

Operations Panel: *Strategies for Planning Fantastic IAB Meetings*

Rodney Guico

UF Site Director

Center for Particulate and Surfactant Systems

I/UCRC Annual Meeting
January 10, 2013



Introducing:

- Rodney Guico – UF Site Director
- Assisted heavily by Ms. Hollie Starr (CPaSS Administrative Assistant at the University of Florida) and staff at Columbia University
- Adjunct Faculty Member at UF in Gainesville, FL
- Affiliated with Center: 4 years
- In Current Position: ~2 Years
- Operations: Used to be part time (other leveraged activities – Center of Excellence, UF Office of Research, Teaching MSE Courses), now ~80% time



About Our I/UCRC:



- Center for Particulate and Surfactant Systems (CPaSS)
- Established in 2008 with 2 sites; recently added 1 site
- Lead Site: University of Florida, *Brij M. Moudgil (Dir.)*
- Partner Site: Columbia University, *P. Somasundaran (Co-Dir.)*
- International Partner Site (2012): Dharmsinh Desai University in Nadiad, Gujarat, India, *A. Shukla & D. O. Shah (Site Dir.)*
- CPaSS strives to deliver a comprehensive knowledge of the interplay between particles and surfactant systems that will lead to processes and products with minimal environmental impact



Our Top Strategies for Planning IAB Meetings:

- **“I love the smell of nametags and registration folders in the morning.”** *–adapted from Apocalypse Now*
- **“May the NSF be with you.”** *–adapted from Star Wars*
- **“The name’s Coordinator. Center Coordinator.”** *– adapted from Dr. No, Goldfinger, et al.*
- **“Toto, I've a feeling we're not in an ordinary IAB Meeting anymore.”** *–adapted from The Wizard of Oz*
- **“I'm gonna make my students and postdocs an offer they can't refuse.”** *–adapted from The Godfather*
- **“Show me the value!”** *–adapted from Jerry Maguire*



Strategy 1: “I love the smell of nametags and registration folders in the morning.”

- This is apparent but bears reiterating: when organizing a meeting of this magnitude, the devil is in the details of the preparations
- You always want to start off on a good note – the opening of registration will help set the tone
- Work with your staff to cover all bases and have all contingency plans thought out and prioritized
- Applies to little things, such as replacing a burnt out projector bulb, and to bigger ones, like running out of coffee or food



Strategy 2: “May the NSF be with you.”

- When possible, utilize the experience and expertise of your NSF Evaluators and/or Program Representative prior to as well as during the meeting
- Proximity of the Evaluator (*Vida Scarpello for CPaSS*) to the Center helps (multiple face-to-face discussions during planning), but having them articulate NSF expectations at the IAB Meeting and how they link with the Center and IAB helps even more
- Point out your Evaluators to the IAB Members at the meetings and continuously engage both sides in discussions



Strategy 3: “The name’s Coordinator. Center Coordinator.”

- Everyone attending the meeting should know who you are, even if they haven’t met you yet
- You are the person that can solve any issue or knows what steps to take to solve any issue
- Will depend on how organized your planning is and how extensive your backup plans are
- *Example:* IAB Member received a campus parking violation during the meeting – I put him in touch with the Parking Office, had him relay clear details of the meeting, and all was resolved within a few hours



Strategy 4: “Toto, I've a feeling we're not in an ordinary IAB Meeting anymore.”

- Let’s face it – listening to presentations and filling out LIFE forms for a day isn’t exactly bungee jumping
- Utilize unique attributes of your University, locale and research programs to help create special activities that get the IAB Members energized, engaged and active
- Tours of new or specialized facilities as well as of local landmarks; active discussion sessions
- *Examples:* visit to the UF Innovation Hub; IAB-led discussion followed by interactive voting



Strategy 5: “I’m gonna make my students and postdocs an offer they can't refuse.”

- Highlight and showcase the work of your students and postdocs in other forms beyond presentations
- Using them in poster sessions is a given, but they are also mini-ambassadors of the Center – promote them as ‘Center Geniuses’ (minus the blue t-shirts)
- A tangible benefit for any IAB Member is an early opportunity to recruit students with specific training, skills, and experience in your Center’s research areas
- *Example:* CPaSS students and postdocs are always encouraged to sit with at least one different IAB Member during each meal or break at the meeting



Strategy 6: “Show me the value!”

- The umbrella theme of each meeting is to highlight added value and tangible benefits to the IAB Members
- Center researchers should have the mindset of continuously presenting and highlighting connections between research projects and existing company processes, connections to improvements for existing products or new product ideas, and connections with consortia or networks in relevant industry segments
- Don't overlook indirect benefits: low-cost/on-site seminars or courses for company participants



To Summarize...

- Be organized, prepared, and ready to go on Day One
- Looping in your Evaluator and the NSF I/UCRC Program will enable you to get right in the middle of the Center-IAB relationship
- As the meeting coordinator, be front and center as the person with all the answers
- Keep the IAB representatives active and engaged throughout the meeting program
- Students and postdocs are the pulse of the Center – show the IAB that the Center is alive and kicking
- Give the IAB something memorable to take home



If Possible, Try Not To...

- Call an IAB representative by the wrong name (*almost guilty*)
- Affiliate an IAB representative with the wrong company (*sort of guilty*)
- Inadvertently push a meat dish on a vegetarian (*didn't quite get to that point*)
- Draw a blank when asked by your IAB if Tim Tebow ever worked at your Center (*no comment*)

