

Education vs Experience: the dilemma for the entry level person

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Objectives

- Why is there a shortage of clinical research personnel?
- What is an entry-level person?
- Discuss education, experience and certification
- Suggest some solutions

The Clinical Research Enterprise

- Increasing number of trials
- Increasing size of trials
- Increasing complexity of trials
- Shortage of qualified and available personnel
 - Monster.com (over 1000 listed 5/12/06)
 - Hotjobs.com (4664 listed 5/12/06)

The entry level professional

Most health professionals

- Education → Hands on experience → Credentialing examination

Most people in clinical research

- Appropriate ability and/or
Appropriate personality characteristics
“right place at the right time”
“knew someone who facilitated getting job”

Credentialing

- ACRP, SoCRA, DIA
 - Need experience to take the exam
- Need experience to get a job
- Need a job to get experience

Experience

- Single greatest impediment
- Big pharma – generally 5 yrs
- CRO's – 2 yrs or more in contract
- Usually premium for certification

What is definition of experience?

- Why is 5 yrs better than 2 yrs?
- How does anyone evaluate the quality of the work done by “experienced” person
- Are certified personnel better?

Academic programs

- Over 100 worldwide
 - Coordinators, monitors, data mgrs, project mgrs, regulatory professionals, etc.
 - Often classes taught by industry professionals
- Hands-on experiences
- Difficulty finding job after graduation
 - Employers do not count education toward experience
 - Internship or preceptorship is not “real” job experience
 - Much easier to find a position as Clinical Coordinator, especially in same place where internship done

Solution to personnel shortage

- Define knowledge bases necessary
- Define needed hands-on skills
- What is an entry level professional?
- How do you evaluate experience?

- Academic/industry collaboration to provide education, mentoring and hands-on skills
- Result will be larger number of more highly skilled clinical research personnel who will be requiring more realistic remuneration