

When Everything Falls Apart: Guidance from Seasoned Training Directors

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(Co-Chairs/Discussants)

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Keith Shaw, Ph.D.; Wayne Siegel, Ph.D.;
Cecilia Sun, Ph.D.; & Matt Zimmerman, Psy.D.
(Panelists: The Seasoned Training Directors)



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Introduction of Chairs

Shannon Fussell, Ph.D.

Director of Internship Training - Biloxi
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Director of Postgraduate Training
Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System

Our Vision for the Panel

We hope this session will:

- * Provide additional resources to training leaders
- * Promote longevity in training leadership positions
- * Simultaneously prevent isolation and foster consultation among training leadership

A Unique Role: Training Director Responsibilities & Tasks

❖ Training Director responsibilities

- * To trainees
- * To the program & faculty
- * To the public
- * To the organization
- * To accrediting bodies/the discipline

❖ Training Director tasks

- * risk management
- * problem solving, picking up pieces & keeping it afloat

Training Director as Risk Manager



- * Standards of Accreditation in Health Service Psychology (APA Commission on Accreditation)
- * APPIC Webpage
- * Ethics Code (APA)
- * Current knowledge of organization, training program structure, and personnel

Problem Solving and Picking up the Pieces

The obstacles (things you can't control):

- * Recurring problems with no manual or “How to”
- * Many things can make the program fall apart
- * Logistics are challenging (workload is too great)
- * Demoralization and burnout set in
- * Turnover in training leadership

Ground Rules for Today's Presentation

- * Vignettes: “Any resemblance to any institution, training program, trainee, supervisor, or training director is purely coincidental.”
- * We must keep moving. Feel free to approach us after the presentation.
- * Sensitive issues/questions may be written on cards, and we will ask the panelists on your behalf.

The Esteemed Panelists

- * Kenneth Adams, Ph.D., ABPP
- * Steve McCutcheon, Ph.D.
- * Keith Shaw, Ph.D.
- * Wayne Siegel, Ph.D., ABPP
- * Cecilia Sun, Ph.D.
- * Matt Zimmerman, Psy.D., ABPP

Introduction of Panelists

Kenneth Adams, Ph.D., ABPP
VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System
Ann Arbor, MI

Introduction of Panelists

Steve McCutcheon, Ph.D.

VA Puget Sound Health Care System
Seattle, WA

Introduction of Panelists

Keith Shaw, Ph.D.

Durham VA Medical Center

Durham, NC

Introduction of Panelists

Wayne Siegel, Ph.D., ABPP
Minneapolis VA Health Care System
Minneapolis, MN




Cecilia Sun, Ph.D.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

University of Houston

Houston, TX



Matt Zimmerman, Psy.D., ABPP
Counseling & Psychological Services
University of Virginia, Student Health
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Overview of Obstacles

- * **External/Environmental Challenges**—completely external to the training program’s infrastructure, but directly impact the program, trainers, and/or trainees (e.g., Aten, Madson, Rice, & Chamberlain (2008))
- * **Organizational/Systemic Challenges**—resulting from organizational processes that indirectly influence training procedures (e.g., Brown, Murdock, & Abels (2014); Kaslow, Johnson, & Schwartz (2014))
- * **Personnel Challenges**—occur when training faculty and/or trainees make choices which are inconsistent with the program’s policies and/or leave the program (e.g., Burian & Slimp (2000), Jacobs et al. (2011), Johnson et al (2008), Kaslow, Johnson & Schwartz (2014); Kaslow & Rice (1985))

External/Environmental Challenges

- * Matt Zimmerman, Psy.D., ABPP
- * Wayne Siegel, Ph.D., ABPP

Vignette:

External/Environmental Challenges

Internship applicant “Jim” is overheard during an interview visit saying, “I’ve heard great things about the program here, but Mississippi is such a backward, discriminatory state that I couldn’t see myself moving there unless somebody could assure me that they’ve gotten out of the 1840s.”

Vignette: External/Environmental Challenges

Keeping in mind our commitments to accurately advertise the training experience and honestly represent the geographic and cultural aspects of the location, how might you specifically and/or globally address Jim's concern?

Organizational/Systemic Challenges

- * Keith Shaw, Ph.D.
- * Cecilia Sun, Ph.D.
- * Steve McCutcheon, Ph.D.
- * Ken Adams, Ph.D., ABPP

Vignette: Organizational/Systemic Challenges

With recent growth in your organization, the physical space for trainee offices is becoming more and more limited. In both the recent Self Study and your publically available brochures, you have promised or advertised office space and resources which now your hospital is no longer providing. Trainees are upset and have contacted their home graduate programs and have implied they plan on contacting CoA while attempts to change the situation with hospital management have not panned out.

Vignette: Organizational/Systemic Challenges

- * How could you effectively invite attention to the fact that the organization made a commitment to a training program no less enduring than to other accreditors (e.g., JCAHO, CARF)
- * Who would be potential allies and problem-solvers?
- * Would you join in the Trainees' appeal to APA CoA for relief? Would you relinquish your DOT role on principle?

Vignette:

Organizational/Systemic Challenges

You are a new, female training director and an early career psychologist taking leadership of an established internship program. Historically, the program has been run by an older, more experienced, male psychologist. Upon taking on the new role, organizational leadership appear to subtly suggest to you and your training faculty that they are in charge of the program. Any decisions you make must be cleared through them, and they implement a schedule of additional meetings to ensure that you are following the prescribed agenda.

Vignette: Organizational/Systemic Challenges

- * What would you do, and what factors would you consider in making a decision?
- * How might your answers differ, given the multitude of chains of command and administrative authority that Directors of Training may fall under?
- * How might your answers differ if the training director in question were mid- to late-career, or were male?
- * What if you were an established training director, and reorganization took place such that your chain of command has changed?

Personnel Challenges

- * Keith Shaw, Ph.D.
- * Wayne Siegel, Ph.D., ABPP

Vignette: Personnel Challenges

You are a training director of a well-established program, and it has been your good fortune to have a stable group of dedicated training faculty over the last several years. Unfortunately, you begin to hear concerns from the trainees and other training faculty regarding one of your trusted colleagues' conduct. It seems, based on their reports, that this colleague may be exhibiting impairment, as indicated by missing scheduled supervision/didactics, and reportedly being off-site while the supervised trainee was conducting services. Upon investigating the concerns shared, you find only circumstantial evidence or support for these claims. Following the APA Ethics Code, you approach the supervisor directly, who is initially defensive and ends the conversation by laughing off the accusations.

- * What do you do in this situation?

Questions from the Audience



Considerations for Managing Training Leadership Challenges

- * External/Environmental
- * Organizational/Systemic
- * Personnel

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