

# Clinical Investigation: Strategies for Success

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# Strategies for Success

- Work styles and management
- Diversity, Bias and Academic Medicine
- Scholarly productivity
- Creating supportive teams for your research

# Understand Your Institution: Values and mission

- State institution; Minority serving institution
  - may be more likely to value engaged scholarship
- Research intensive institution
  - may be less interested in applied research
- CTSA/All institutions
  - interested in translation of basic and clinical research

# Understand Your Institution: Promotion and Tenure

- What are the expectations for promotion?
  - How many papers, grants and how much teaching and service do you need?
- Is your scholarship “valued” in the institution?
- What is your departments track record for promotion? What about for faculty of color?

# Understand Yourself: Work style and Time

- What is your job?
  - Researcher, teacher, administrator
  - Make sure you are spending your time accordingly
  - How much protected vs. funded time to do research?
- Are there others who have been successful doing the type of research you are interested in?
  - Is there job the same as yours? Can they mentor you?

# Understand Yourself: Work style and Time

- Are you task oriented? Goal oriented?
- Do you value process? Outcomes?
- How do you approach conflict? Change? Challenge?
- What about “Control”?
- Can you multitask? Compartmentalize?

# Chapters in a Career

- Anticipate a long and productive career
- Allows you to prioritize for that chapter
- Tenure is but one early chapter
- Achieve different things that are central to your professional life during different chapters
  - Research, teacher, mentor, role model, institutional change agent, community activist
- Ability to make choices depends on focusing on scholarly productivity early

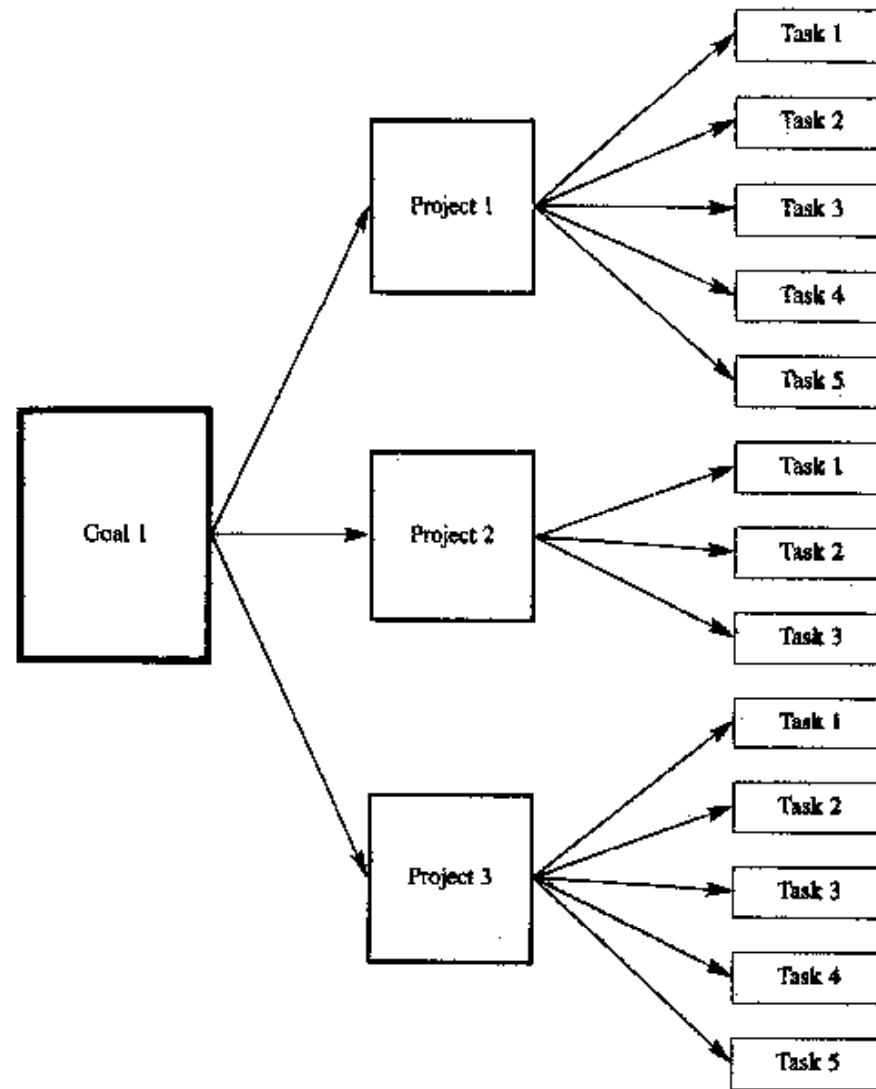
Rockquemore and Laszloffy, *The Black Academics Guide to Winning Tenure Without Losing Your Soul*

