Personal Development Plans and CVs

Al Brown
Aberdeen Fungal Group
Objectives:
- encourage the use of Personal Development Plans
- help you optimize your CVs (plural)
- discuss the covering letter
A Personal Development Plan is simply a vehicle to help you:

- express your career aspirations in an explicit manner
- convert these plans into a series of specific career objectives
- identify what training and expertise you require to achieve these objectives
- plan how to obtain this training and expertise, and ultimately to
- achieve your career objectives
Personal Development Plan

- express your career aspirations in an explicit manner

What position do you want to hold in 5-10 years?
- medical mycologist
- independent group leader in academia
- research in a biotech company or big pharma
- other aspirations
Personal Development Plan

- convert these plans into a series of specific career objectives

What steps will you need to take to achieve this longer term ambition?
- a(nother) postdoc
- land a fellowship
- land a faculty/clinical position
What do you need to achieve to achieve these steps in your 5-10 year objectives?

- publish strong papers

- identify what training and expertise you require to achieve these objectives

- research training and experience of:
  - immunology
  - genomics
  - Bioinformatics, or
  - systems biology

- training and experience of teaching and supervision
- training and experience of clinical mycology
- training in other transferable skills
Personal Development Plan

- Training courses in:
  - immunology [Aberdeen]
  - genomics [Exeter, Aberdeen, etc.]
  - bioinformatics [Wellcome Trust, EMBL-EBI]
  - systems biology [Gothenberg, Imperial, Aberdeen]

- Training courses in teaching and supervision
  - Host institution

- Training and experience of clinical mycology
  - UCL Diploma/MSc

- Training courses in transferable skills
  - Host institution, WTSA, MC-ITN courses

- plan how to obtain this training and expertise
Personal Development Plan

- Execute your plan to achieve your career objectives
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Name of WTSA Researcher:
Department:
Institution:
Name of Supervisor(s):
Date:
Year of Contract:
Length of Contract:

PART A: SHORT OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH PROJECT EMPHASIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS ACHIEVED/EVENTED

PART B: LONG TERM CAREER OBJECTIVE(s) (AFTER 5-10 YEARS):

PART C: ANTICIPATED STEPS IN CAREER PATH (OVER 5-10 YEARS):

Guidance Notes

Introduction
A Personal Development Plan (PDP) is an effective method for setting your own personal targets and finding the best way to achieve them. The central objective of your work is your research project, and the integration of this research into the WTSA network objectives. Nevertheless, some meetings with your supervisor will lead to the identification of generic complementary skills that will contribute to your personal development goals. For example, research students often contribute to academic forums such as symposiums, conferences and seminars. Generic training on presentation skills can support and develop your abilities to give an effective presentation. However, this type of training is often transferable to other aspects of your life and is highly valued by employers. Training in such transferable skills is provided by host institutions in the WTSA Consortium and by the Consortium itself, and is representative of achievable skills that you can include in your Personal Development Plan.

This form provides the basis for your PDP. Through consultation and meetings with your supervisor, it is designed to be an effective method for setting your own personal targets and finding the best way to achieve them. A PDP is a dynamic plan, designed to be periodically reviewed and updated throughout your fellowship. Please record your progress in these areas and save all updates of your PDP.

Completing the PDP
The PDP should be completed in your first year, and then reviewed and updated in each subsequent year of your membership of the WTSA. In the first year your objectives should reflect the skills and expertise that you aim to acquire. In subsequent years those objectives should be revised in light of your training, and used to monitor the progress of your career. There are three main parts to each PDP.

Part A. To start your PDP, write a brief overview of your research project, and what you expect to achieve / have achieved from it. You could summarise your scientific objectives, the wider significance of your research to the WTSA network objectives, and the types of publications that your data generate.

Part B. Where do you hope to be in your career in the next 5-10 years? Have your goals changed over time?

Part C. What key steps will be required to achieve your current career objective(s)? For example, will you need to do a postdoc (in what area)?, or will you need to land a fellowship (to study what)? You can consider these steps as your major goals over the next 5-10 years.

Part D. List key expertise and training you will require to achieve these goals?

