Committee to Review the Process to Update the Dietary Guidelines for Americans

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Richard Black, PhD
Quadrant D Consulting, LLC
...though not always a fan of using cartoons in a very serious discussion, they do highlight universal themes – otherwise no one would laugh.....
Today's Random Medical News

Can Cause

Hypothermia
Feeling of Well-Being
Heart Disease
Fainting
Gum Disease
Very Specific Taste
Sudden Inversion
Stress

In

Men 25-40
Two-Income Families
Arthritis Sufferers
Overweight Smokers
Rats

According to a report released today...
WHAT DO YOU KNOW...COFFEE IS GOOD FOR YOU AGAIN.
SO IS WINE, COPS. TOO LATE, IT'S BAD AGAIN.
SAYS HERE THAT MANY NATURAL SUBSTANCES HAVE CURATIVE POWERS.
THEN YOU'LL LIKE THE POISON IVY/ASBESTOS/COW PIE/GRAVEL SALAD WE'RE HAVING FOR DINNER.
ACCORDING TO A NEW STUDY, PEOPLE WHO HAVE CHILDREN ACTUALLY LIVE LONGER THAN PEOPLE WHO DON'T.

BTHHHHTHHTHHHTHHTTTT!
EEEEEFFFFEEEEEK!

TALK ABOUT BAD SCIENCE.
The DGAC’s central challenge is one of trust

Shared values are 3-5X more important in building trust than demonstrating competence

Trust research was published in December, 2009 – Journal of Rural Sociology

Adapted from Charlie Amott, Center for Food Integrity
Scientists are really good at finding flaws in studies that contradict their own views, but it sometimes happens that evidence accumulates across many studies to the point where scientists must change their minds.

I’ve seen this happen in my colleagues (and myself) many times, and it’s part of the accountability system of science – you’d look foolish clinging to discredited theories.

But for non-scientists, there is no such thing as a study you must believe.

It’s always possible to question methods, find an alternative interpretation of the data, or, if all else fails, question the honesty or ideology of the researchers.

Jonathan Haidt, Thomas Cooley Professor of Ethical Leadership at NYU’s Stern School of Business, from The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion, 2012
So….

If they like you and they trust you, your facts don’t matter.

If they don’t like you or don’t trust you, your facts don’t matter.

Jack A. Bobo
Recommendations

• Acknowledging the reality that is our current nutrition environment:
  – do not shy from eminently qualified candidates simply because they are completely transparent in their views and research;
  – avoid overly zealous advocates of specific positions regardless of their public or academic appeal.

• Consider this not as a committee, but rather as a team
Do not shy from eminently qualified candidates

- I believe that you need to accept that the entire DGAC process (including selection of the committee) will involve some controversy.
- Scientists who acknowledge that they work with industry should not be penalized for acknowledging that fact, or for the fact itself.
- The DGAC process is now so startlingly public (all full committee meetings “now brought to you live!”) that any member bias will be on display for all to see.
- You cannot run away from bias, but you can insure that it is exposed.
Avoid overly zealous advocates of specific positions.

• Choosing scientists who have never shifted their position on a nutrition topic, means choosing scientists who are willfully blind to new data or new approaches to data analyses.

• Choosing scientists whose careers are built upon a singular health message, means choosing scientists with an immense impetus to champion their personal point of view.

• However, choosing scientists whose views have demonstrably evolved with new data, means choosing scientists who listen, who seek understanding and who honor the opportunity to learn while serving.
Consider Facilitation and Team Dynamics

• Consider using a professional facilitator, so that the Chair/Vice-Chair can be a more active participant (this will also lead to more productive meetings).
• Consider the individual styles for each committee member, and for what you are seeking to achieve.
• Consider previous effective committee experience.
• Of course there are many more things to consider, but failure to consider these less objective, more subjective aspects of committee members can dramatically hamper progress and reduce likelihood of success.
Life is messy sometimes.

Sometimes the best you can do is to accept that it is messy, try to love it as much as you can, and move forward.

Dave Kelley
CEO & Chair,
IDEO