# Your 5-year plan: Developing and executing a strategic plan

- Identify your professional goals
- Outline your projects and tasks
- Map your projects on to time
- Execute the plan on a daily basis
- Create accountability and support

Rockequemore and Laszloffy, *The Black Academics Guide to Winning Tenure Without Losing Your Soul*

Figure 4.1 Moving from Goals to Specific Tasks



# Diversity and Academic Medicine

- Awareness of race permeates the experience of physicians of African descent in workplace
- Race-related experiences shape interpersonal interactions and define the institutional climate
- Responses to racism at work vary along a spectrum from minimization to confrontation
- Health care workplace is silent on issues of race
- Collective race-related experiences can result in "racial fatigue," with personal and professional consequences for physicians

Nunez-Smith M et al, Ann Intern Med. 2007

# Diversity and Bias in Academic Medicine

- Minority faculty more likely to perceive racial/ethnic bias in their environment
  - Nearly half (48%) of URM and 26% of NURM reported experiencing racial/ethnic discrimination by a superior or colleague
  - Faculty with these experiences had lower career satisfaction
- Minority and foreign-born faculty report ethnicity-based disparities in recruitment and subtle manifestations of bias in promotion process
- Minority faculty less likely to report satisfaction with racial/ethnic diversity, less likely to believe networking included minorities and less likely to report they would be at their current institution in five years
- Minority faculty also describe structural barriers (poor retention efforts, lack of mentorship) that hinder success and professional satisfaction

# Race Politics and Managing Conflict

- Moving from habits of survival to strategies of success
- Habits of survival- enabled oppressed people to endure and persist amid horrific conditions
  - Neither conscious or chosen; assumed automatically
  - Quality of life is defined by more than survival
- Strategies of survival- conscious choices about the way of being in the world
  - Deliberate, purposeful, conscious, chosen

# Race Politics and Managing Conflict

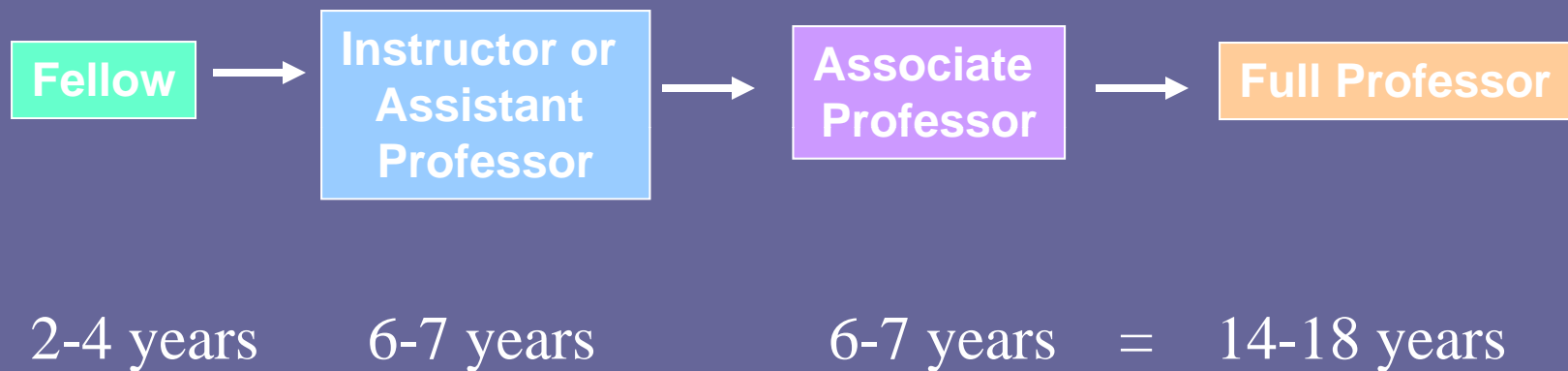
- Problem when we respond in one of two ways:
  - Fighting every battle
    - you will quickly alienate yourself from everyone in your environment
  - Avoiding conflict altogether
    - when you push anger down, it grows, deepens, and expands
- Expressing anger is tricky - few socially acceptable forms of communicating anger for Black and Latino faculty

