

Should scientists interact with the tobacco industry?

"I hereby declare that I do not currently accept, and do not intend to accept in the future, any research funds" ... or anything else of value from the tobacco industry.

What does this statement infer?

- That the tobacco industry is always dishonest, disreputable, evil?
- That the tobacco industry is always trying to entrap researchers?
- That the industry will use data for ill purpose?
- That the integrity of researchers is for sale to the highest bidder?

Is the tobacco industry the only potential danger?

- Brewers, distillers, etc. (licensed beverage industry foundation)
- Pharmaceutical manufacturers
- Biotech companies
- Governmental agencies
 - NIH, NSF, etc.
 - Defense
 - Interior

Postulate: A scientist cannot trust any of these agencies

- All funding agencies have agendas
- Nearly every funding decision is influenced by political factors
 - Good luck in trying to get a grant funded from NIH that might demonstrate a positive effect of tobacco
 - When money is in short supply it is very difficult to obtain funding from NIH for truly novel research that is not scientifically and politically correct.

How do Scientists Deal with Funding Agencies with Agendas?

- Don't accept funding from agencies that "attach strings" to the money.
- Don't agree to any requests to edit research results or to modify conclusions.
- Don't agree to unreasonable delays in submitting manuscripts for publication.
- Let the peer review system work.

A Scientist Loses If He/She Does Not Seek the "Truth."

- Accountability is a hallmark of science. If a scientist "says" something, others can determine the validity by doing the same study.
- If results are not replicated, scientist might earn unwanted labels:
 - Incompetent?
 - Inadequate?
 - Dishonest? (most often applied to studies funded by agencies with agendas)

Recommended Behavior

- Choose funding agencies carefully avoiding ones with too many restrictions.
- Do not compromise your integrity to garner grant support.
- Insist that all studies be published in a timely way with ABSOLUTELY NO interference from funding agency.
- Scream bloody murder if the agency tries to limit publication or influence interpretation of findings.