

Designing an Internal Complaint System

Secret Instructions for Rupert Overween (The Lab Director)

Senior management at Biochemix Unlimited recently decided that the company needs an internal dispute resolution system. As the head of a major laboratory, you have been asked to join a committee to draft some possible specifications for this system. The committee will include a number of research staff.

You were really annoyed about this, but senior officials have convinced you that there needs to be something on paper that the company can point to—several recent pieces of legislation make it advantageous for companies to appear to have such a system. You think this is all another example of over-regulation by the government but you agreed to give a few minutes to lay out a plan for internal dispute resolution.

You woke up this morning thinking about how to keep this new system from being yet another set of constraints on creativity and yet more loss of control with respect to the ability of senior scientists to run the company. You believe in the traditional rights of Principal Investigators and believe you are and should be in control of all the operations and achievements of your laboratory.

You will be meeting in a few minutes with others on the committee to discuss the basic specifications for the system the company might adopt. Please prepare with several other colleagues a list of specifications that you believe to be important.

Please stay in role for this assignment—try to imagine what Overween actually would want, and prepare and play the role accordingly? You may make any presumptions you like about what you read in the General Instructions. You can consider yourself guilty or imagine you've always been ethical. You do know that from time to time junior people imagine—and claim—all kinds of irresponsible rights to intellectual property.