# Race Politics and Managing conflict

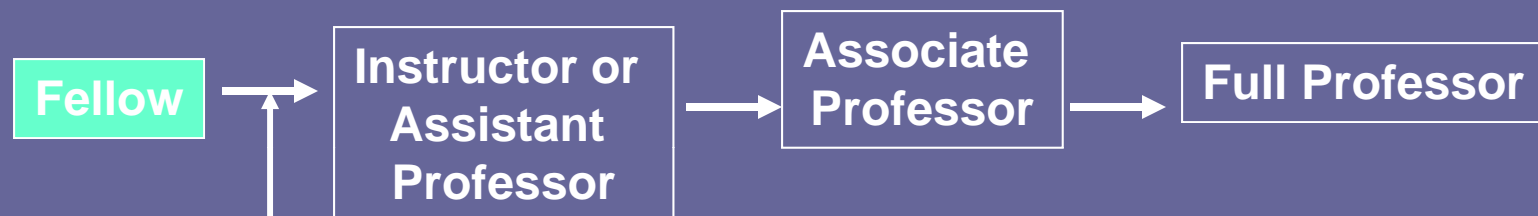
- In this particular situation, should I *push back* or should I *pull back*?
- What will I gain and what will I lose?
  - Don't confuse pulling back with stuffing down!
- If I decide to push back, what's the most effective way to do so
  1. State the behavior
  2. Describe how it makes me feel
  3. Make my needs explicit, and
  4. Clearly request what I want

# Scholarly productivity

# Progression of an Academic Career in Clinical Research



# Goals and Tasks at Different Stages of an Academic Career in Clinical Investigation



- Develop skills in scholarship
- Develop self-management skills
- Become a skillful collaborator
- Understand the value of being mentored and develop a primary mentor-protégé relationship
- Present work at national meetings
- First author of 1-2 original publications

# Skills You Need to Acquire

- Asking important research questions and hypothesis development
- Study design
- Epidemiology
- Biostatistics
- Primary data collection
- Database management and statistical programming
- Ethics and regulatory issues involving human subjects
- Critical appraisal and literature synthesis
- Scientific writing
- Grant writing
- Presentation skills
- Survival skills- (e.g. human resource management, budgeting, job seeking, negotiation)
- Genomics and proteomics
- Other - behavioral, HSR, cost-effectiveness

# Ways to Acquire The Skills

- Clinical research courses
  - Formal enrollment in a master's (or doctoral) program in clinical research, epidemiology, public health
  - Look locally across town or for short courses at professional societies or universities
  - See if your institution has a clinical research training program (e.g. NIH K30 program)

