Strategies for Working with Investigators: Crucial, Critical, Courageous Conversations

Jamie Caldwell
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Partners in Research

DIFFERING PERSPECTIVES: RESEARCHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Kim Moreland

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What I Thought I Said

I know you believe that you understand what you think I said,

but I'm not sure that you realize that

what you heard is not what I meant.

Bumper Sticker

Two Perspectives

From Scholar-Practitioner Quarterly 56. A Journal for the Scholar-Practitioner Leader, Volume 3, Number 1

- *. . . While the partnership between faculty and administrators is essential to shared governance, it is also a fragile one, characterized by lack of harmony and large doses of mistrust.*

- *Faculty highly value autonomy and the direction of their work is largely self-determined. The role of administrators on the other hand, is to serve the collective good, requiring them to measure and weigh a multitude of interests. Influence is a tool widely used by administrators to build consensus . . . .*

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Poll Question

What do you think are primary characteristics of investigators? Select three from the list below.

Curious	Good instructors
Practical	Problem-solvers
Theoretical	Good collaborators
Determined	Respectful
Creative	Other (please list)

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Faculty Responsibilities

- Nourish a climate of intellectual growth
- Foster curiosity
- Advance knowledge
- Mentor
- Provide outstanding learning experiences
- Participate in departmental responsibilities
- Participate in governance

- Engage in research, creative activities, instruction, service
- Cultivate a safe and inclusive environment
- Model professional conduct
- Ensure compliance with responsible research requirements
- Provide timely submission of deliverables
- Mange the lab, classroom, etc.

Excerpted from University of Maryland, College Park, Faculty Expectations and Responsibilities

Poll Question

What do you think are primary characteristics of research administrators? Select three from the list below.

Curious	Good instructors
Practical	Problem-solvers
Theoretical	Good collaborators
Determined	Respectful
Creative	Other (please list)

Research Administrators –
From a Variety of Universities

|			
Support project investigators in the development of proposals and related financial narratives and budgets	*Supports the research departments of an educational institution, corporation, government agency, or non-profit organization.*	*Assist faculty members in the department with all administrative aspects of proposal development*	*Organizes, plans, establishes and monitors fiscal budget control of contracts and grants administration*
Solve problems	*Help faculty members navigate the complexities of submitting and managing research*	*Communicate critical information to principal investigators*	*Etc., etc., etc.*

