

Negotiating Up: Dealing with Power in the Workplace

by Ann Skoczenski, PhD, Program Manager, Center for Faculty Development

As part of the *Office for Women's Careers* (OWC) celebration of national Women in Medicine month, Melissa Brodrick, Ombudsman for Harvard Medical School, an expert in the field of dispute resolution with over 25 years of experience, presented a negotiation skills workshop. The OWC asked her to advise faculty on how to negotiate in situations where there is a power imbalance between the two parties.

In the first part of the session Ms. Brodrick focused on defining types of power:

- **Connective**: who you know
- **Coercive**: being in a position to punish others
- **Reward**: person's ability to reward others
- **Expert**: expertise via acclaimed skill/accomplishment
- **Informational**: having valuable/important information
- **Legitimate**: position held
- **Referent**: well-liked and respected

With a better understanding of these multiple power types, participants were able to see what they can bring to negotiations, regardless of the overall power differential. Within that framework, Brodrick also helped participants plan ways to approach upcoming negotiations, including:

- Understanding the difference between your *position* ("what do you want") and your *interests* ("why do you want what you want")
- Developing your *BATNA*: Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement (e.g. in seeking a raise, your BATNA may be another job offer with better pay)
- Identifying *objective criteria* to support the legitimacy of your position/interests.

Overall, the faculty participants reported that the session will have an impact on their professional life, with the greatest gain reported to be a better understanding of the power they have in different negotiation settings.

For additional resources on the topic of negotiating up, see the handouts for the session here: http://www2.massgeneral.org/facultydevelopment/owc/pdf/2014%200930%20Negotiating%20Up_handouts.pdf