# Currency of Academia



GRANT MONEY

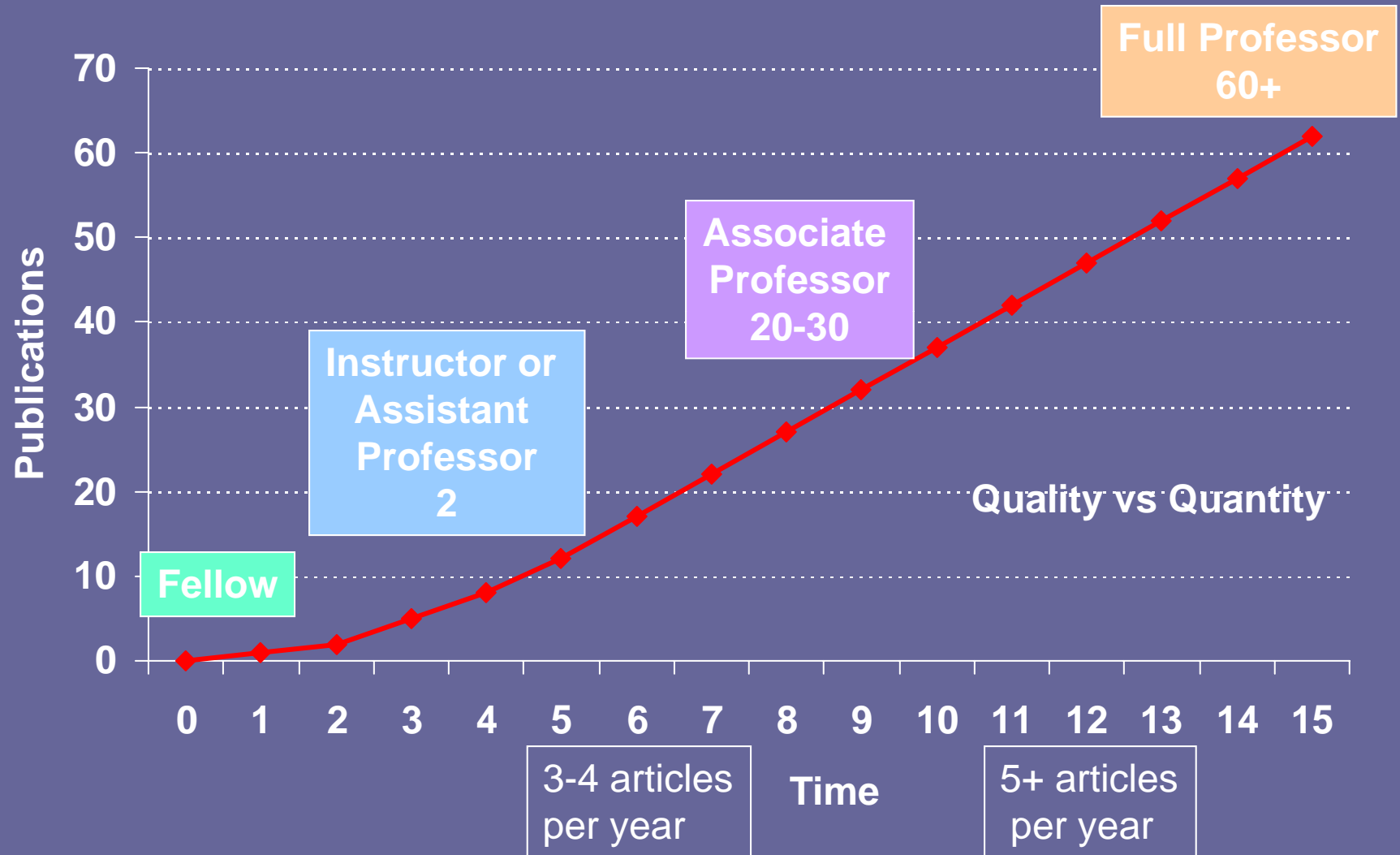
Peer-reviewed



MANUSCRIPTS

Peer-reviewed

# Research Publication Milestones



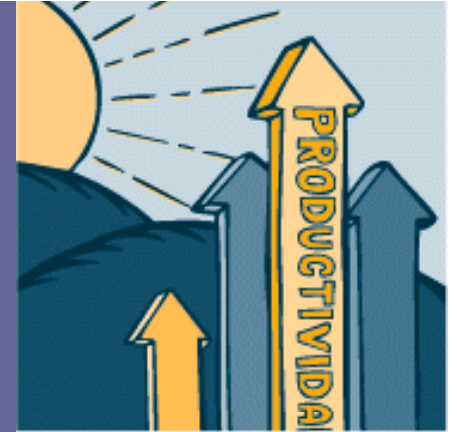
# Writing strategies

- Must know number and type of manuscripts needed for promotion
  - First author, journal type, conceptual or data driven
- Strategic plan include the number per year and from which projects
- Outline main papers at the beginning of a research project

# Writing strategies

- Block out 30-60 min every day to write and only write
- Identify target journals early in writing process
  - Understand surface and deep structure for journal
- Create a plan for completion
- Create accountability
  - Writing groups, mentors

# Ways to Increase Your Scholarly Research Productivity



- Constantly think of publishable scholarship
- Prepare to write by reading, reviewing and networking
- Use professional presentations to develop publishable manuscripts
- Collaborate and co-author whenever possible
- Identify your audiences
- Attend to style, format and appearance
- Know the steps and timetable of the publication process
- Expect to revise and resubmit

# Preparing for Productivity

- Find passion and niche
- Manage career, life and time
- Understand the rules of the game
  - Currency of academia
  - Tenure clock
- Understand what opportunities there are at each phase of your career
- Concentrate on different skills at different phases
- Apply for smaller grants first (instill confidence)

# Preparing for Productivity

- Learn collaborative skills and collaborate with senior faculty
- Be intellectually curious
- Respect diversity- appreciate differences among your peers, subordinates and mentees
- Look critically at oneself
- Network
- Persistence and tenacity



# Dedicated Research Time

- Best protection for time is dedicated research funding; necessary but not sufficient
- Research requires a different type of initiative than clinical care
  - Patients present to you with problems
  - In research you must define the problems
- Protect best “mental functioning” time for research
- Set boundaries around your research time and carefully negotiate other responsibilities (clinical care, teaching, administrative and citizenship) with your supervisors
- Negotiate hard for research time for your 1<sup>st</sup> job

