Research Operations Outside of the Central Office

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Organizing Research - Central Office

- **Major Academic University**
  - Research is automatic
  - VP Research (many other VPs)
  - Research Directors based on Subject Matter Expertise (SME_)
  - Emphasis on …. ?
  - Limited focus on research operations

- **Non Academic Systems**
  - Research is ancillary
  - Oversight assigned to Leadership
  - Research Director is general Subject Matter Expert (SME)
  - Emphasis on research roles for Institution and PIs,
  - Tremendous focus on research operations
Organizing Research - Departmental

• Major Academic University
  ○ Departments provide limited resources for administrative support
  ○ Department role seems limited to pre and post award management
  ○ PIs responsible for knowing compliance
  ○ PIs decide what support they need
  ○ PIs operationalize research

• Non Academic Systems
  ○ Departments have resources based on research volumes and specialists
  ○ Where research volumes are low, difficult to resource
  ○ Support goes beyond pre and post award management
  ○ Departments play a role in assuring compliance
  ○ Departments operationalize research
Learning Objectives

- Expand thinking of research operations to a global view
- Explore necessary Research Resources
- Contextualize organizing research resources at the Department level
- Methods and tools to effectively manage and communicate
Think about and answer....

- Who do you work for (why does your job exist)?
- Who is your customer?
- What are your PIs' scientific and administrative needs?
- What training do your PIs receive from their institution?
- Where do your PIs learn to be good PIs/researchers?
- What information is available to your PIs from their institution?
- Whose responsibility is it to accommodate the researchers?
- Who is on the front line and responsible for research compliance?
- Who is on the front line and responsible for research efficiencies?
Departmental Research Environment (think and answer)...

- How would you describe the research environment in your department?
- How would you describe the research support environment in your department?
- How would your researchers/PIs describe the environment and research support services in your department?
- Have you asked your researchers/PIs, lately, what would be helpful?
- How would some of your researchers answer this question? “What administrative services would be helpful to you”? 
● “What research administrative services are you interested in: finding funding, proposal preparation assistance, budget development, statistical and analytical, data access, reporting, regulatory (human/animal), research conduct education, technical writing, abstracts and poster presentation, graphics”?
When I asked “What would be helpful”....

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher List of Needs ......</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff supervision</td>
<td>Computer infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>Research brand logo and photo library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development efforts</td>
<td>Professional illustrator/photographer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate student opportunities</td>
<td>Funding searches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical trials office</td>
<td>Writing assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of collab. efforts (MD/PhD)</td>
<td>Statistical assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internal mock reviews</td>
<td>Efficient communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public relations</td>
<td>Group/lab manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulatory – FDA 510K app assistance</td>
<td>Reduced administrative burden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centralized services for all</td>
<td>Free MRI time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal preparation</td>
<td>A fund for gap years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRB preparation</td>
<td>Small Grants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Satellite/Hotel office at SOM for PhDs</td>
<td>New T-shirts</td>
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</table>
### Research Resources (Step 1)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>To Centralize OR De-Centralize w/in Dept</th>
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<td>IRB/IACUC Reviews</td>
<td>Templates – posters and presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regulatory Compliance (FDA)</td>
<td>Publication Fees</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Research education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Managing research staff</td>
<td>Mentorship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laboratory safety</td>
<td>Graduate student coordination</td>
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Building the “Ideal”

● Step 2 – Identify the gaps
  ○ Review for what you have and what you don’t have
  ○ Record it

● Step 3 – Work to fill the gaps
  ○ Prioritize
  ○ Build relationships
  ○ Establish budgets where needed
  ○ Establish positions where needed
## Research Resource Gaps

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Fill the Gaps, but before you do...

- Ponder a few realities
  - Is the current state broken?
  - The have-nots

- Find the resources and options
  - Focus on the ideal for your environment
  - Organizing the resources so the researchers don’t have to
Gaps and Costs

- Roles that must be hired versus outsourcing

- Internal resources to your institution
  - Build relationships
  - Identify costs
  - Budget
  - Obtain feedback

- External resources
  - Same as internal

- Budget and justify both internal and external resources
Building the Ideal Continued...Where to put all this information?

● Step 4 – Write it all up

  ○ Language of the researcher “I want to submit an IRB”
    “I need study design assistance”

  ○ Make sure it is a resource for your researchers/customers
    ■ Concise writing
    ■ Make it visual – easy on the brain
    ■ Located where customers will find it
Example

- Study Design

  - Statisticians at the Study Design and Biostatistics Center (SDBC) can do the following:
    - Clarify the research hypotheses
    - Study design / sample size / analysis plan
    - Data collection / survey design / health measurement
    - Data analysis
    - Guidance to investigators who wish to do their own data analysis
    - Statistical aspects of manuscripts (methods, results, tables & figures)

  - Request projects by filling out their request form

  - The cost for statistical assistance is $100. Generally a funded project will cover the costs. Limited Department funds are available for grant development work and study feasibility.

  - For more information, visit their website.
Building the Ideal Continued... Staffing and Process Improvement

● Step 5 – Refining Staff and Processes

○ Changing things up. “Good is the enemy of Great” Chapter 1 “Good to Great” by Jim Collins

○ What are the realities of your department?
  ■ Do you have the people and processes for managing research?
  ■ Talent?
  ■ Gaps in resources?

○ Moving toward the ideal Departmental Research Organization
  ■ Organize/reorganize
  ■ Operational workgroups (examples grant submission, IP, Data Management, Clinical Trial Operations)

● Process pipelines and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
Improvements are continuous

● Step 6 – Synthesizing

○ “Combing (a number of things) into a coherent whole”

○ Keep department priorities

○ Interface with PIs/Researchers/Faculty
  ■ Organize their research meetings
  ■ Lab Managers
  ■ Find out what is important/what is helpful

○ Track and report improvements and progress
  ■ Dashboards, Progress Reports, Goals
  ■ Updates and faculty meetings
  ■ Network with peers
If you want to truly understand something, try to change it – Kurt Lewin

Thank you
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Special thanks to Kevin Titus, Business Director, Allergy & Immunology and Asthma Research Divisions, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital