grad contracts can't be written until your progress reports are approved. Don't follow the OGCA timeline, because your students won't get paid in time. So get your next year's budget approved, ASAP.

UMass Hiring process (continued):

- You should also keep in mind timing, and anticipate it taking longer than you thought. *(have we said this before?)*
- Below is a link to UMass policies regarding the hiring, paying, evaluating and terminating personnel: http://www.umass.edu/humres/empl_dept_hire_kit.htm

2. **Get the word out:** Once you are clear on the jobs you need done and the staff or students you need to do them, then it is time to put the word out!

- Ask colleagues, friends, and former students for references.
- Consider students in your classes who would want research experience before moving on to graduate school.

Remember that diversity in your staffing (culture, race, age, gender, etc.) can bring great advantages to the project and to each other!

3. **Interviews:** When you finally get to the point that you have selected several applicants to interview, prepare well for this critical stage -- the interview:

- Even if you are tremendously busy, it really is important to schedule enough time to find the right people to do the job.
- Outline questions ahead of time related to the job description
- Make sure to have others involved in the interview process with you, to get different ideas and perspectives (especially if they are part of your research team).
- Ask short and open-ended questions (examples follow in attachment).
- If appropriate to their role,
  - Ask for any publications or writing they have done.
  - Develop a short quiz on software they should be familiar with to see if they have the necessary skills (e.g. excel spreadsheet, statistical software analyses)
- Consider the other people you have already hired; will their skills complement each other? Is the team diverse?

MANAGING YOUR RESEARCH TEAM

Taking on a large research project requires relying on many other individuals and keeping multiple balls in the air at the same time --- while also continuing with all the other responsibilities such as teaching, committee work and mentoring.

One of the biggest challenges PIs face is delegating tasks. Allowing others to carry out ones intellectual ideas can be daunting. They have often learned to rely on themselves to get things done and, in many cases, believe they are the only ones who can "do it right." The reality is that you cannot run a large research study on your own. Here are some important issues to keep in mind which will help you to be an effective manager and successful researcher:

Create and Use a WORK PLAN:

- Set target goals for when things should be completed, and then work backwards on what steps need to happen and how long they take.
- *For example, if you have a three year grant and plan to publish findings along the way what "pieces" will need to be completed to get a paper out in the second year, the third year.*
    - Establish short and long term goals for each individual and for the group as a whole.
- Target dates should be set for submissions and presentations!
  - Make sure to involve others in establishing those goals and targets to build buy-in and personal investment from everyone on the team.
  - Outline and set expectations and guidelines so that employees are clear about what their role on the project is and how they work with the team.
  - Make sure to include administrative goals such as reporting requirements, your project's dissemination plans, and goals that are specific to the research. This will make reporting requirements easier as well.

Post your WORKPLAN:

White boards or big flip charts are great for having posted up on the wall in your project office. Everyone can see and review the list every week at your project meeting! Google Calendar may be another idea for the way your team would like to plan and show the project deadlines.

- ➢ The plan will change and grow and visually represent your collaborative progress!

A Workplan example is at the end of the manual!

Establish means of accountability and QUALITY CONTROL:

As the PI, you need to ensure quality control in data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Training, communication and supervision are key:

- ➢ Meet weekly to review goals and timelines.
- ➢ Be available for clear direction and support.
- ➢ Document methodological issues not anticipated in the research plan, and discuss these issues with your staff.

Identify and CELEBRATE SUCCESS along the way:

This may sound like a "no-brainer" but often in the rush to get to the finish line we forget to celebrate the successes along the way such as:

- Accepted conference presentations
- Successfully defended Master's theses and dissertations
- Published papers
- Personal events (Birthdays, Weddings, Babies, etc.)

Recognize that there will be PERSONNEL ISSUES:

Challenges will always come up -- illness, graduation of student employees, etc, etc! Some of them can be anticipated and planned for, while others cannot, but each requires you to communicate, listen, adjust and plan again how to accomplish the tasks at hand.

- Poor performance generally, can simply be frustrating and discouraging. There's no straight path for dealing with these challenges:
  - Clear communication is essential:
    - Talk to the poorly performing staff member about your specific concerns.
    - Focus on the job and not issues of personality.

Listen and ask about their understanding of the issues or concerns. Hopefully this will be enough to get them motivated, accountable and back on track with their performance.

Sometimes, poor performance can not be resolved easily. It is helpful to bounce your concerns and problems off of a trusted and objective colleague who could help you to make an unbiased and clear decision, and figure out what to do next.

Your 'people' skills will be put to the test!

You may decide to **terminate** a staff member when it is clear that the work is not getting done to your satisfaction, even after intervening with clear communication or other supervisory strategies.

