Joanne Kamens, Ph.D.
Executive Director, Addgene

COMMUNICATION IN THE WORKPLACE

@JKamens & @Addgene
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Addgene Helps Scientists Share Plasmids

Non-profit, mission driven company dedicated to facilitating collaboration and sharing in the scientific community
We fund this mission by making it easy to share plasmids!
**Addgene Statistics**

- >40,000 plasmids stored
- >450,000 plasmids shipped to 5,000 institutions in 78 countries
- From >2,000 contributing labs, >500 institutions worldwide
- >2,000 plasmids shipped each week
- 51% shipped to scientists outside the United States

“I do science differently because I can use the Addgene library to find reagents”

**Addgene’s Collection**

- Plasmids and collections for experiments in many organisms: human, mouse, rat, bacteria, yeast, worms, flies, fish, plants, etc.
- Plasmids for a wide variety of applications: gene expression, gene knockdown, tagging, empty backbones, etc.
  - Genome Engineering (e.g. TALENs, CRISPRs)
  - Viral expression & packaging
  - Fluorescent tags and biosensors
  - Stem Cell Factors
  - Reporters
Addgene Resources

Benefits of a Central Plasmid Repository

- Save time on request mailing
- Access all plasmids in one request
- No loss due to turnover of lab members
- New labs hear about your work, more citations
- Archive historical clones and standards, rigorous QC
- Get a list of who has your plasmids any time (for grants or Tech Transfer offices)
- Collaborate! Participate in our Community!
Depositing in a Biological Resource Center Increases Citation Rates

“Climbing Atop the Shoulders of Giants: The Impact of Institutions on Cumulative Research.”

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A Better Way to Share—Plasmids and Science

Addgene Blog

A Better Way to Share Science

blog.addgene.org

- Plasmids 101: What is a plasmid?
- The 10 Most Distributed Plasmid Technologies in Addgene's First 10 Years
- Using CRISPR/Cas9 to Edit Disease Out of the Genome
- Three Tips to Organize Your Lab Notebooks in the New Year
- Top 10 Open Science Developments of 2013
- "What Makes a Good Mentor?" and 6 More FAQs About Science Mentoring
- Drew Endy Introduces the Biobrick Public Agreement Plasmid Collection
- Overwhelmed? Take a Break with our 5 Favorite Science Comics
- Kiran Musunuru on the Newest TALEN Genome-Editing System
- From our Table to Yours: An Inside Look at Lunch at Addgene
- Let There Be LITE Plasmids
- Tag Your Favorite Yeast Genes with Ease
Most People—Men AND Women—Hold Implicit Biases

- Decades of cognitive psychology research reveal that most of us carry prejudices of which we are unaware but that nonetheless play a large role in our evaluations of people and their work.
- For example:
  - People are more likely to view a tall person as being competent
  - When information or time is scarce, people will far more often give the benefit of the doubt to a man than to a woman, to a white person than a person of color
  - For links to data see my blog “Spot the Sexist in You”
    http://blogs.nature.com/naturejobs/2013/01/08/spot-the-sexist-in-you
Some Data on Implicit Bias

Competence, hireability, and mentoring by student gender condition (collapsed across faculty gender).

Salary conferral by student gender condition (collapsed across faculty gender).

Randomized double-blind study (n = 127) Science faculty from research-intensive universities rated the application materials of a student—who was randomly assigned either a male or female name—for a laboratory manager position.

More Examples of Implicit Bias in Action

- Women as the “marked” gender:
  - Bachelor/bachelorette, actor/actress, man/woman, etc.
  - Marked on every form a woman fills out... Mrs, Ms, Miss, Dr— but that might be “uppity”
- Images of authority
  - Have you ever used the phrase “Big Boss Man”?
  - How about “Petite Boss Woman”?
  - Is it a “Big Fireball” or a “Little Fireball”?
  - “Little Pipsqueak” and squeaky voices
  - “Be a Man”—can women even do this? (yes)
- We form ideas about people before we hear them speak...
Can you guess what went through my mind as I picked my clothes for today? (really, go ahead, guess)

Why is All This Important?

“Just because there isn’t a conscious bias doesn’t mean that it doesn’t exist…”

Richard Gallagher, The Scientist (Jan 2008, editorial)

- Implicit bias leads to communication and conflict issues—I am going to focus on examples of how gender bias can play a role, but other types of bias influence how we communicate and resolve conflicts as well
Talking Through Different Filters

- Communication styles vary!
  - A whole other workshop
  - What is heard and what is understood can be very different
- Communication styles give rise to conflict resolution style
- Men and women have different communication habits that have developed (in general... there are always exceptions)

Asking Questions

- The thing about men and asking directions
- Women really do ask more questions
  - Totally counter to the stereotype that men are more focused on “information” and women are more “sensitive”
- The workplace majority perceives question-asking very differently
- But not asking can have very negative consequences...
- Men who need information are often prevented from getting it
- Bottom Line: flexibility and awareness
Negotiating From A Different Place

- Boys do sports—Girls play house
  - What differences do you imagine develop from this?
- What kind of behaviors does this lead to in the adult work place?

