Scenario:

You recently joined a Problem Solving group of biomedical postdocs. This Problem Solving group was designed specifically as a platform for researchers of a variety of fields to periodically meet to offer each other advice on ‘problems’ they may be encountering with their current research. This is an opportunity to share your current research and some obstacles you may be having; your group members will then offer some possible solutions. These ‘problems’ should be specific to the actual focus of your research; it could also relate to struggles with IRB proposals, recruitment of study participants, writing proposals for grants and/or conferences, renewing your visa, etc.

You enjoy being a part of this group because you get feedback from a variety of other researchers, not just those in your lab or particular area of work. This professional development group has really helped you to ‘think outside the box’ and look at your ‘problem’ from many different angles.

Assignment:

You are looking forward to this monthly meeting of your Problem Solving group because:

(1) You have been experiencing an obstacle and are looking for advice
(2) There are new members to your group this month, and you’re looking forward to extending your professional network.

You will participate in a 20-30 minutes videoconference. During this time, you will need to:

(1) Introduce yourself to the group – remember, there are new group members, so they know nothing about you or your current research. The facilitator should ‘bring them up to speed.’
(2) Describe a ‘problem’ or ‘challenge’ you’ve been having and request advice from your colleagues. You must use some type of visual to represent your ‘problem.’ This can be a simple graphic, a PPT, a chart, a graph, etc. The purpose of this is to remind us of the importance of visual support whenever possible and to gain practice with the necessary technology.
(3) Offer advice/feedback to other colleagues in a nonjudgmental manner

Logistics:

Your Problem Solving group is comprised of individuals from all across the US. Therefore, you will be meeting with them via videoconference (Skype).

Your group will have 4-5 members, and each person must ‘get the floor.’ It’s important, therefore, that you are conscious of time.

One member will be pre-selected to be the meeting facilitator. This person will be responsible for writing and introducing an agenda and managing the time throughout the meeting. You can take no longer than 30 minutes. The facilitator should consider asking someone to take notes.

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