Follow the yellow brick maze:

Planning your career path in Research Development
Panelists

Joanna Downer
Associate Dean for Research Development at Duke University School of Medicine

Dawn McArthur
Director, Research and Technology Development Office, Child and Family Research Institute
BC Children’s Hospital and University of British Columbia

David Stone
Associate Vice President for Strategic Innovation and Planning at Northern Illinois University

Joann Sullivan
Director, Office of Research Development at Medical University of South Carolina

Tokesha Warner
Goals

• What is available in RD career paths?
• What is the skill set?
• What are the trends?
Follow the Yellow Brick Road

NORDP 2016

Joanna Downer, PhD
Associate Dean for Research Development
Duke University School of Medicine
My path

BS – Chem. 1993


~10 years Science Writing – 1995-2005 (freelance, Duke, Hopkins)


Competitive Volleyball
Personal tools

• In each position, look to use your existing skills and to build new ones by looking for and accepting new challenges.
  • If you want a path forward, you can’t rest on your laurels or stay in a rut.
• Do excellent, high quality work all of the time.
• Take responsibility for your actions.
• Treat everyone with respect.
• Build excellent relationships
Strategic Skills Developed and Deployed

• Being able to **quickly get up to speed** in new areas of science,

• Being able to **sift** through everything I know to identify what the reader needs to know,

• Using my knowledge of the topic & understanding of the audience to **craft a compelling story and/or argument for that audience.**

• **Being responsible & trusted** with “hot” information.

• **Having diplomacy, tact, firmness, and fairness** in communication style.

• Identifying both problems **and** solutions.
External tools

• “What Color Is Your Parachute” book and workbook

• Enneagram personality typing system (https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/), mentioned within “Parachute”.

• These tools (and others, no doubt) can both help you define what you want to do and help you shape your job to better align with these preferences.
Where might I go from here?

• Definite: continue finding and meeting new challenges – at work & outside of work

• Possible:
  • Continue doing what I’m doing
  • Continue moving up within my institution (narrowly or broadly defined)
  • Move to a narrower role at my institution (i.e., something smaller than the School of Medicine)
  • Move to a different institution
  • Switch to contract work or consulting
Finding a path and ‘home’ in research development
My path

Propelled by

- curiosity, creativity, exploration, and wanting to figure out how things work
- love of learning, literature, architecture, nature, and the ‘doing’ of science

Early adventures in nature

Research Development
CFRI / University of BC
(2003 – present)

Research in comparative physiology & metabolism

BSc (Hons) Zoology (cold tolerance)
MSc Zoology (control of breathing)
PhD Zoology (control of metabolism)
[plus English/French lit/language in undergrad and grad school]

PDF in Biochemistry (obesity/stress)
PDF in Physiology (obesity/diabetes)

Research Grants Facilitation
Simon Fraser University
Perspectives on the road taken

Why/how I decided to do RD full-time

• I had honed related skills, from undergraduate through PDF
• I had an exceptional opportunity, in a unique place and time, to build a career focused on using these key aspects of knowledge and training
• I get to integrate 3 of my favourite things – scholarship, language, architecture – and to learn new things about the world, think in new ways, and build with ideas and words, every single day
• Over the past 17 years, I’ve done much of what faculty do, but for ‘fun’

Aptitudes, skills, and “what I like best”

• curious learner interested in nearly everything
• integrative, lateral, pattern-seeing thinker
• highly trained and experienced researcher
• love experimenting and solving difficult problems
• reasonably high tolerance for chaos and the ‘not knowing’
• somewhat organized and somewhat renegade
• prefer high level of autonomy
Finding your path and ‘home’

**Ask yourself -**

**What do I like best to do?**
- eg, planning, doing, leading, integrating, collaborating, competing, reading, writing, drawing, working with numbers/money, organizing, teaching, providing service, helping people, working alone, ...

**What are my best aptitudes and skills?**
- eg, people, data, numbers, words, pictures, ideas, thinking, synthesizing, planning, organizing, doing, leadership, teamwork, altruism, ambition, ...

**How do I think, and when do I think best?**
- eg, concepts/details, slowly/quickly, quietly/loudly, linearly/laterally, abstractly/creatively/concretely, in silence/chaos, ...

**Which aspects of research development are most appealing?**
- eg, service, research design, building teams, project management, budgets, texts, graphics, communication, training, policy, partnerships, strategic planning, ...
Tokesha L. Warner, M.H.A.

**MOM**
- B.A, M.A.- English: rhetoric and Composition
- Adjunct Professor, Developmental Studies
- Observational wall flower

**DAD**
- B.S. – Business Administration
- Manager, General Services Administration (federal)
- Center of attention, social butterfly
You've got to know when to hold 'em
Know when to fold 'em
Know when to walk away
Know when to run

The Gambler (1978)
Kenny Rogers
16 years at Vanderbilt University

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Dept/ School</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Funding agency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Manager, Alumni Relations</td>
<td>Institute for Global Health</td>
<td>3.6 yrs</td>
<td>NIH Fogarty International Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Coordinator</td>
<td>General Pediatrics</td>
<td>1 yr</td>
<td>State of Tennessee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Assistant III, Assistant Project Coordinator</td>
<td>School of Nursing</td>
<td>1 yr</td>
<td>Blue Cross Blue Shield of Tennessee Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Coordinator, MIND Training Project (LEND grant)</td>
<td>Developmental &amp; Behavioral Pediatrics</td>
<td>7.5 yrs</td>
<td>NIH Maternal and Child Health Bureau</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Coordinator, A Better Nashville</td>
<td>Pediatric Critical Care &amp; Anesthesia</td>
<td>1.5 yrs</td>
<td>Memorial Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alumni &amp; Development Assistant</td>
<td>Peabody College of Education</td>
<td>1.4 yrs</td>
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Strengths I bring

• Strong written and oral communication skills
• Compelling writer (concise)
• Networking
• Strong interpersonal skills
• Attention to detail
• Work smarter, not harder
• Strategic, process oriented thinker
• High risk, high reward
The (Yellow Brick) Road Less Traveled

Joann Sullivan, PhD
Director, Office of Research Development
Asst Dean, College of Graduate Studies

May 25, 2016
My path

BS – Chem. 1975

PhD – Physical Chemistry - 1979

~15 years Research & Research Administration – 1980-1994

MUSC Research Development – launched office 1994; staff of 4; appointed Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies in 2003
Serendipity

or

Conscious Choice?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduate / Postdoctoral</th>
<th>Serendipity</th>
<th>Conscious Choice</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Worked in large research group</td>
<td>• Aptitude for writing / editing</td>
<td>• Became the “go-to” person for editing manuscripts</td>
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<td>• NSF EPSCoR Program initiated</td>
<td>• Accepted parttime administrative position as state coordinator</td>
<td>• Expanded my professional network</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Passion for undergrad and grad education</td>
<td>• Implemented undergrad research program at USC</td>
<td>• Gained experience and “relational intelligence”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• EPSCoR program expands to all federal agencies</td>
<td>• Opportunities to work on writing/editing proposals</td>
<td>• First proposal was funded – I was hooked!</td>
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<td>RD Career</td>
<td>• RD Office is created at MUSC</td>
<td>• Move to MUSC</td>
<td>• “wins” that established ORD reputation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Doubling of NIH budget</td>
<td>• Gravitate towards institutional research training grants</td>
<td>• Become resident “expert”</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>• Appointment in College of Graduate Studies</td>
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