

**IF YOU BUILD IT,
THEY WILL COME...**

***HOW TO START A GENETIC
COUNSELING TRAINING
PROGRAM***

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YOUR FIELD OF DREAMS



STEP 1: SURVEY THE LAND

Perform a needs-assessment

- What are the needs based on **census data**?
- How many GCs are in your catchment area?
 - If there aren't enough local GCs, who else is currently providing GC-like services?

Reach out to the Association of Genetic Counseling Program Directors (**AGCPD**)!

- Interview PDs who recently started programs or are interested in serving as a consultant
 - What roadblocks have they encountered?
 - What do they wish they had known at the beginning?
 - What is their vision for the future of GC training?

STEP 2: TALK TO THE NEIGHBORS

Where are the closest GC training programs?

- Call those program directors to hear their experience

Who might be your champions on and off campus?

- Identify existing educational and clinical programs that might be good collaborators
 - How can you leverage resources?
 - Piggy-back on existing courses
- Are there any departments or programs that would NOT support a GC program?

STEP 3: CHECK THE SOIL

(AND BRING IN THE CONTRACTORS)



Funding stream?

- Tuition remission, departmental support, grants, etc.
- Ask for sample budgets from other PDs on campus or other GC PDs

“In kind” assistance?

- By your division/department?
- faculty teaching/supervision, administrative services (registrar, financial aid, scheduling, etc.)

Physical resources?

- Office space
- Student rooms
- IT infrastructure

Support from other institutions?

- Affiliation agreement?
- Memorandum of understanding (MOU)?
- Legal counsel

STEP 4: GET ZONING PERMITS

Internal

- Official name of your degree?
- Approval process for new programs?
 - Dean/Provost?
 - Board of Trustees?
 - Board of Regents?
 - Academic Policy Committee?

External

- **ACGC**
 - Let them know that your institution is considering starting a GC program
 - Get ready to apply for accreditation

STEP 5: HIRE THE GM

(AND THE STARTING LINEUP)

Selecting a program director

- Should it be you?
- Should there be a national search?

Things to consider when building your team

- Area of expertise
- Years of experience
- Training in pedagogy
- Personality
- Availability / dependability
- Personal / professional interest

Find people whose strengths are different from yours

- Consider taking a formal self-assessment
 - StrengthsFinder Profile
 - VIA Inventory
 - 360 evaluation or Johari window

STEP 6: BUILD THE STADIUM

Create a mission statement

- What can your program bring that is new and different?
- How do you envision the future?
- How will these goals mesh with your institutional mission?