- Be Fair – weigh what you know about their reasons for poor performance against what you have said or done, and be fair to them, to the other team members and to yourself as you go forward.
- Keep track – Make sure that you have documented the details regarding your concerns and the poor performance, including dates and conversations, etc. Also, make sure that the employee has received appropriate notice about their unsatisfactory work in your lab.
- Read university policies about terminating staff or students, or talk to the human resource person about what protocols to follow.

And ask yourself:

- Have you given the person at least some type of warning?
- Have you made it clear to the person what they are doing wrong?
- Are you treating the person differently than other people in your lab or office?

THE ART OF NEGOTIATION

There will be many times in running your project where you will need “to work or talk with others to achieve a transaction, an agreement, etc.” (dictionary definition of negotiation) There will be the need for resources, such as money, space, equipment, time, and support which you will need to request, discuss, and reach an agreement.

Negotiating is a skill

Negotiations always work best when you go into the situation with a good understanding of your needs ***and*** the needs of the other person. The goal should be a "win-win' for all involved. Take time to think through clearly:

- Who are you negotiating with?
    - Department Heads, Deans, co investigators, subcontracts, students, staff…..
- What are you negotiating?
    - Money, space, time, course buyouts, you know what…
- What do you need and what does the other person need?
- How can the outcome be equally beneficial?
- And a reminder…keep cool and respectful; be honest and clear.

Also, try to establish trust and some sort of rapport; make sure to lead with and talk about your common goals.

- Prepare to make a clear case for how what you are proposing is a win-win option.
- After discussion or meeting, summarize what was agreed upon and next steps (even if they are only "baby steps".

COLLABORATION

As a researcher, you will find yourself collaborating with many different groups and individuals to get your project accomplished -- Research participants, Students, Co-investigators, Funding Agencies, Consultants, Subcontractors, etc…..

When collaborating with Co-investigators/ Collaborators:

- Be particularly clear about expectations; have them tell you what they think they are supposed to be doing and by when.
- Make sure that they have carved out time for research!
- Set up clear communication plans and regular meeting times
- Work together to develop and sharpen ideas and to establish the scope of the research

When collaborating with students:

- Be sure to be clear with them about publications and authorship
- Be a great mentor – think about what the student is learning and invest your time in them
- Talk and email and communicate at many levels, including asking and listening.

“My rule is that first draft is first author. I try to ensure that any project has a first authored piece for any grad student or faculty collaborator. Sometimes that means I write those first drafts, but…I try to make them feel ownership. This is easier for someone at my stage than an assistant, but it is important to realize that getting your students to publish does almost as much or sometimes as much for your career as publishing on your own does. “

DISSEMINATION

Spread the word/Announce your award:

- Talk with your department chair about how to best publicize your accomplishment. Don't be shy, this is important not only for you but for the department, college and university.
- Check to make sure the information going out is accurate and balanced, and you are not promising that you will save the world today.
- Also, make sure to check what the rules are regarding announcing your award, with your sponsor. This also varies, and there may be constraints or language to include, etc.
- Contact the news office: http://www.umass.edu/newsoffice/contactus/

Become familiar with funding agency guidelines, rules and regulations:

- Take the time to **read** over the rules and regulations regarding regular reporting to your funding agency.
    - *Note key deadlines, reporting requirements and contact people.* (you can find links to the funding agencies under 'reporting')
- Talk with your program officer about general responsibilities and what to anticipate in terms of reporting and communication.
  Talk to post award staff at OGCA as well as your department staff members to make sure you understand the regulations for your grant and who does what when.
- This is another area where it is useful to go to more senior faculty who have had grants from the same agency to get copies of sample reports and their best advice about presenting your yearly research accomplishments to the funder.

Have a plan for DISSEMINATION:

To be most effective, dissemination strategies must be incorporated into the earliest planning stages of a research study. To create a dissemination plan, consider:

- What are the goals and objectives of the dissemination effort? What impact do you hope to have?
- Who is affected most by this research? Who would be interested in learning about the study findings? Is this of interest to a broader community?
- What is the most effective way to reach each audience?
- When should each aspect of the dissemination plan occur (e.g. at which points during the study and afterwards)?
- Who will be responsible for dissemination activities?

BROADER IMPACTS

Your proposals inevitably included a description of what is often called 'broader impacts' or more generally, how your research or science impacts on our society. Basically, in order to have received this award, you must have demonstrated how your project will be effective *and* fit within the infrastructure for engagement of the university.

- Reporting on your activities and goals which lead to these 'broader impacts' should be on your mind throughout the project.

MEDIA:

There are countless media resources interested in cutting edge research. Free media coverage can be an easy way to get results out to as many people as possible.

