

**RESEARCH SEMINAR: “INTEGRATING RESEARCH INTO YOUR OTHER PROFESSIONAL WORK**

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**Is it appropriate to ask if there is opportunity to integrate research into the particular position one is applying for?**

**PANEL RESPONSE**

- Yes, absolutely! Job hunting is as much about you, as it is about them.
- Consider the language you use e.g. rather than ask “*is there protected time for research*” ask how one would go about collecting data that aligns with what they are already doing?
- Job postings will tell you if the position has ‘protected time’ for research but research can be part of any clinical job, even without protected time.
- Research can be challenging without leadership support and infrastructure. This infrastructure is critical when deciding how to collect data but also how to ask meaningful questions.

**Funding**

- Look for small seed funding; doesn’t always have to be large grants
- Look at research projects that can be done without funding; any funding then becomes a bonus
- Students are key in helping you; students are often equally invested into the project
- A critical question asked by funding agencies is: how is your research going to help society? To answer this you have to talk to people. Create connections with colleagues, students, politicians, etc. around the idea that we all work for the same team, with a common goal.
- Engage families and patients in a common vision and then convince leaders, inspire colleagues.
- Work at the intersection of education, clinical work, policy and research. This approach may assist you in achieving the infrastructure to do your work.
- For example, researchers are not always efficient, not all data that is collected is analyzed. In order to maximize your outcomes you identify the resources available to you (e.g., students, clinics, colleagues) that could contribute to the data collection, data analysis, to the writing of a paper, etc. and engage them. These resources are relating low cost as they are already part of the system.

**Adjust your expectations for yourself and what research looks like for you.**

- One of the best ways to overcome research challenges as a clinician is to adjust your expectations according to your role.
- Do not compare to people in different roles when looking at productivity e.g. full time researchers.
- Just because another colleague is doing 80% research, this does not mean you have to be 80% research
- People make choices. Adjust expectations and what productivity looks like for you and what it means to still be engaged or you will burn out.
- You will find that many people have different opinions or perspectives on your work but you have to maintain your vision.
- You may be in a different trajectory or have a family with young children; therefore your expectations may need to be different.
- Don't beat yourself up!
- Expectations should be based on what you want to do; what you are passionate about
- Set realistic attainable goals; what are you trying to achieve , e.g. publish one manuscript /year
- Change perspective; I can do research despite not having grants; any funding becomes a bonus
- Don't set up a costly lab; set up lab where you can continue to do work despite funding

**Learn to prioritize and to be efficient**

- When designing and conducting a study, it is important to learn how to capture data efficiently and how to process it as well.
- Keep in mind that if you are going to establish a lab, to be one that can operate in times of feast and times of famine. Again, students are a wonderful and very rewarding resource.
- You need to put on your "research" hat when analyzing a project to know if and when you need to give it up.
- When working with students, especially undergrads, a co-supervisory model works great because you divide the work in half and have the opportunity to learn from another colleague as well. Make it a fun, enjoyable and rewarding experience.
- Another challenge in clinical research is to get patients to answer questions for post-treatment assessment. You will discover that creativity plays a big role. I have tried different techniques: from online surveys to personal approaches to incorporating it on the last session as opposed to making them come back one more time.

**When do you apply research findings/ is there a process?**

- The ‘back-and-forth’ that occurs through consulting colleagues is a great way to filter through what is a good research question; each informs the other into practice.
- In clinical work you inform patients all the time; whether it is from the readings you have done as preparation for your research or research results themselves.
- Try to immediately integrate findings to determine translation (e.g., model). If it’s about treatment, however, you need to be more cautious.

**Publications**

- Do you want to publish to just publish or do you want to publish with impact?
- Think about being strategic, focus on the message you want to convey rather than the number of publications
- Publications and expectations e.g., how many times do you keep submitting the same paper, which are the journals to aim for, which journals are predatory? Keep trying, asks colleagues.
- Keep trying when you get shut down; every paper is likely to have a home!

**Other points**

- Engage family and patients, then you have a common vision; convince leadership; inspire colleagues – once you achieve this, you are part of a team
- Tap into the experts we have
- Reach out to other academic colleagues and mentors; don’t commit yourself to just McMaster
- There are faculty members who have had the opportunity to learn from a mentor, have gained experience and would be able to advise you, even if it is not the same field of expertise, you would be able to gain valuable feedback.
- One of the functions of the Research Office is to connect you with the right resources when conducting research whether it is related to grant review or stats, etc.