



## Leadership Discussion Guide: Familiar Grant Proposals

As a Second-year assistant professor, you are instructed to work with a new faculty member who has received an endowed chair. He came highly recommended, however, upon further collaboration with him you realize that he did not shred any of the grant proposals that had reviewed for NIH. Now you have a hunch that he used those grant proposals to come up with ideas. Recently you have been adamantly unwilling to help in the responsibilities required to write a grant proposal, and now the assistant professor is frustrated with you as well. What do you do?

### Decision Making Framework:

- 1) List the issues raised by the 2MC.
- 2) What rules or regulations apply to the situation?
- 3) What questions will help you open up the problem?
- 4) What resources could you use or consult to help you make a decision?
- 5) What are your options and how does each option affect others involved in the situation?
- 6) What would you do after considering all of these and in light of your own values?

#### Issues

Stealing Intellectual property  
Looking through other proposals  
No support from Leadership  
Do you have other options for work?  
Whistleblowing: should you tell?

#### Resources

Campus and federal regulations  
Research integrity officer on campus  
Colleagues  
National Ethics Center website

#### Rules and Regulations

Federal research integrity regulations  
University's regulations

#### Options

Wait and see  
Talk to the research integrity officer on your campus  
Talk to adviser or other trusted mentor  
Leave the Institution  
Contact NIH



## Questions

Had the faculty member done anything? What? With what results?

If you refuse responsibility then the project will fail, if you were looking from outside what would you do to help change your mentality and help both parties address the real problem at hand?

What if the hunch was wrong and the proposals you thought you saw were actually all of the previous? What if your colleague were in this position and asked for your advice?

Given the question before this one is true, what steps would you take to mend the broken relationship? Has anyone else worked on the proposal?

What other problems could the professor be having?

What is your description of the best outcome that could happen.

If you are ignored are you willing to stay at your position?

Is there any possibility that you could retreat to your Ph.D. lab to regroup?

What cross-cultural conflicts could possibly arise?

## Takeaway Lessons:

### 1) Information Gathering

You have a lot of information, however, you would need more information before going forward.

### 2) Seeking Resources

You may need advice before you take the next step. Are you on close enough terms with any member of your committee to seek confidential advice from one person? Does your new campus have an ombudsperson who might be able to provide confidential advice?

### 3) Asking Questions

Once you have gathered the facts so you have a fuller sense of the situation, One option is to talk with the faculty member based on what you have learned. You should rehearse these questions so you can ask them in a low-key, professional affect, without making charges. Depending on how your fact-finding goes, you may want to have someone else present when you ask these questions.

### 4) Follow the Rules for Having a Dispute Professionally

Before you have your conversation with the visiting faculty member you should read and absorb the rules for having a dispute professionally.

## Next Steps:

You have three possible problems first the professor could be mining through other research grants second the professor has been unwilling to take responsibilities associated with writing a grant proposal. Third, you could be completely wrong and now the relationship is strained. Either way you will need to have a tough conversation with either the professor or your mentor. You will need to document your findings, and ensure that you tried lightly. Think of possible reasons for the professor to have grant proposals from and what actions you can take to mend the relationship or ready yourself to report the professor if the proposals are in fact other researchers' proposals.

## What Really Happened:

The proposal was not successful and the Second year assistant professor had their credibility damaged.

