

How to Set Up a Lab

To prepare:

- What do you need? Space, materials, equipment, people
- Make lists of every reagent and piece of equipment you use currently and find out how much everything costs
 - Create a spreadsheet to track it all
 - Talk with vendors – institutions negotiate different rates
 - Get multiple quotes
 - Ask to go over current lab's budget
- Go over allotted space during campus visit with critical eye
 - What equipment already exists and can be shared? What must you buy new?
 - Are there core facilities you can use? What are the rates?
 - Will the space need to be renovated or reconfigured? Ask about possibilities and timeline
- Create a working budget for yourself with contingencies
- Negotiate your start up package understanding what you need!

Determine your people needs:

- How much will someone cost at your new institute?
 - Not just stipend/salary – must factor in benefits cost, tuition for grad students, overhead, etc.
- What will be the initial research focus of your lab? What level of skill will you need: undergrad, grad, postdoc, staff, tech, etc?
 - Grad students:
 - Use rotation system, teach classes, give seminars to make yourself and your lab known
 - Make expectations clear and choose wisely
 - Postdocs:
 - Use your network to find PhDs just finishing up and go to conferences
 - Make research and mentorship expectations clear
- You will be responsible for training and guiding their careers – invest in management and leadership training for yourself

Resources:

- *Making the Right Moves: A Practical Guide to Scientific Management for Postdocs and New Faculty*, by BWF and HHMI*
- *At the Helm: Leading Your Laboratory*, by Kathy Barker
- *Lab Dynamics: Management and Leadership Skills for Scientists*, by Carl M. Cohen and Suzanne L. Cohen

*Free to download

