

Development and Implementation of a One-Year New Manager Leadership Program, Including Didactic and Mentorship Components, in an NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center

N. Sweeters

Stanford Cancer Institute

1. Background

Maintaining the National Cancer Institute (NCI) Comprehensive Cancer Center (CCC) designation at medical centers requires a commitment to strong clinical research infrastructure to offer complex, practice-changing, cutting-edge clinical trials to their patient population. Well-trained Clinical Research Managers (CRMs) are a key component to a highly successful Comprehensive Cancer Center because of their knowledge and experience in hiring, training, regulatory issues, maintaining quality data, personnel management, and problem-solving skills. The development of a robust one-year, bi-weekly didactic training and mentoring program for new clinical research managers will increase job satisfaction, retention, and program development which will support the overall research goals of the medical center.

Haiku:

Simplify the Problem
Research is Complex
Managers are Critical
Train and Mentor

2. Goals

Implementation of the New Manager Leadership program can increase managers' speed in onboarding, increase confidence in the management of complex HR issues and overall job satisfaction. These metrics will be measured using Qualtrics' survey tool at baseline, three months, six months and one year.

3. Solutions and Methods

A one-year, new manager leadership program was implemented in 2023 at the NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center at Stanford University in California. The program consisted of a six-month, bi-weekly didactic portion and a one-year mentoring program. New managers did a self-rating of their skills in the following areas: people management, hiring, study start-up, regulatory, finance and study portfolio management, at baseline, six months and one year using a Qualtrics tool. A wide variety of topics were presented during the bi-weekly meetings, questions were answered in real time regarding challenging issues and new managers were assigned homework. The two facilitators of the program acted as mentors for the new managers and met periodically throughout the year.

4. Outcomes

Preliminary data demonstrated improvement in self-rated skills. Qualtrics tool rating skills in 20 different areas were measured using a Likert Scale of 0-5, 0=no experience and 5=expert with a possible 100 points. Baseline scores mean scores were 53.6/100 and after six months the mean scores improved to 72.3/100. Preliminary data continues to be analyzed.

Quotes from one participant "It truly has been a great experience to have been involved in the Managerial Mentorship. The program provided comprehensive guidance on HR items (appraisals, PIPs, hiring, etc.), study start-up/closure, CRG portfolios, resources for new managers

(Supervisory/Managerial Academy), complex employee issues, and many more. This program was super helpful because it provided meaningful discussions and feedback between new managers and senior managers that would not have been taught elsewhere. Also, as a new manager, it is not always easy to fit in and be comfortable in my new role. I was able to gain close relationships with the new managers which I really enjoyed!”

5. Lessons Learned and Future Directions

Future plans are to expand the leadership training and mentorship program. A more formal mentor program has been designed with monthly meetings and agenda. The new managers and mentors will have six months of bi-weekly dyadic classes taught by experts in cancer clinical research and the mentors. The mentor will work with the new manager for 1-year. Self-evaluation of the new manager skills will be done via a Qualtrics tool at baseline, three months, six months and 12 months. A budget has been developed for the manager training program that includes mentorship training, quarterly lunch gathers and stipend for mentors at the completion of the program.