

Retaining Postdoc Women with Professional and Career Development

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Who Needs a Plan?

Olympic athletes

Investors

Movie directors

Military strategists

Postdocs

What is an IDP?

(www.faseb.org)

- Individual:** Unique training and career goals of each fellow
- Development:** Improvement / maturation needed to achieve the individual's goals
- Plan:** Specific steps rather than a random walk

Career Planning Works

- Thinking about goals motivates people to pursue them.
- Developing specific rather than general goals helps people to achieve them.
- Developing and implementing strategies to pursue career goals leads to:
 - ★ Higher salaries
 - ★ Promotions
 - ★ More responsibility
 - ★ Greater satisfaction

SIGMA XI SURVEY

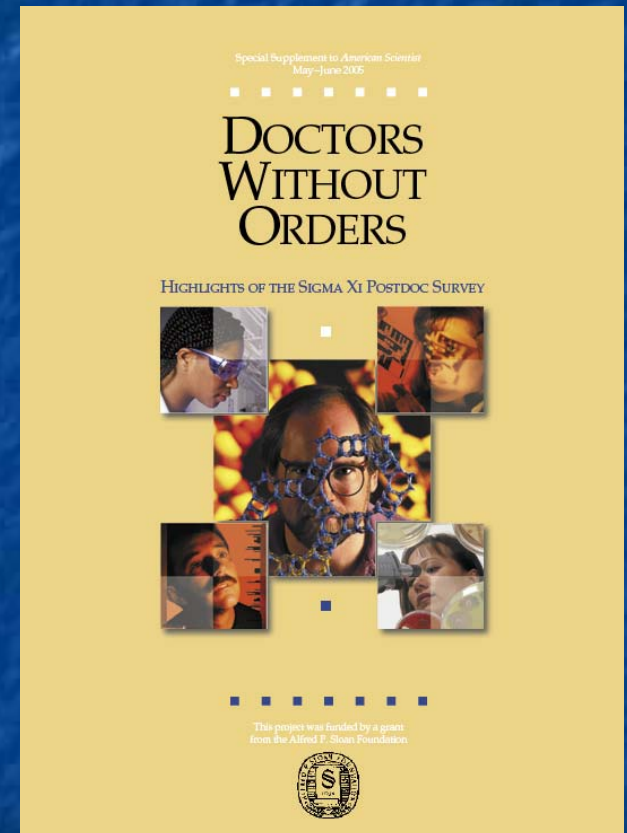
22,000 postdocs contacted
7600 postdocs surveyed

Postdocs with a structured
plan:

More satisfied

More productive

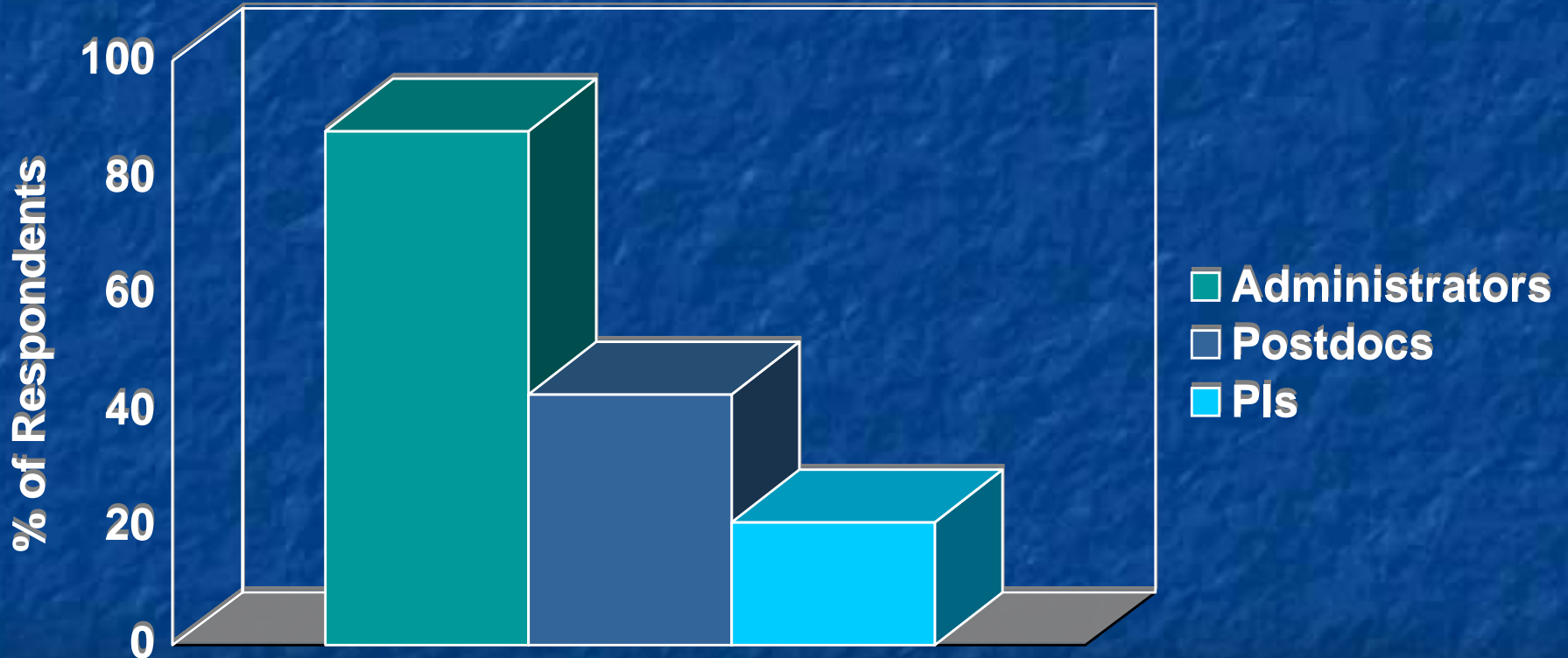
Fewer conflicts with PI



Why does a plan make a difference?

