

WHAT I WISH I KNEW BEFORE STARTING AN EFFICACY PROGRAM LESSONS LEARNED, HARD TRUTHS, AND PRACTICAL GUIDANCE

Lessons Learned, Hard Truths, and Practical Guidance

EQUIPMENT PHILOSOPHY

- Fancy equipment not required
- Stay out of debt; run lean
- Avoid going too cheap — it costs more later



Equipment is your largest startup expense



Mechanical skills are essential



Repairs and fabrication save thousands



Used equipment works if you can fix it



Custom fabrication = competitive advantage

MECHANICAL
APTITUDE
MATTERS





GPS improves
precision



Tubular planters
= multi-pass
efficiency



Small tools
improve
sampling



Think creatively
about
equipment

EQUIPMENT RESOURCES & EFFICIENCY



Most new CROs undercharge

“Wow, this is cheap!” = red flag

Clients rarely share budgets

Pricing is a learned skill

THE PRICING STRUGGLE

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UNDERSTANDING YOUR VALUE

- ▶ Evaluate your time realistically
- ▶ CRO expertise is niche
- ▶ If you're good, people will pay
- ▶ Clients accept low prices without telling you
- ▶ Talk to peers — it's not price fixing



PRICING PRINCIPLES

ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

- ▶ Clarify compatibility
- ▶ Clarify adjuvants, surfactants
- ▶ Labels imply things protocols don't state
- ▶ Never assume, ask