Understand the Reason for the Meeting

Common reasons
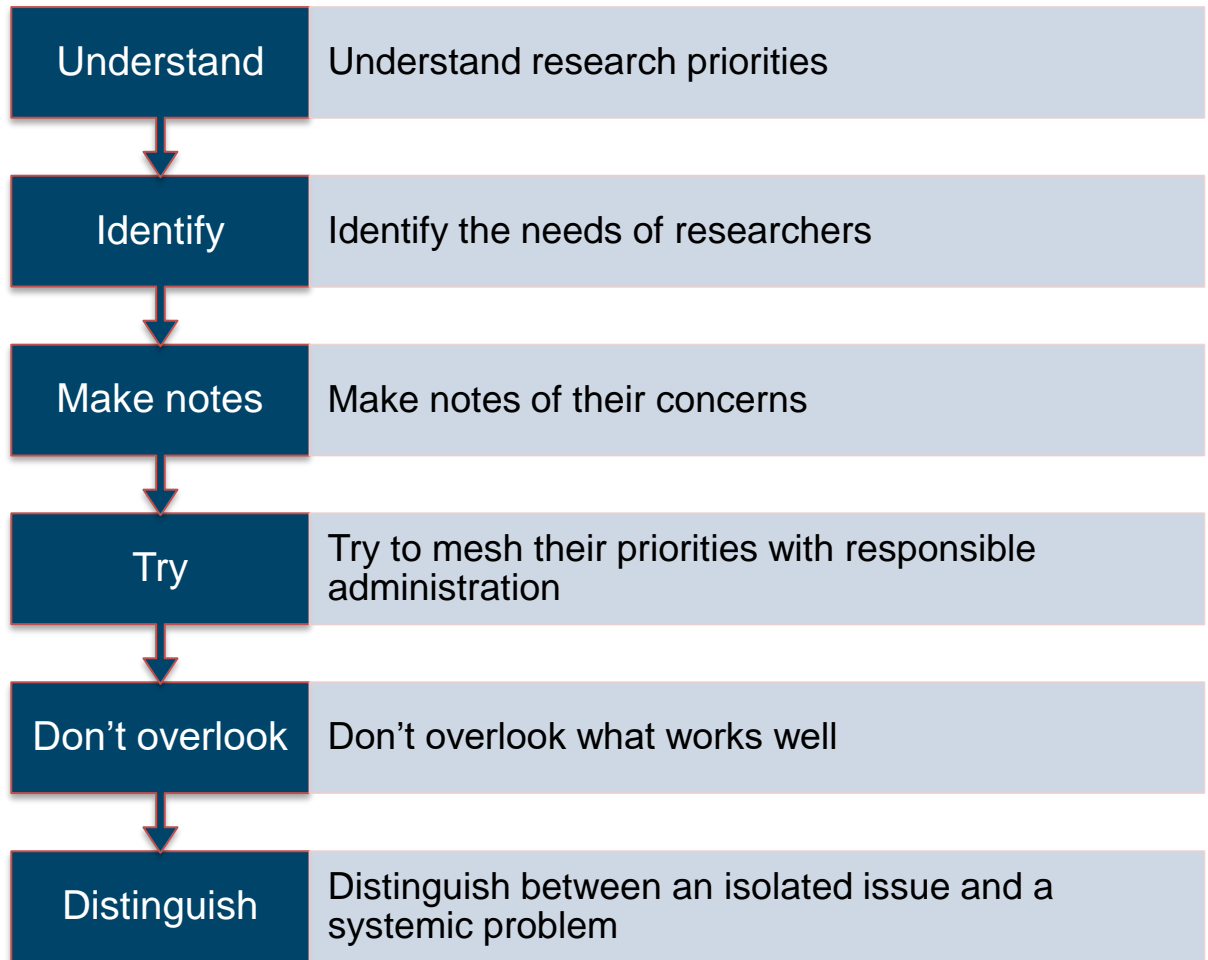
👤 Facilitate a request

📄 Solve a problem
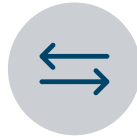
⇄ Convey information

⚠ Reduce misunderstandings

✓ Demonstrate capability

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How Can We Approach the Divide?

Understand	Understand research priorities
Identify	Identify the needs of researchers
Make notes	Make notes of their concerns
Try	Try to mesh their priorities with responsible administration
Don't overlook	Don't overlook what works well
Distinguish	Distinguish between an isolated issue and a systemic problem

Service in Research Administration

Customer Service

Responsiveness

Accuracy

Integrity

Professionalism

Respect

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Jamie Caldwell

Building Relationships and Communicating With Investigators

We work in a complex environment that involves collaboration with many different types of people and personalities at different organizational levels. The foundation of great working relationships is strong and effective communication skills, especially when working closely with different types of PI's.

Building relationships and trust between investigators and research administrators

Key Elements

Transparency

Who is on the team?

Ability to answer questions in real time

Be an ambassador

Tools and resources

Transparency

Success for the PI is accomplished with support of research administrators who work in various roles and areas of a university. Being honest and transparent is very important.

Who is on the team?

Departmental Research Administrators

College level Research Administrators

Central Office Research Administrators

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Poll Question

Which area best fits your role at your institution?

Department

College

Office of Sponsored Programs Administration

Vice Chancellors Office

Other

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Thinking Out Loud

Providing answers to Questions

There is no such thing as a dumb question.
Who can answer questions quickly and in real time?
Where should the question be directed?

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Jill Frazier Tincher

Poll Question

Consider a recent conflict with a faculty member. Don't think about the issue itself. Instead, focus on what impeded your ability to resolve the issue?