Part E. How do these long term goals translate into the short term? Your short term objectives are probably bound within a timeframe, and can be represented as a series of specific skills and achievements that you plan to achieve in the next 1-2 years. For example:
Personal Development Plans and CVs

Objectives:

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- discuss the covering letter
CVs

In preparing your CV:
- What is your objective?
- What post are you applying for?
- What about the people reading your CV?
- What are they looking for?
CVs

"The first 10 seconds of someone picking up your resume is critical"

**Tips for success:**

- Think about what your CV says, how easy it is to read and the order you place the content.
- Be dynamic in how you present your work history and skills – **tune the content of your CV to the post you are applying for.**
- Use positive language about yourself.
- Make sure there's a well-designed front page.
- Put a photograph of yourself on the first page of your resume.
- Put your name in colour
- Remember, you get only one chance to make a good impression.
CVs – content

CAMERON J. SMITH

Address: Molecular Microbiology and Infection Imperial College London
Flowers Building London, SW7 2AZ, UK
Telephone: 001-647-405-4437
E: c.j.smith@imperial.ac.uk

Nationality: British

Do you include a personal statement? Yes. They definitely can make an impact – positive or negative. A personal statement is particularly important when pursuing positions outside the academic sphere, but less so for academic positions. Support the content with evidence. Keep short and punchy.

Current Post
2012 – 2015 Postdoctoral Fellow, Molecular Microbiology and Infection Imperial College London
Regulatory networks that control virulence in the fungal pathogen, Candida glabrata

Education
2008 – 2011 PhD on influence of cell surface glycosylation on host-Candida interactions Supervised: Professor Hamish McTeague, University of Aberdeen, UK
I won a three-year scholarship from the Sporran Development Trust which supported my PhD studies.
2005 – 2008 BSc, (with First Class Honours) in Molecular Biology University of Manchester, UK
1996 – 2005 St Trinians College, Surrey, UK (5 A-Levels)

Career Progression
October 2008 – December 2011 PhD, University of Aberdeen
"Influence of cell surface glycosylation on host-Candida interactions". Examined the impact of specific Candida albicans cell wall mannosyltransferases and mannosylated proteins in pathogenesis of the fungus. Identified effects on the C. albicans mutations on cytokine signalling during infection in animal models.

January 2008 – March 2008 Honours Project, University of Manchester
Screened approximately 150 C. albicans protein kinase mutants to determine which protein kinases are involved in activating the cell integrity pathway in response to antifungal drugs. Identified two novel signalling pathways that contribute to antifungal drug tolerance in C. albicans.

June 2007 – August 2007 Work experience University of Manchester, UK
I was awarded a grant to work on a 10 week summer project to investigate the transcription factor ATF1 and its role in cell cycle dependent gene activation in an azole resistant strain.

Awards and Prizes
2008 Undergraduate prize for excellence in Molecular Biology
2010 Best Poster – British Society for Medical Mycology, Cardiff, UK
2011 Young Investigators Award – FEBS course on Human Fungal Pathogens

Research Skills and Expertise
Fungal molecular biology:
- Transformation, mutant construction, phenotypic analysis
- Mammalian cell culture, aseptic techniques, microscopy
- DNA isolation, cloning, PCR, Southern blotting, gene knockouts
- RNA, qRT-PCR, RNA extractions
- Protein extractions, Western blotting, co-IPs, ELISAs, FRET assays

Protein Biochemistry/Immunology:
- Protein extractions, Western blotting, co-IPs, ELISAs, FRET assays
- Proteomics (LC-MS/MS, 2D gels), dynamic mathematical modelling
- BLAST, protein structure prediction, growth of trees

Other Experience
IT skills
- Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel

Teaching
- Lectures to Molecular Biology undergraduate students
- Tutorials for Molecular Biology undergraduate students

Supervisory experience
Project supervisor for undergraduate and MSc students at Aberdeen University and Imperial College in molecular biology, genetics, microbiology and proteomics

Publications


Presentations and Conferences
July 2009 – "The conservation of a glycosylation machinery in a fungal pathogen": XXIVth International Conference on Yeast Genetics and Molecular Biology, Manchester UK

Positions of Responsibility
August 2010 – present
- Reviewer - invited reviewer
- PhD Student Representative
- University of Aberdeen
- Demonstrator - Demonstrator Programmes
- Lab Chair - Organised and chaired

Interests
- Travelling
- Snowboarding
- The arts

Referees
Prof. Naomi X. Campbell
Molecular Microbiology & Infection Imperial College London
Flowers Building London, SW7 2AZ, UK
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E: n.x.campbell@imperial.ac.uk

Prof. Hamish McTeague
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CAMERON J. SMITH

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Length of CV???

