

Building Your Lab -Transitioning to Independence

Cultivate mentors and colleagues both inside and outside your institutional/departmental

- stay in touch with previous mentors
- establish official department mentors – helps with promotion/tenure etc.
- seek out informal mentors – more senior scientists
- build relationships with potential letter writers for tenure
- establish a set of confidants

Gain recognition and an independent identity

- talks, meetings (important for you and your students)
- service at institution (choose wisely)
- professional societies
- study sections
- collaborations
 - understand your institution's culture/expectations on interdisciplinary research (joint publications, grants, etc.)
- publications!!!
- have a strong plan in place to separate *your* research program from previous advisors

Develop your leadership and management style

- create a vision for your lab
- create a mission statement
- develop a written five year plan
 - obtain feedback from senior faculty
 - assess progress and update often
- establish a lab culture
- build an effective team

Constantly improve leadership skills

- find role models
- take courses, read books
- get to know your strengths and weaknesses – exploit one, compensate for the other

Staff your lab

- determine staffing needs
 - technical staff
 - graduate students vs. postdocs vs. undergrads (dept/university funding available?)
 - be very picky about who is your group – productivity does not scale linearly with numbers
- sell yourself as a junior PI
- learn what size group is right for you

Protect your time

- it is OK to say no (repeat daily)
- learn what does not require your best effort – save it for what really matters
- can be as important to learn what *not* to do as it is to learn what you need to do