Ritual Language: Thank You, So Much, Really...

- We were always taught to be polite, but sometimes it can be sending the wrong message when what you say is not what you really mean
- Other types of ritual language—I am sorry that happened vs. I am sorry I did something wrong

You'd get a lot more work done if you didn't reply to every spam email with "Thank you for your kind offer!"
Indirect Language—Sometimes it Helps to Get to the Point...

- Imagine you usually spend Saturday morning with your significant other—Your partner has recently discovered golf and has begun playing 18 holes with friends every Saturday morning

- Let’s look at the ways you might approach this and critique them...
  - Don’t say anything at all
  - Honey, there’s really a lot to be done around the house this weekend!
  - Is golf so important you need to play it this often?
  - You are simply playing too much golf!

- “I’d like to spend more time with you. Saturday morning was one of our few times to be together and as a result I am finding your golf playing very irritating”

Joanne Kamens, Ph.D.
Executive Director, Addgene

PART 2: STYLES OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION
Ways to Approach Conflict—
The Thomas Kilmann Conflict Modes

- Competing
- Collaborating
- Compromising
- Avoiding
- Accommodating

**Collaborating**

- Problem solving, We both win. “Two heads are better than one.”
- Description:
  - Assert your views while also inviting other views. Welcome differences; identify all main concerns; generate options; search for solution which meets as many concerns as possible; search for mutual agreement.
- Perspective on Conflict:
  - Conflict is natural, neutral. So affirm differences, prize each person’s uniqueness. Recognize tensions and contrasts in viewpoint.
- Collaborating IS good when:
  - Have the time and want to work something out that satisfies all sides.
  - Care about the other person(s) and also feel strongly about the issue.
- Collaborating is NOT good when:
  - You don’t care that much about the issue.
  - You need to do something quickly. ("Fire! Everybody out!")
Compromising

- We meet half-way. "Let's split the difference."

**Description:**
- Urge moderation; bargain; something for everyone; meet halfway.

**Perspective on Conflict:**
- Conflict is mutual difference best resolved by cooperation and compromise. If each comes halfway, progress can be made by the democratic process.

**Compromising IS good when:**
- Need a quick solution and can both give up something.
- Both want exactly the same thing and it can be divided up or shared.
- Willing to let chance decide it (flip a coin).
- Have tried to satisfy each one completely and it isn’t possible (or take too long).

**Compromising is NOT good when:**
- Might work a little longer and find a solution that pleases each one better.
- You care a lot about the outcome

Accommodating

- Giving in I give in. "I'd rather not deal with it now."

**Description:**
- Accept the other's view; let the other's view prevail; give in; support; acknowledge error; decide it's no big deal or it doesn't matter.

**Perspective on Conflict:**
- Conflict is usually disastrous, so yield. Sacrifice your own interests, ignore the issues, put relationships first, keep peace at any price.

**Accommodating IS good when:**
- Are, or were, wrong about something.
- Care more about the other person than you do about the issue.
- You see a future need to have been accommodating

**Accommodating is NOT good when:**
- It happens a lot and you wish you could speak up more often.
Avoiding

- I leave. "I'd rather not deal with it now."
- **Description:**
  - Delay or avoid response; withdraw; be inaccessible; divert attention.
- **Perspective on Conflict:**
  - Conflict is hopeless; avoid it. Overlook differences, accept disagreement or get out.
- **Avoiding IS good when:**
  - Don't care that much about the issue.
  - You (or someone else) are very angry and need time to cool off before discussing the issue.
  - Postponing an issue until a better time
- **Avoiding is NOT good when:**
  - You rarely want to deal with the conflicts in your life.
  - You care about an issue but are afraid to speak up.
  - You keep being bothered by a disagreement with someone you care about.

