

**“YOU CAN’T JUST FOCUS ON THE SCIENCE:  
A PRIMER OF STRATEGIES TO BECOME SUCCESSFUL IN YOUR NEW POSITION”**

SOT 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting; Charlotte, N.C.  
Career Resource and Development (CRAD) Symposium  
Wednesday, March 28<sup>th</sup> 2007 4:30pm – 5:50pm

**Guest Speakers**

1) Tom Kawabata, Pfizer Inc. Groton, CT

**“Planning for Success and Career Satisfaction”**

<http://www.toxicology.org/ai/spd/seminar/PlanningForSatisfaction.pdf>

Scheduled Speaker: Jean Kramarik, Burroughs Wellcome Fund, NTP, N.C.  
Jean was unable to attend, so Leigh Ann Burns Naas filled in.

2) Leigh Ann Burns Naas, Pfizer Inc. La Jolla, CA

**“The Importance of People and Leadership Skills in Career Success:  
It’s All About the ‘Soft Stuff’”**

[http://www.toxicology.org/ai/spd/seminar/People\\_Leadership.pdf](http://www.toxicology.org/ai/spd/seminar/People_Leadership.pdf)

**Highlights**

***Planning for Success and Career Satisfaction:***

- \* Start the active process of Career Planning.
- \* Find the right path for your own strengths and weaknesses.
- \* Identify people with your dream job and get a mentor. This year CRAD in collaboration with the PDA established a postdoctoral mentoring pilot program. We would like to encourage you to take advantage of programs like these in order to identify and interact with potential mentors.
- \* Develop skills, demonstrate productivity, and network to open opportunities to explore the career path you have planned.
- \* Re-evaluate your career plans at different life stages.

***The Importance of People and Leadership Skills in Career Success:***

- \* Leigh Ann Burns Naas explored the role of “Soft Skills” in excelling in your scientific career. These skills include: Interpersonal skills, building effective teams, communication, problem solving, planning and organization, influencing and negotiating, leadership and motivation skills, initiative, and conflict management.
- \* Strategies for developing your interpersonal and leadership skills: Find a mentor, Educate yourself (courses and books on leadership), Know yourself, Actively practice these skills (day-to-day activities and family situations).

**Recommended Resources**

The books listed below were donated to attendees by the Burroughs Wellcome Fund. These books focus on preparing postdocs and new faculty to become successful scientific managers.

- 1- “Training Scientists to Make the Right Moves: A Practical Guide to Developing Programs in Scientific Management.” HHMI and Burroughs Wellcome Fund. 2006

- 2- "Making the Right Moves: A Practical Guide to Scientific Management for Postdocs and New Faculty." HHMI and Burroughs Wellcome Fund, 2006. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.

*Other resources highlighted by the speakers*

**Tom Kawabata**

- 1- "The Lemming Conspiracy: How to Redirect your Life from Stress to Balance." Bob McDonald.
- 2- Web Resources:  
[http://images.sciencecareers.org/images/careers\\_basics\\_book](http://images.sciencecareers.org/images/careers_basics_book)  
<http://www.hhmi.org/resources/labmanagement>

**Leigh Ann Burns Naas**

- 1- "The 7 Habits of highly Effective People." Covey Leadership Series, Stephen R. Covey
- 2- "Type Talk at Work: How the 16 Personality Types Determine Your Success on the Job." O. Kroeger, with J.M. Thuesen and H. Rutledge.
- 3- "Communication Styles: Being Effective with Others." Wilson Learning Corporation.
- 4- "Situational Leadership II." The Ken Blanchard Companies. Ken Blanchard and Paul Hersey

**Question/Answer Session**

There was only time to address a couple of questions in this session.

**Question #1:** What do you do if you are currently in a postdoctoral position that you believe you are not fit for. However, your boss has certain expectations and would like for you to remain in the position for a longer period of time. How do you address this without burning bridges?

**Answer #1:** Leaving a postdoc position can be uncomfortable, especially when there are high expectations from your PI. However, you need to take the initiative to communicate respectfully with your PI and realize ultimately that you need to do what is right for your life and career goals.

**Question #2:** How do you avoid getting criticized for too much or too little passion in the workplace? (ex. Student is up for an annual or 6 month review and was criticized for displaying too much passion. The student changed his tactics and at the following review, was criticized for displaying too little passion. How do you avoid this?)

**Answer #2:** Actively pursue feedback from your superiors and frequently adjust your actions to this feedback. This demonstrates an active desire on your part to improve on your actions. Take the feedback and modify your actions frequently to avoid this kind of negative criticism at your 6-month or annual review.