Verbal instructions = risk



Written instructions = protection



Scope creep is constant



Use written scopes and change orders

GET
EVERYTHING
IN WRITING





Ask questions
before agreeing



Requests often
differ from needs

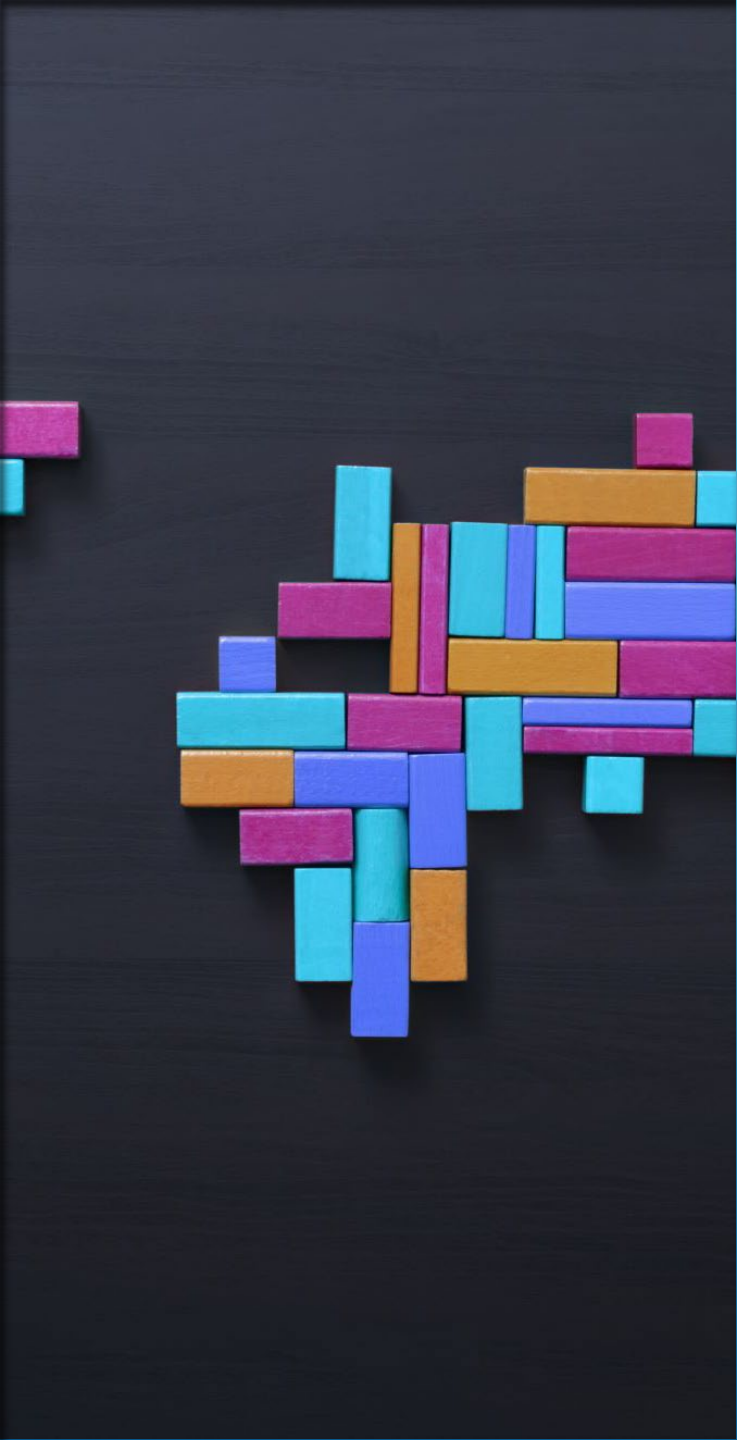


Simple questions
prevent issues



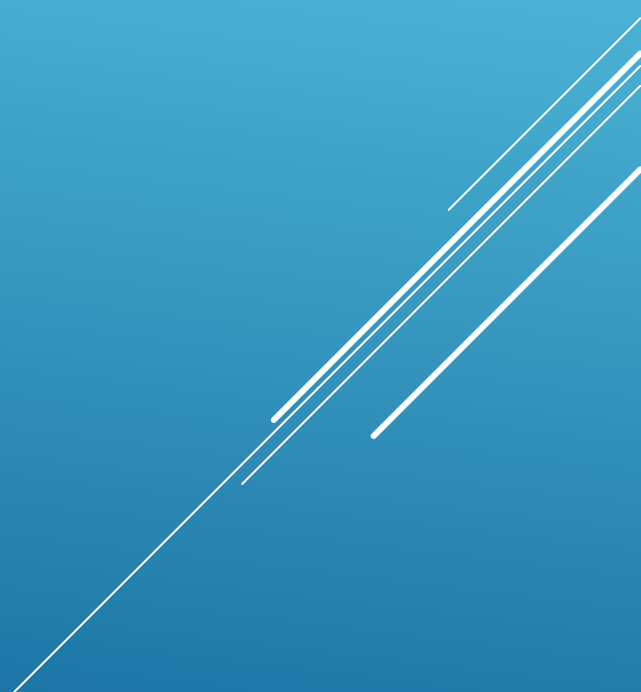
Good questions
improve data
quality

DELIVERABLES
& TRIAL
CLARITY



- ARM maps are a starting point
- Stacking reps reduces variation
- Latin squares outperform randomization for some
- Adaptability improves data

BLOCKING & RANDOMIZATION





- ▶ Field uniformity is everything
- ▶ Soil variability masks differences
- ▶ Good fields elevate good researchers
- ▶ Renting fields improves data

FIELD SELECTION

Real-time entry prevents chaos



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graph TD; A[Real-time entry prevents chaos] --> B[Early data requests require readiness]; B --> C[Deliver reports quickly];
```

Early data requests require readiness

Deliver reports quickly

DATA DISCIPLINE

- ▶ ARM training is essential
- ▶ Data handling reduces errors

SOFTWARE SKILLS





- ▶ Build relationships
- ▶ Refer work
- ▶ Good people send good work back
- ▶ Collaboration strengthens the industry

OTHER CROS

- ▶ CROs carry liability
- ▶ Compliance matters
- ▶ Worker safety
- ▶ Permits and restricted materials
- ▶ SOPs and training

REGULATORY REALITY

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- ▶ Data must be defensible
- ▶ Protocol discipline
- ▶ Deviation logs
- ▶ Chain-of-custody
- ▶ Raw data retention

DATA INTEGRITY

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Capability statements



Clear data presentation



Professional hosting



Expert network



Organized data

PROFESSIONALISM
& CLIENT
EXPERIENCE

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AVOID OVEREXTENSION

Time is finite

Overcommitting
ruins reputations

Clients notice

Quality >
quantity

WEARING MANY HATS

- ▶ CRO owners wear many hats
- ▶ Organization is essential
- ▶ Outsource strategically
- ▶ Know your limits

- ▶ CRO success requires resilience
- ▶ Learn continuously
- ▶ Protect your time and reputation
- ▶ Build relationships

FINAL THOUGHTS

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