Competing

- Forcing. I take charge. "Might makes right."
- **Description:**
  - Control the outcome; discourage disagreement
- **Perspective on Conflict:**
  - Conflict is obvious; some people are right and some people are wrong. The central issue is who is right. Pressure and coercion are necessary.
- **Competing IS good when:**
  - Need to do something quickly.
  - Conscience tells you to do or not do something that displeases others.
  - Know you are right and it is important to you that the others recognize that.
- **Competing is NOT good when:**
  - You use it often with people you care about or will need to spend time with in the future.
  - You want people to feel they can discuss and disagree with you openly.
### Homework: What is your TKI style?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Style</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Competing</strong></td>
<td>A power-oriented mode. Pursues own concerns at other person’s expense. Uses whatever power seems appropriate to win.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compromising</strong></td>
<td>Objective to find an expedient, mutually acceptable solution. Middle ground, gives up more than competing, but less than accommodating. Addresses issue more directly than avoiding, but doesn’t explore as much as in collaborating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collaborating</strong></td>
<td>Opposite of avoiding. Attempts to work with others to find solutions that satisfy both. Involves digging into an issue to identify underlying concerns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Avoiding</strong></td>
<td>Does not immediately pursue his or her own concerns OR those of the other person. Does not address the conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accommodating</strong></td>
<td>Opposite of competing. Often neglects own concerns to satisfy others. Element of self-sacrifice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### PART 3: DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS (PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT)

- **Your snacks are too loud.**
- **Only inconsiderate jerks eat crunchy food in cubicles.**
- **Maybe you should try to make me love you more than I love salt.**
Prepare—You First

- What is your purpose for having the conversation? What do you hope to accomplish? What would be an ideal outcome?
- What assumptions are you making about this person’s intentions?
- **Impact does not necessarily equal intent**
  - Are you more worked up than you should be?
  - Is there more going on here than the obvious?
- Take responsibility for the situation
- MAKE A SCRIPT!! I’M NOT KIDDING!

Prepare—During the Conversation

- Keep Watch on Yourself
  - Staying in control
  - Staying “centered”
  - Go slow

- Why is it not OK to “lose it” at work?
Prepare—"But it isn’t my fault... or is it?"

- When you can’t see your contribution
  - Have you been avoiding the problem until now?
  - Have you been unapproachable?
  - “Intersections” = People are just different
  - Problematic shared role assumptions
    - Example: Backfiring group SOP for sample delivery
    - Example: A disabled child drawing time and attention away from his/her siblings

Learn—Start by Asking Questions

- Find out what your opponent/partner is thinking—listen, probe, LISTEN
- Abandon blame, evoke contributions
- Watch body language—What do they really want? What are they not saying?
- Don’t take it personally—It’s not really about you.
- Make your opponent a partner.
- You’ll get your turn...
Acknowledgment

- Make their argument for them
  - Explain back to them what you think they’re really going for
  - They won’t change unless they see that you see where they stand—Then they might, maybe
- Acknowledge (out loud) whatever you can, including your own defensiveness
- Acknowledgment is not agreement—that’s why this is a difficult conversation
  - Avoid the dead end conversation of who is right and who is wrong

“OK, I see your stupid point of view. Now are you ready to agree with me?”
Advocate—Now It’s Your Turn

- Stay Centered—if you can!
- What can you see from your perspective that they’ve missed? Help clarify your position without minimizing theirs.
- Return to “learn and listen” if things aren’t going well.
  - If you stay centered, so will the conversation partner.

Solve—Finding Solutions

- Brainstorming
- Continue inquiry
  - Ask what they think would work
  - Whatever they say, find something that you like and build on it
  - Watch for openings, watch for miracles
The Difficult Conversation Cycle

- Prepare
- Learn
- Solve
- Acknowledge
- Advocate

Productive Conflict Resolution

- If you are in conflict, and you want to **WIN**, it makes sense to do what you can to **weaken** your opponent.
- If you are in conflict and you want to **RESOLVE**, it makes sense to do what you can to **strengthen** your opponent.

Lydia Harris, Project Office Services
Resources—Read Just One?

- Women at Work: A Guide for Men. Even the most well-intentioned male managers can be clueless when dealing with women in the workplace. Wall Street Journal, December 12, 2014
- The Magic of Conflict, by Thomas F. Crum
- Difficult Conversations, by Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton, & Sheila Heen
- Talking from 9 to 5: Women and Men at Work, by Deborah Tannen
- Crucial Conversations, by Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, Al Switzler
- FAQs about Conflict, by Judy Ringer ([http://www.judyringer.com](http://www.judyringer.com))
- Hardball for Women, by Pat Heim
- Why are women always apologizing? Sure, it’s polite to say “sorry” sometimes. But for everything? No way.
  - [http://youtu.be/rzL-vdQ2DhA](http://youtu.be/rzL-vdQ2DhA)
- Emotional Intelligence in Tough Conversations, Harvard Business Review video clip
- Spot the Sexist in You, by Joanne Kamens
  - [http://blogs.nature.com/naturejobs/2013/01/08/spot-the-sexist-in-you](http://blogs.nature.com/naturejobs/2013/01/08/spot-the-sexist-in-you)