Name – prominent
Don’t include “Curriculum Vitae”

No date of birth, marital status, religion

Include a Personal Statement???
CVs – content

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Awards and Prizes

2008 – 2011 Three year PhD Scholarship from the Sporrnan Development Trust

Funding

2009 – 2011 Phd Scholarship from the Sporrnan Development Trust

August 2011 MBL Scholarship, £1400

March 2011 FEBBS Young Travel Fund Award, £500

October 2010 Biomedical Society General Travel Fund, £450

October 2010 British Mycological Society Grant, £250

March 2010 FEMS Young Scientist Meeting Grant, £500

December 2009 Institute of Medical Sciences Travel Grant, £500
CVs – content

Place prizes and funding on front page
Put most important awards first
Include travel grants as well as scholarships, etc.
Repetition of awards under funding is fine!
**CVs – content**

**Research Skills and Expertise**

- **Fungal molecular biology:** Transformation, mutant construction, Mammalian cell culture, aseptic techniques, DNA isolation, cloning, Southern Blotting, RNAi, q-RT-PCR, RNA extractions.
- **Cell Culture:** DNA Manipulation, RNA Assays, Protein Biochemistry/Immunology: Protein extractions, Western blotting.
- **Through Collaborations:** Proteomics (LC-MS/MS, 2D gels), Bioinformatics: BLAST, protein structure predictions.

**Other Experience**

- **IT skills:** Microsoft Word, Powerpoint, Excel, Lectures to Molecular Biology undergraduates.
- **Teaching:** Tutorials for Molecular Biology undergraduates, Demonstrator of undergraduate modules, Project supervisor for undergraduate students.
- **University and Imperial College in molecular microbiology and proteomics.**

**Publications**


**Presentations and Conferences**

- **Talks:** September 2011 – Invited speaker on “Impact of glycosylation upon antifungal drug resistance in Candida albicans”, Society for General Microbiology Conference, York, UK.
- March 2011 – Invited talk on “Modelling the regulation of antifungal drug resistance by Xy2 and Xy22 in Candida albicans”. British Society for Medical Mycology Meeting, Cardiff, UK.

- **Posters:**
  - March 2010 – “Modelling the regulation of antifungal drug resistance by Xy21 and Xy22 in Candida albicans”. 10th American Society for Microbiology International Conference on Candidiasis Miami, Florida, USA.
  - July 2009 – “The conservation of a glycosylation mechanism in a fungal pathogen”. XXIVth International Conference on Yeast Genetics and Molecular Biology, Manchester, UK.

A punchy list of research skills

Also include transferable skills

Organisational skills

Teamwork skills

Leadership skills

Financial management skills

Etc.

Provide brief evidence of these skills
CVs – content

List publications, highlighting your name
Don’t include too many papers that are “in preparation”

List presentations, but not too many posters!
Highlight those where you won a prize
Positions of Responsibility provide evidence of leadership qualities

Interests (hopefully) provide evidence of a well-rounded, well-balanced personality, but ...... avoid inferences that you:
Have so many interests that you are never at work
You are a party animal (“I enjoy socialising with friends”)
You are a steroid junkie (“gym and weights”)
Choose your Referees carefully:
1. Your current boss
2. A previous boss or supervisor (preferably from a different institution)
3. A third Referee (ideally famous and international)
CVs – *dynamic* content is vital

- *Tune the content of your CV to the post you are applying for*
- Replicate the skills and attitudes listed in the job advertisement in your resume.
CVs – presentation is critical

“A CV isn't just a list of your work history. It's a marketing exercise”

“recruiters and employers take from 15 to 45 seconds to decide whether a resume goes into the interview pile or not”

- Eliminate mistakes
- Clear, neat, tidy format
- First impressions are vital
CVs – *presentation* is critical

An Exercise:

*A few seconds per CV – what are your first impressions??*
CVs – include a photograph?

- **UK**: generally not included
- **USA**: regarded as discriminatory
- **Europe**: include photos
- **Israel**: photos optional
- **Australia**: photos “worthwhile”
CVs – include a photograph?

- “With a photo CV, a candidate becomes a person, not just words on paper”
- “People remember a photo.“
CVs – include a photograph?

- “you could be hurting your chances (and) contributing to a bigger problem: allowing bias to creep into companies' hiring processes”
- HR departments are staffed predominantly by women, many of whom are young and single.
- They display bias:
  - against good-looking females
  - towards attractive-looking men
- [link](http://articles.businessinsider.com/2012-03-22/news/31223815_1_photos-cvs-attractive-women)

- *Tune the content of your CV to the post you are applying for*
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Cover Letter

- Tailor the letter to the employer and the job.
- Link your training, attributes, interests to the job.

- Personalise: “Dear Dr Johnson …”
- 1st paragraph: “Please consider my application for …”
- 2nd paragraph: How your skills match the post
- 3rd paragraph: How this post fits with your career plans
- Closing paragraph: “I look forward to hearing from you …”

- Keep the letter to a single page
- Eliminate mistakes
- Clear, neat, tidy format
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