Were the parties ineffectively communicating
Was there a clash of egos,
Was there a lack of trust,
Was either party being indecisive?

Common Causes of Conflict

Poll Question

Thinking back to past conflicts, what mistakes have you made which caused or inflamed the conflict?

Avoiding conflict
Being defensive
Forgetting to listen
Wanting to win the argument

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Common Mistakes With Conflict

Being Defensive

Being "Right"

Avoiding Conflict

Forgetting to Listen

Playing the Blame Game

Trying to "Win" the Argument

Poll Question

What are some conflict resolution techniques that you have utilized with success?

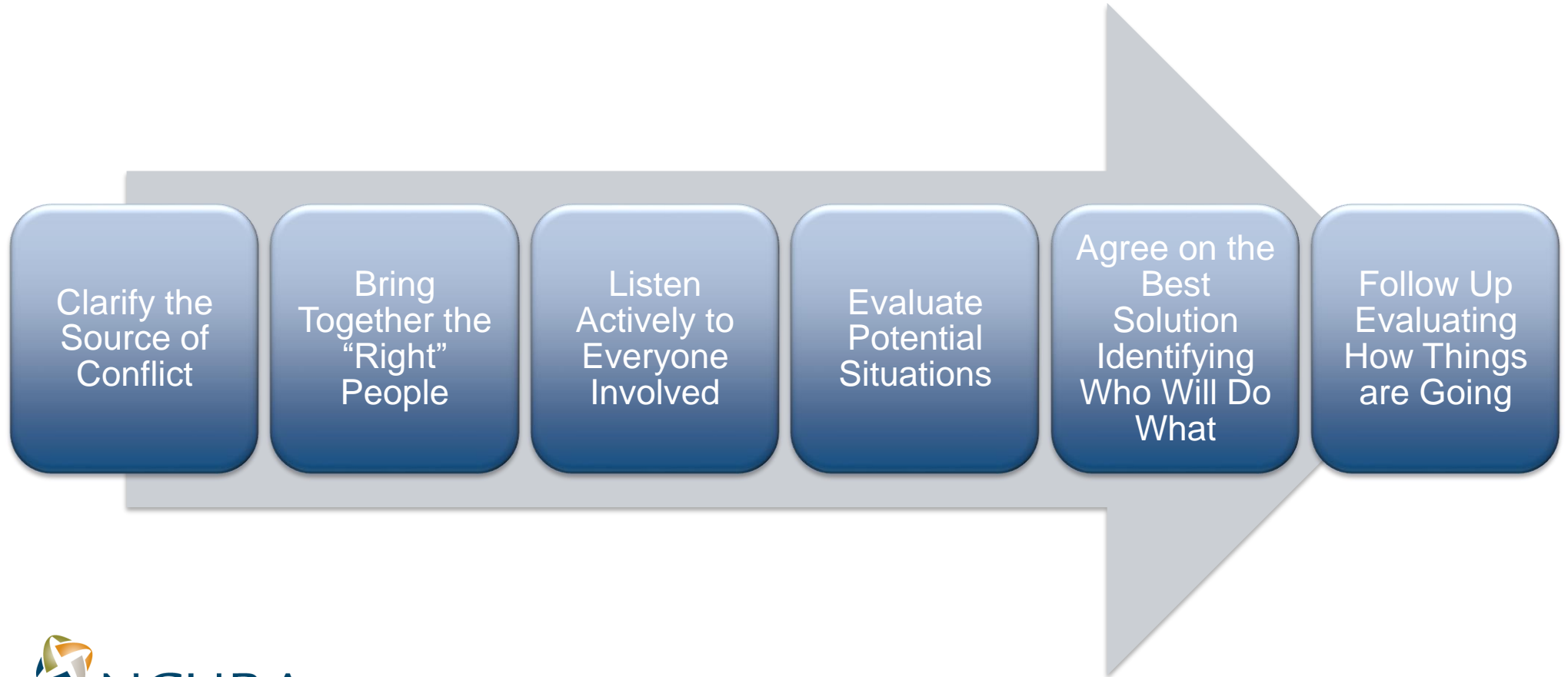Picking up the phone and talking through the issue
Listening effectively
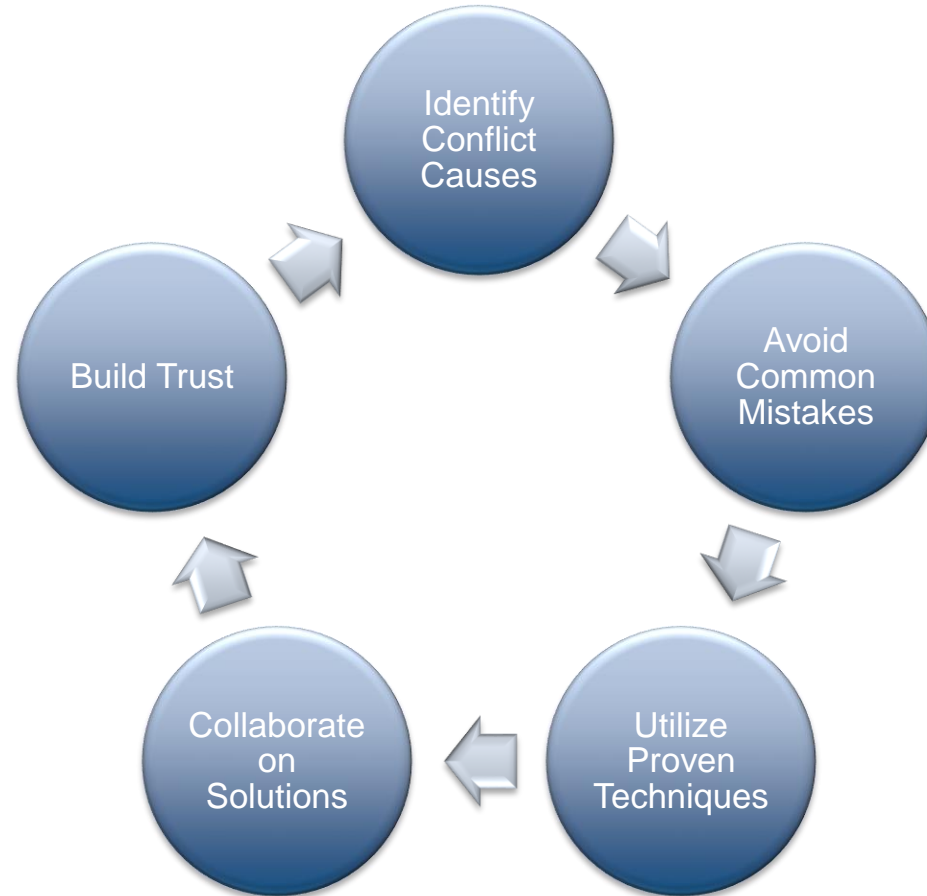Looking critically at the issue
Giving the benefit of a doubt
Proposing solutions

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Conflict Resolution Techniques

Clarify the Source of Conflict

Bring Together the "Right" People

Listen Actively to Everyone Involved

Evaluate Potential Situations

Agree on the Best Solution Identifying Who Will Do What

Follow Up Evaluating How Things are Going

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Conflict Solutions

BEST PRACTICES

Jamie, Kim, Jill

Prepare carefully for the meeting

Be professional

Avoid jargon

Organize your thoughts

Set goals for the conversation

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

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Think about the other perspective

Be clear about the source of any requirements

Be sure the right people are in the room

Be clear about changes needed

Articulate an action plan

MORE LESSONS LEARNED

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Listen carefully

Don't blame someone else

Accept your own responsibility

Don't be defensive or personalize comments

Maintain civility

WE'RE STILL LEARNING

STAY WITH US!

AFTER THE SHOW

Will begin 5 minutes after the
conclusion of the webinar