- Personal responsibility
- Contract
- Expectation setting
- Focus effort

Knowledge of IDPs



4 Steps of an IDP

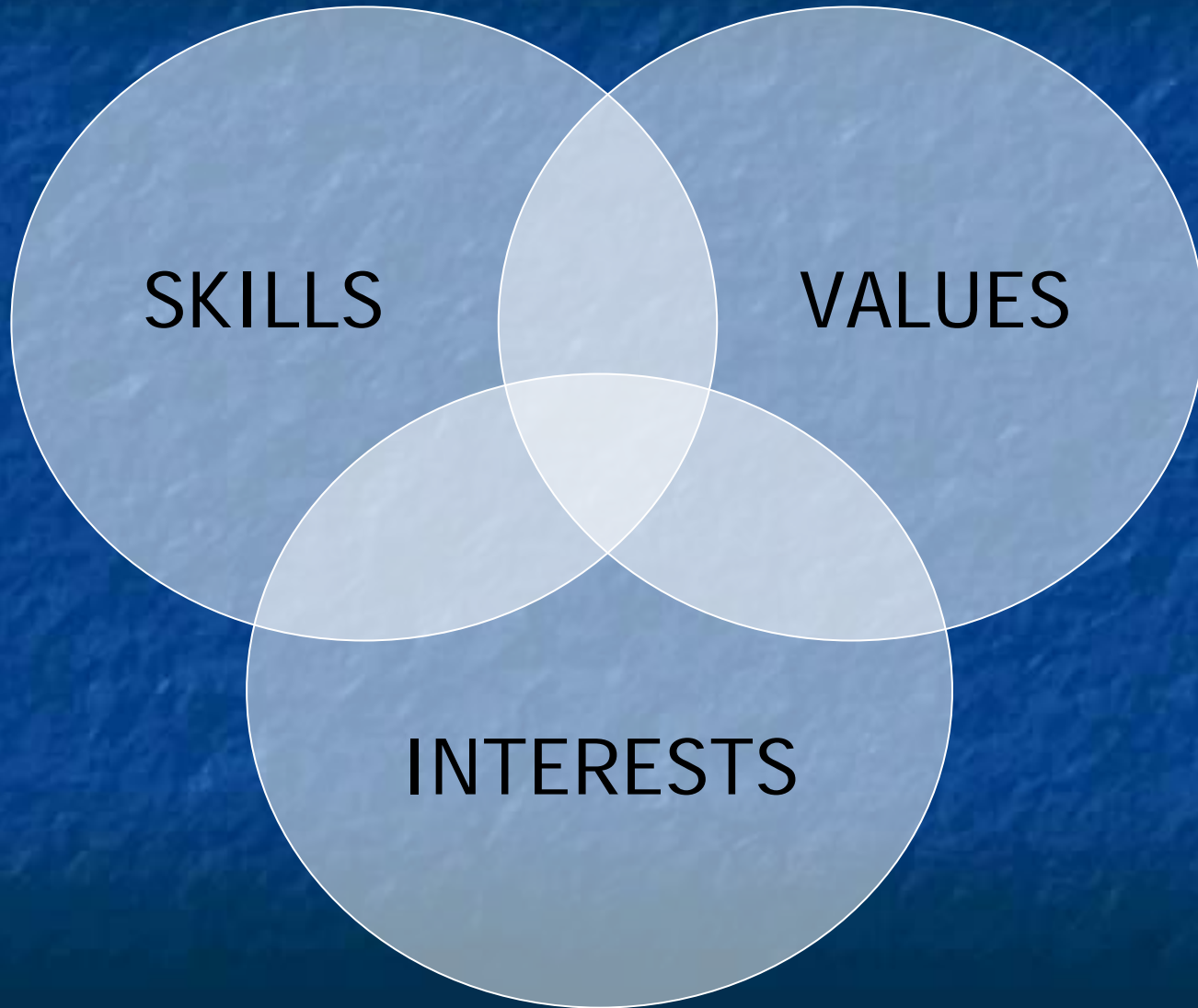
1. Self-assessment
2. Career exploration
3. Write your IDP
4. Implement and evaluate

Core Competencies

(www.nationalpostdoc.org)

- Scientific Knowledge
- Research Skills
- Communication Skills
- Professionalism
- Leadership and Management
- Responsible Conduct of Research

Career Satisfaction



4 Steps of an IDP

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Career Exploration



Career Resources

- Web-based materials
 - Sciencecareers.org
- Books
 - www.mcw.edu/virtualcareercenter
- Seminars/Courses
 - at institution, professional meetings
- Career fairs
- Mentor(s)
- Networking
- Informational interviews

