

Report for 2013 Laboratory Managers Workshop (Tuesday June 11, 2013)

Title: How to Work With Your PIs More Effectively (and Without Them Knowing It)

Workshop Leaders: Nathan Dalleska and David Friedman

Approximately 75 people were in attendance.

We were fortunate to have 3 invited panelists join our discussion: Allis Chien of Stanford, Sonja Hess from Caltech, and Brett Phinney from UC Davis.

A recap of last year's workshop ("Who Ran That") found near unanimous support from the group to ask the ASMS board to adopt authorship guidelines similar or identical to those listed at <http://www.abrf.org/index.cfm/page/resources/Authorship.htm>

The organizers and panelists were introduced and a few slides were presented that covered common situations that managers of core facilities encounter and how the panelists addressed them. Discussion proceeded as members of the audience asked questions, and offered their own perspectives.

The group focused on discussion of handling situations in which a client's stated desires contradicted the considered opinion of the manager or accepted best practices. Themes included 1) How to address a rush request for data on an insufficiently statistically powered experiment 2) What do you do when the client thinks your proposed analysis is too expensive (or time consuming) but in your opinion the proposal is only barely good enough 3) How do you address a request for a complicated one-off experiment? What if the client is unwilling to invest in method validation? 4) How do you build your pricing structure and what portion of total costs do you recover? 5) Computation and post-acquisition data processing are becoming an increasingly important and very expensive component of providing chemical analysis. How do you recover this cost?

Advice from the panelists and attendees included 1) Always be willing to walk through the door of a PI or Department chair to discuss your labs needs and operation. 2) Education of the user pool is key. Attendees were in agreement that they had to explain the process of electrospray ionization on a nearly weekly basis and that this was perhaps not an optimal use of their time. Jennifer Grant (lately of the Education Committee) referred the group to resources on the ASMS website and suggested this may be an area for cooperative effort with the Education Committee. 2) Use of QC type samples with users to explain baffling data. One attendee explained his maxim "Fail

Fast, Fail Cheap” in achieving rapid progress towards understanding anomalous or nonsensical data. 3) The collective experience suggested that hosting workshops on techniques or instruments was not an effective way to reach future users.

The Lab Managers group would like to highlight that they see tremendous potential utility in web-based video projects that the Education Committee may be pursuing.

We found the panel discussion format produced a very lively discussion and intend to repeat the format (with a new topic) next year. We also observed that the strategically chosen refreshment menu preceding the workshops leads to open discussion.

One problem we were made aware of was that the conference Program at a Glance listed only our workshop title, and not the name of the interest group. At least one graduate student showed up hoping for advice on how to work with their boss and spent the workshop wondering just when we'd get round to that. The long title we offered for our workshop likely precipitated this editorial decision and we will strive to shorten our title for next year.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathan Dalleska