You should work with the UMass Office of News and Media Relations to disseminate research findings widely through public media.
http://www.umass.edu/newsoffice/contactus/

There is also a collaborative project on campus called the **Public Engagement Project**, which is committed to helping and training faculty to get their research word out. Go to their website to find out more about trainings and tips:
http://www.umass.edu/family/research-programs/public-engagement-project

PRESENTATIONS - conferences, meetings, on and off campus…

- Often the large research questions can not be answered in the first few years
- Work with your research team to develop presentations that should occur along the way

PUBLICATIONS:

- Set aside time to write!!
- There are writing spaces, workshops, and fellowships offered through the Center for Teaching and Faculty Development.
- Give yourself deadlines and schedule writing time into your calendar every week.

We do hope that this document will assist you in managing the sometimes challenging tasks of getting all the administrative work completed on your grant while staying focused on the really important piece...the research!

This compiled information is an evolving document. We'd appreciate your feedback and comments so please email us with your questions and corrections.

Wendy Varner – wendy@sbs.umass.edu
Center for Research on Families

ADDENDUM

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Experience and Skills:

- Tell me about your most significant accomplishment
- Tell me the part you played in conducting a specific project or implementing a new approach or technology in you lab
- I see you have worked with [insert specific technology or technique]. Tell me about its features and benefits

Commitment and Initiative

- Why do you want to work in my lab?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- What kinds of projects do you want to do? Why?
- Tell me how you stay current in your field
- Describe a time when you were in charge of a project and what you feel you accomplished
- Tell me about a project or situation that required you to take initiative

Working and Learning Styles

- What motivates you at work?
- Would you rather work on several projects at a time or on one project?
- Do you learn better from books, hands-on experience, or other people?
- Tell me about a project that required you to work as part of a team. What was the outcome of the team's efforts?
- How would you feel about leaving a project for a few hours to help someone else?
- Behavioral Interview questions (Situation, Task, Action, Result or "STAR" from http://web.mit.edu/career/www/guide/star.html)
- Describe a situation in which you were able to use persuasion to successfully convince someone to see things your way.
- Describe an instance when you had to think on your feet to extricate yourself from a difficult situation.
- Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
- By providing examples, convince me that you can adapt to a wide variety of people, situations and environments.
- Describe a time on any job that you held in which you were faced with problems or stresses that tested your coping skills.
- Give me an example of a time in which you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.
- Tell me about a time in which you had to use your written communications skills in order to get an important point across.
- Give me a specific occasion in which you conformed to a policy with which you did not agree.
- Give me an example of an important goal that you had set in the past and tell me about your success in reaching it.

- Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
- Give me an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person even when that individual may not have personally liked you (or vice versa).
- Is there a question that I did not ask you today that you prepared an answer for?

Interviews - The Basics

- Tell us about yourself.
- You have (are getting) a degree in _____________. Why did you choose that field of study?
- What are your long-term career goals?
- What prompted you to apply for a position in the Labs of Cognitive Neuroscience? What appeals to you about our research program?
- Tell us about your research experience.
- Tell us about your experience working with children.
- Do you have experience working with any special populations of children?

Communication

- How important is listening to others? Describe how you focus on listening to others.
- How do you know that you have received and understood the message?
- What do you see as the differences in dealing with research participants via the phone vs. face-to-face?
- Tell me about a time that you had to deal with a difficult patient or family. What did you do and what was the outcome?
- Describe a situation when you felt shy or socially uncomfortable. What did you do?
- What was the toughest communication situation you've had to deal with? Discuss.
- What is your typical way of dealing with conflict? Give us an example.

Teamwork

- What makes you a good team player? How do you deal with those who are not?
- What have you done when some team members were not carrying their load or fair share?
- Describe a time that you had difficulty with another team member. How did you handle it?
- How have you handled situations where others complained to you about another team member?
- What specific actions have you taken that foster a productive team environment in XX situation? What do you deliberately do to promote team spirit?
- Tell us about a time that you felt strongly about something and you weren't ready to compromise in the name of team harmony. What was the outcome?
- Give us an example of a time when you motivated others.
- What specific strategies did you employ in this situation and why do you think you were successful?

Miscellaneous

- Tell us about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
- What are 3 adjectives you would use to describe yourself?
- What do you do when your schedule is interrupted? Give us an example of how you handle it.
- What do you like to do in your spare time?
- Would you describe yourself as more of a people person or a technical person?

EXAMPLES OF PROBING/FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

- Can you explain what you mean by ______________?
- Can you give me an example?
- Tell me what exactly happened.
- What steps did you take?
- What was your involvement?
- Can you tell me why you reacted that way?
- How do you think others felt when you did that?
- Were you satisfied with the outcome?
- What did you learn from that experience?
- What was your role in this?

WORK PLAN – EXAMPLE

Milestone/Task	Start Date	Duration	Responsible Party	Justification

This is a good example because it:

- **Supports and is consistent with the information provided in both the Narrative/Project Summary and in the Budget/Cost Breakdown**
- **Clearly details specific tasks and actions to implement the project**