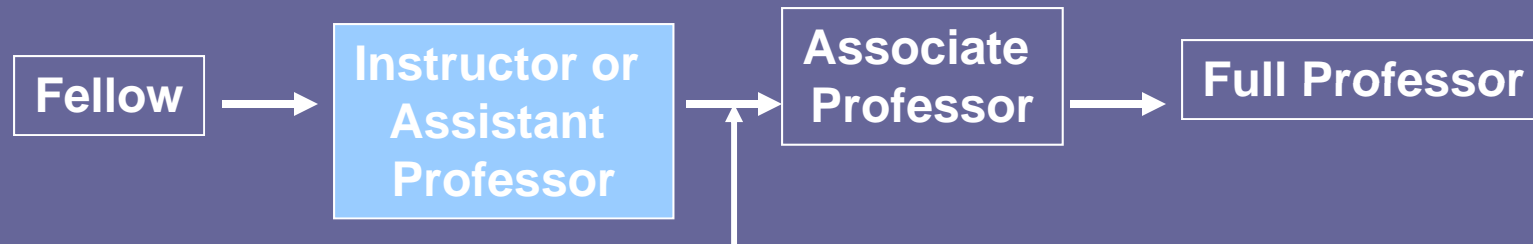
# The First Faculty Position

## *Ideal*



- Three years of support before independent research funding generated
- 75% research time (e.g. one clinic, 1-2 months attending)
- Salary at midpoint of starting range for same rank in the department
- Minimal teaching
- Space – private office
- Research and development funds- 20-30K per year
- Administrative support

# Goals and Tasks at Different Stages of an Academic Career in Clinical Investigation

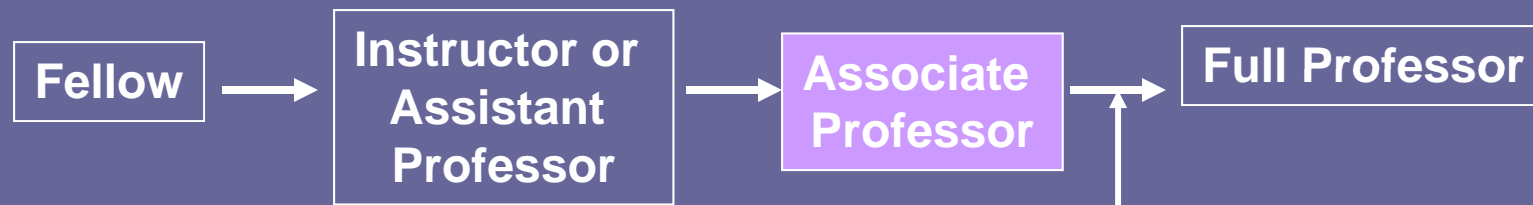


- Be clear on academic area of concentration (research)
- Develop an area of expertise (**central theme**)
- Pose and address an important question that has potential significant findings or impact for patient care (**quality and productivity**)
- Develop oneself **autonomously** in this area –demonstrate ability to function scientifically as an “independent” investigator
- Obtain external, peer-reviewed funding for this work
- Become **nationally recognized** for your body of work
- Provide faculty service to your Division, Dept, School

# Career Building Support

- NIH Loan Repayment Program
- Diversity Supplements to R01s
- K Awards
- RWJ Harold Amos Minority Medical Faculty Development Program

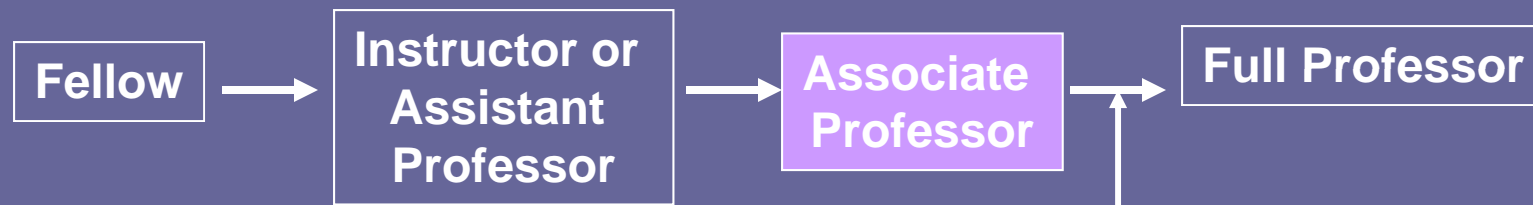
# Goals and Tasks at Different Stages of an Academic Career in Clinical Investigation