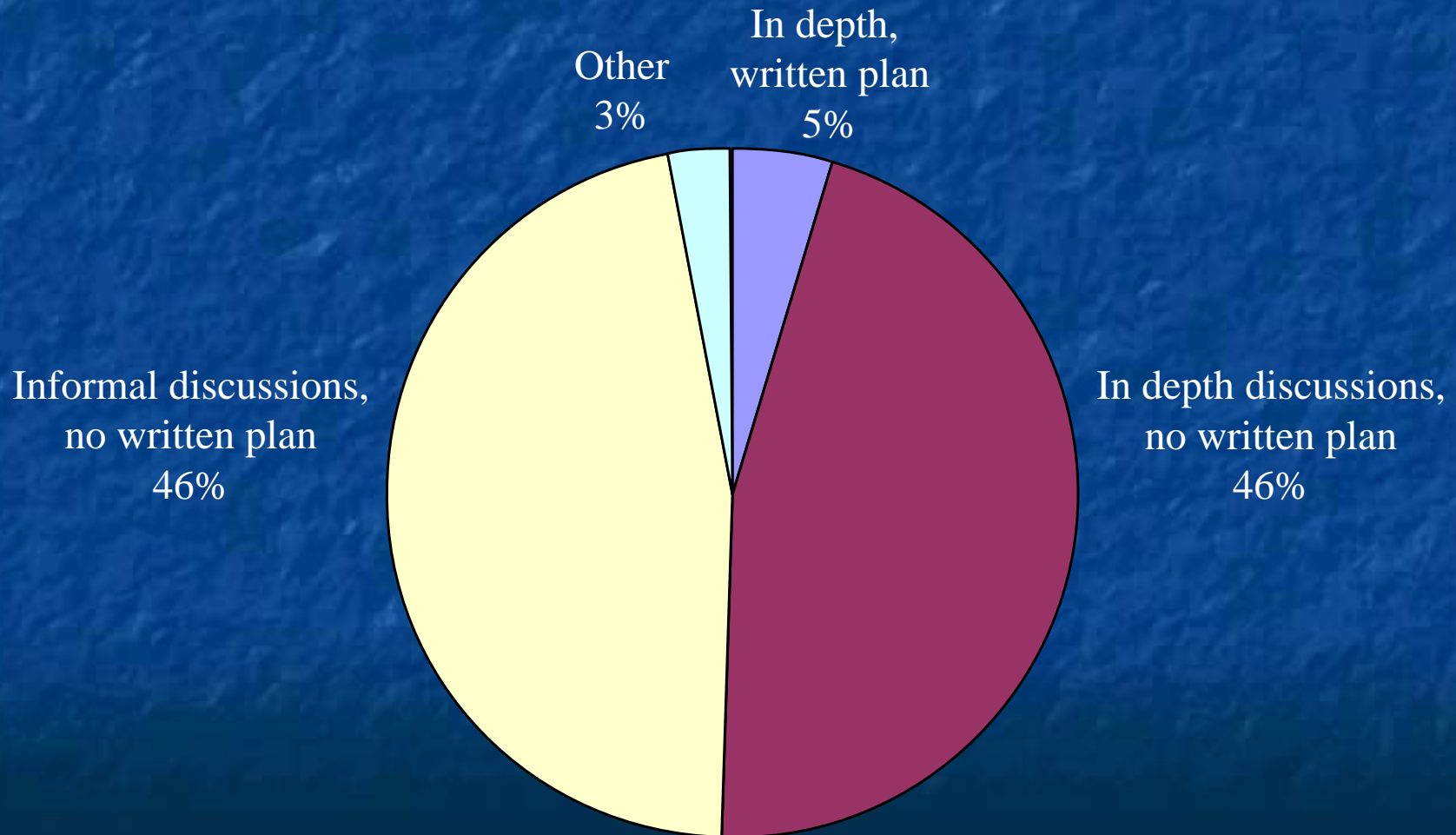
4 Steps of an IDP

1. Self-assessment
2. Career exploration
3. **Write your IDP**
4. Implement and evaluate

Setting SMART Goals

- Specific
- Measurable
- Action-oriented
- Realistic
- Time-bound

How would you describe the type of career plan you helped your postdocs develop?



Writing it down is important!

“The discipline of writing something down is the first step toward making it happen. In conversation you can get away with all kinds of vagueness and nonsense, often without even realizing it. But there’s something about putting your thoughts on paper that forces you to get down to specifics. That way, it’s harder to deceive yourself or anybody else.”

Lee Iacocca

4 Steps of an IDP

1. Self-assessment
2. Career exploration
3. Write your IDP
4. Implement and evaluate

Institutions can help

- Publicize the idea of IDPs
- Provide resources for self-assessment and career exploration
- Make IDP and annual evaluation a requirement

Columbus had a plan

