Managing Your IAB Relationships

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The economy has hit Centers hard. 2009 looked tough, but 2010 is going to be worse!

The CCMC has survived because of a specific topic of corporate interest – armor materials. Thrusts in areas where the economic downturn has been hit hard are not retaining members.

For multi-university programs, this is particularly a trying time as each partner does not have an equivalent buy on to the Center.

IAB participation may be more limited than in past year.
GIVE THE MEMBERS MORE!

Historically, the CCMC provided 2 review meetings a year.

Last year, attendance was down 50%+ at both review meetings. REMEMBER-If members do not interact with the Center you will lose them!

Forget what you promised in your Center agreement, this is the time where you need to do more!!
WHAT ARE NEW THINGS THAT YOU CAN DO?

• We added a 3rd meeting at a society meeting where travel was simple and cost effective
• Our 2010 review meetings will be webcast also (gotowebinar.com is easy to use)
• We are adding topical webinars every 6-8 week in 2010
• We have made access to past Center deliverables web based. This includes: past reports, presentations, thesis, papers
• Find new ways to get Members to the Center
  – Service or use of facilities
  – Fast tracked projects – PROBLEM SOLVING!
  – Seminars
• Really encourage students to take jobs with member companies
MAINTAIN FREQUENT COMMUNICATION

• Understand your members challenges. This means treating each member separately.
• If you need to do some creative things – do it!
  – Arrange for payment options that match
  – Do some one on one testing gratis
• Make sure that participating faculty know that they have to help with this!!
• Visits to the company are really important!
• Don’t forget to keep communications open with partner universities. You may need to help them maintain a teetering member of their own
DON’T ASSUME THAT CORE MEMBERS WILL STAY

• Each member will have hard decisions this year. Center membership should not be assumed.
• We almost lost a 20yr member because I assumed they would never leave!!
• Don’t spend more time on new members than old member!
• Make sure you have a clear understanding of your corporate champions and how funding for the Center membership is amassed.
• Recognize that you may need to “court” additional funding sources from each member.
LOOK FOR OTHER FUNDING SOURCES TO LEVERAGE THE CENTER

• We are lucky to have a US Army Materials Center of Excellence that allows technology transfer to our Center members. This provides a 2:1 cost leverage.
• Be aware that you may need to work with your smaller members on SBIR/STTR’s as a means of leveraging their membership.
• Be careful to balance what you need to do for small members with larger member expectations.
  – THIS IS NOT SIMPLE!
• Develop collaborations with Members for Federal Programs