Develop the curriculum

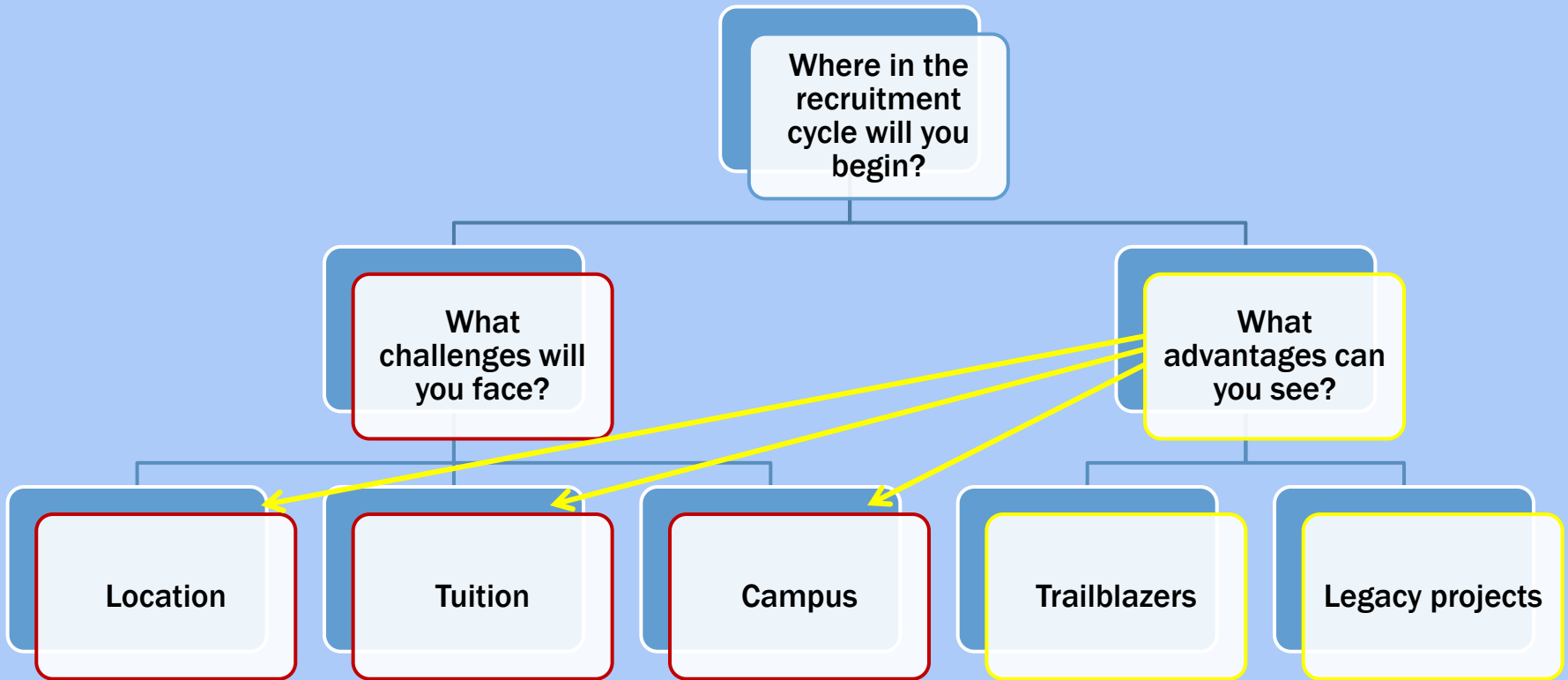
- Look through textbooks, other program websites, ACGC/ABCG/AGCPD resources
- Consider semantics
 - Thesis v. Capstone
 - Course names
- Maximize your strengths
- **Think outside the box**

Flesh out your faculty

- Instructors, supervisors, and research mentors
- Advisory board
- Are formal appointments available?
- If not, how will you thank/compensate individuals?

Formally request the green light from your institution and ACGC!

STEP 7: SELL TICKETS!



CLOSING PEARLS OF WISDOM

Loosen up

- Stop aiming for perfection
 - "Better a diamond with a flaw than a pebble without." — Confucius
- Don't take yourself too seriously
 - It's business, not personal
 - Know whether you are comfortable with failure

Get out there and rub elbows

- "If you never miss a plane, you're spending too much time at the airport." – George Stigler
 - Be gracious, kind, and fair
 - Reach out to everyone
 - Listen... attentively

CLOSING PEARLS OF WISDOM

- **Expect delays**
 - Pareto principle (aka the 80–20 rule)
 - It commonly takes 20% of your time to complete 80% of a task while it takes 80% of your effort to complete the last 20%.
- **Appreciate the benefits to your city/region**

Year	# of GCs in Boston
2004	35
2007	50
2014	120+

DON'T SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF

$$P = 1 - \sum \frac{CS \times CC}{RDC} + \sqrt{JM} + \int FC$$

$\infty + \equiv CD^W$

P = Program Director productivity

CS = # of crying students

CC = # of crying colleagues

RDC = # of requests from dean / department chair

JM = jammed machines

FC = family crises

CD = caffeine deprivation

W = wine consumption in past week

REMEMBER YOUR ROOTS...

Faculty and students - 2014



2005 - original GC faculty

... and keep
your eyes
on the prize!



SYNERGY

Coming together, sharing together, working together, succeeding together.