

B O O K R E V I E W

Development and Management of Research Groups

A Guide for University Researchers

by Robert V. Smith

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91 pp 15 x 23 cm.

The message of this book, which is intended as a guide for the academic researcher in his/her first role as co-ordinator of a small research group is quite clear: increased competition among academic researchers for funding sources as well as diminished real dollar support necessitate the development of sound planning strategies and management techniques in research activities.

The book is divided into two sections. The first deals with developing the research group. Topics in this section are: obtaining grant support; recruiting personnel; obtaining equipment; and devising collaborative research agreements. The novice research manager may be particularly interested in suggested procedures for applying for funding from foundations or industrial firms. Recruiting techniques include specific questions addressed to a potential candidate's strengths and weaknesses - very useful to the researcher unaccustomed to such duties.

The second section describes the management of the research group. It includes, among other topics, reporting mechanisms; promoting morale of researchers, and meeting the needs of different types of academic researchers (undergraduate, graduate, post-doctoral). Suggestions in the first of these sections are aimed to allow the novice research manager to keep abreast of work when he/she is no longer directly involved in daily laboratory activities. Ideas in the subsequent two chapters aim toward maintaining a harmonious and produc-

tive laboratory environment. The final chapters of this section are devoted to subjects such as travel policies, publication activities, maintenance of literature files, and time management. The guidelines and suggestions incorporated in these chapters are common knowledge and it is doubtful that even the least experienced research manager will gain many fresh insights.

Although veteran researchers may not profit greatly from this work, it is not this audience for whom the book is primarily intended. It would certainly be useful to novice research managers, to post doctoral personnel, and to graduate students considering an academic career. The wide range of subject material will provide these individuals with an extensive checklist of considerations in the development and management of their research activities. In addition, the bibliography contains many suitable references for those interested in pursuing any of these subjects in greater depth.

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