Top 10 Strategies for Success as a Clinician Educator

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What is a “Clinician Educator”? 

• Term adopted by Medical Colleges in the late ’70’s and early ’80’s.

• Colleges experienced difficulty retaining faculty; demand for faculty grew

• “Clinician Educator” tracks were developed
  – Non-tenure positions
  – Funding through practice income

Clinician Educators in Pharmacy

• **Non-tenure track or “Clinical Faculty” appointment**
  – approx. 95% of pharmacy schools/college have non-tenure positions

• **Provide clinical pharmacy services; experiential & didactic education**
  – ex. [Eckerd Patient CARE Center](#)

• **May be fully-funded by the College or shared (50/50) positions**

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How is a “Success” defined?

- Merriam Webster

**Success:**

“degree or measure of succeeding. b : favorable or desired outcome; also : the attainment of wealth, favor, or eminence”


“Success” as an Academician

- **Wealth**
  - A relative term
    - Very good salary/benefits
    - Opportunities to supplement income via consulting work
    - Non-monetary Wealth

- **Favor**
  - Promotion and/or Tenure

- **Eminence**
  - Awards
  - National recognition as an expert in the field
How I Define Success:

Today at work I felt:

Ideal Career = % DAYS “NO HURT” > % DAYS FOR ALL OTHERS COMBINED

http://www.mosbysdrugconsult.com/WOW/facesPermission.html
Strategy #10

- Mentorship is the KEY
  - many schools have a formal mentoring/
    “buddy” system
  - choose a mentor with similar background and
    interests
  - multiple mentors can be advantageous
  - discuss career goals/aspirations early and often
  - be receptive to mentorship
Strategy #9

- **Know where you are & where you’d like to go**
  - learn about your institution
    - policies/procedures/personnel
    - promotion and tenure criteria
  - get to know your colleagues
  - set your goals early and reexamine them
    - short-term and long-term
  - understand your roles and responsibilities
Roles and Responsibilities

- **Teaching**
  - Didactic
    - large lectures
    - small group/labs
  - Experiential
    - clerkship students at clinical practice site
    - residency precepting

- **Service**
  - College
    - committee work
    - student advising
  - Site
    - clinical services
  - Profession
    - pharmacy organizations
    - legislative advocacy

- **Scholarship**
  - original research
  - manuscript/journal reviewer
  - review articles/textbooks
Roles and Responsibilities

Tenure Track

- Teaching
- Service
- Scholarship

Non-Tenure Track

- Teaching
- Service
- Scholarship
Promotion/Tenure Criteria

• **Tenure Track**
  – Evidence of excellence in teaching, service and scholarship
    • emphasis on scholarship and original research publications

• **Non-Tenure Track**
  – Emphasis on teaching and service
    • evidence of excellence in scholarship can be considered as well
    • definition of “scholarship” may vary
Strategy #8

• Establish a quality practice site, but be realistic
  – key features of a successful site:
    • adequate learning environment
      – resources
    • learning experience integrate education and practice
    • practice activities/services seen as valuable by patients and site personnel alike
      – services allow for some degree of flexibility

Avoiding the Need for a Clone

• **Keep everyone informed of your roles and responsibilities**
  – shared faculty (50/50) positions are common
    • ensure clearly defined responsibilities up front
      – 50% + 50% ≠ 200%

  – educate all parties about activities/responsibilities
    • “Faculty forum” at ACP PP department meetings
    • regular meetings with practice site personnel
Strategy #7

• **Become the “local expert” in any area of interest**
  – Generalist = “jack of all trades, master of none”

  – **Find your passion and pursue it**
    • a topic you loved as a student/resident
    • an area relevant to your everyday practice
    • a topic you teach in the classroom

  – **Opportunities for scholarship in your “area of interest”**
    • reviewer for peer-reviewed journals, newsletters
    • publications (case reports, letters, review articles)
    • original research
Strategy #6

• Never stop learning
  – Numerous professional development opportunities
  – Seek out teaching workshops / conferences
    – AACP Annual and Interim Meetings (www.aacp.org)
    – specialty conferences: IDEA conference (www.idea.ksu.edu)
  – Staying current is a must
    – Journal Watch, Medscape.com, PNN Pharmacotherapy Line
  – Additional training/certifications
    – BCPS, CGP, CDM, CACP
    – APhA Certificate Programs
Strategy #5

• Take advantage of “extracurricular” opportunities
  – Review institution’s consulting policy
    • ACP = 20% of time for consulting activities

  – Opportunities for financial gain and professional development
    • consulting opportunities
    • industry-sponsored speaking engagements
    • The Six O’Clock News
Strategy #4

• Practice saying two letters... N O
  – “Lack of Time” causes stress and burn out
  – determining your “plate size” can take time
    • err on the low side initially
  – time management is essential
    • establish a system
  – evaluate the “risk/benefit” ratio of everything you do

Strategy #3

• **Serve your students & the profession**

  – **Student organization/activities**
    
    • Be a faculty advisor to your favorite student group
      
      – APhA, ASHP, ASCP, NCPA student chapters
      
      – Professional Fraternities
      
      – Clubs/Intramural activities
  
  – **Local, state and national pharmacy organizations**

    • serve on committees; run for office
    
    • advocate for the profession
    
    • opportunity for networking with colleagues
Strategy #2

**Collaborate**

- Albany College of Pharmacy Community Pharmacy Practice Group (CPPG)
  - three faculty members and one resident
  - collaborate on practice-based research projects, clinical practice development, teaching activities, professional/College service
  - also provides a “support group”

- Joint teaching activities
  - shared clerkship activities (ex. journal club, case presentations)
  - clerkship orientation session/preceptor training
Collaborative Scholarly Activity

- **Benefits of collaboration**
  - On the job training
    - work with tenured/tenure-track colleagues to develop research and writing skills
  - Many hands make light work
    - reduce workload/time burden
    - improve the quality of your work
      - increase the sample size of original research projects
  - Collegiality
Strategy #1

• **Reap the rewards of the position**
  – Unparalleled variety and flexibility
  – Direct impact on the lives of students, patients, and on the profession
  – Opportunities for advancement
Conclusions

• Clinician Educator positions offer a unique opportunity to experience the best of both worlds

• Success as a clinician educator can be defined many ways

• Strategies for success should be implemented from the start
Eckerd Patient CARE Center – Loudonville, NY