Successfully Managing an R01

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This Talk

- What it is not:
  - A cookbook for how to manage a grant
  - Detailed review about the rules and regulations for grants management
- What we'll do:
  - Provide a philosophy and general approach to grants management
  - Discuss some of the pertinent details of the practical aspects of grants management
  - Take your questions and discuss ideas and your specific situations

Being a PI means managing a small business: Who Knew??

- Elements of grants management
  - Budget
  - Organizing your environment
  - Staffing
  - Managing your research team (including contracts and sub-awards)

Budgeting: Thinking ahead to be successful when you are funded

- Learn to write a realistic budget
  - A good budget includes a well written and detailed budget justification
    - People leave out the most obvious budget items
    - A good budget justification allows not only the reviewer to assess your budget but an opportunity for you to think it through
    - Make sure you know what your department will or will not pay for A first budget draft should be your 'wish list'
    - Identify the absolutely critical items you must have to successfully operationalize your research
    - Make sure you have enough staff that will collect the data– remember you are not a graduate student or trainee any more
  - Don't believe it when they tell you to low-ball your budget so that you can get funding- you will live to regret it! If you are funded you will take a budget cut!
  - Have a senior investigator in your area help you

Managing the Budget

- You have the grant, now what??
  - Make sure you have a fiscal administrator (FA) who will actually handle and track the money
  - Develop a good working relationship with your FA and make sure s/he know the basic purpose of the research
  - Work with your FA to:
    - Create a list of baseline purchases you are likely to make (if you have to contract for services give yourself plenty of time)
    - Track sub-awardee expenses if applicable (remember to separate out direct and indirect expenses)
    - Provide you with monthly reports AND projected carry forward
    - If you think you will need a NCE, plan it from day 1
- Learn to embrace your inner accountant

The Research Environment

- Organize your environment
  - ❖ The research enterprise needs structure
    - ➢ Lab or office space
    - ➢ Management structure
    - ➢ File system: electronic & paper
    - ➢ Order the equipment you need as soon as the NGA arrives

Staffing

- Your staff are critical to a well managed grant
  - If the project is sizeable, has multiple data collection sites, sub-awards, complex data or more than 2 staff, always plan for a project coordinator
  - Have a plan for how to organize you research team (including contracts and sub-awards)
  - Understand the basics of your HR system and issues around hiring, firing and severance. Remember, most universities will make your grant pay for severance, sick time and vacation time
  - Break it all down into the minutia of managing the office, collecting the data, managing the data
  - Have someone who knows how to manage data

Managing your Research Team

- **Don't** make these assumptions
  - ❖ Everyone knows what the goals of the research are
  - ❖ All the sub-award sites or different clinical sites can operate exactly the same way: communication is critical!
  - ❖ The protocol can be implemented exactly as it is written in the grant
  - ❖ You only need to say it/demonstrate it once
  - ❖ **Do** create written Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

Last but not Least

- Get guidance from a mentor
- Communicate with your NIH program director
- Make sure you get the time you have committed to the project available to you from your supervisor/chair
- Consider what your major grant products will be in advance
- Remember that a poorly managed project will yield lower quality data no matter how good your research design is on paper