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- Continue to develop questions and answers in one's area of expertise as an **autonomous** investigator
- Establish body of contributions (**publication productivity and impact**) in one's defined area, becoming **nationally and internationally recognized**
- Take responsibility for an area important to one's own institution becoming a resource and leader
- Mentor** trainees and junior faculty
- Peer awards, honors or **indications of excellence**
- Continued peer-reviewed support for research

# Goals and Tasks at Different Stages of an Academic Career in Clinical Investigation



II

- Take on additional responsibilities outside one's research (e.g. fellowship director)
- **National level involvement** in societies
- Serve on national committees such as study sections
- Take on departmental and university functions- particularly some time-consuming committees
- Ad-hoc committees tackling controversial issues

Creating teams to support  
your research career

# Needs of New Faculty

- Professional Development
- Emotional Support
- A Sense of Community
- Accountability
- Institutional Sponsorship
- Access to Networks
- Project Specific Feedback

# Roles of Mentors

- **Professional Socialization**
  - access to people and resources
  - understanding culture and environment (local and national)
  - understanding promotion process
- **Role Modeling**
  - teaching by example
- **Nurturing**
  - instilling enthusiasm and confidence
  - serve as a sounding board
  - career planning
  - reality testing
  - counseling and moral support (professional and personal)
- **Teaching**
  - developing specific knowledge or skills
  - constructive feedback
  - providing motivation
- **Advocacy**
  - sponsorship
  - negotiating department politics
  - association with track record

Stange et al. Family Medicine 1990

# Advantages of Same-Race or Gender Mentoring Relationships

- Mentor
  - Role modeling
  - Help cope with work/family conflicts and other gender or race-related barriers
  - Champion successes
  - Career guidance
- Mentee
  - Spark mentor's career rejuvenation
  - Heighten mentor's recognition
  - Improve mentor's productivity
  - Create a base of support

# Potential obstacles: race and gender-discordant mentoring relationships

- Negative stereotypes
- Identification and role modeling
- Skepticism about intimacy
- Public scrutiny
- Peer resentment

Thomas DA. The Truth about Mentoring Minorities: Race Matters.  
Harvard Business Review April 2001

# Overcoming challenges in race and gender-discordant mentoring relationships

- Openly discuss racial and gender sensitivities – acknowledge race and/or gender as barriers
- Identify common experiences and goals to forge a closer relationship
- Identify other appropriate supporters if you or your mentor are uncomfortable or unsure if he/she is the best role model

# Advantages of Race or Gender-Discordant Mentoring Relationships

A mentor from the dominant culture may:

- Provide more networking opportunities for a woman or ethnic minority mentee
- Have a better understanding of institutional or organizational politics and mores
- Provide a different viewpoint
- Help mentee put his/her experiences in a broader context (e.g., distinguish generic issues from racial or gender-based issues)
- Advocate more effectively for the mentee due to power and influence

# Collaboration

- Difficult to meet expectations of scholarly productivity without collaboration
- Multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary scholarship require teams
- Collaborators essential in successful grant applications
- Creates another mechanism for accountability

# Collaborators

- Similar professional goals and expectations
- Complementary work styles
- Be explicit about criteria to determine authorship and contributions
  - preferably at the beginning of the collaboration and in writing

# Study Staff

- Another element critical to success
  - Project Manager
  - Project Coordinator
  - Research Assistant
  - Graduate Research Assistant
- Identify important skill sets
  - Written and oral communication, organization, finance, attention to detail

# On campus support networks

- Writing groups
- Workgroups
- Mentoring programs
- Faculty development programs

# Off campus support networks

- Type of relationships outside of your professional life
- National professional support systems
  - Focus on the interest of faculty of color
  - Listservs, electronic forum

# Summary

- Planning and effective use of your time is critical to success
- Bias is still present in academic medicine
  - Cultivate consciousness in your response
- On and off campus teams bolster odds of success
  - Supportive networks are critical to self preservation

# Resources

- Table of Contents for the NIH Guide for Grants & Contracts [NIHTOCL@LIST.NIH.GOV]
- COS Funding Opportunities
- Grantsource  
<http://research.unc.edu/grantsource/index.php>

