

Leadership: Yes We Can

Virginia C. Broudy MD
Scripps Professor of Hematology

February 5, 2020

Outline

- What is leadership?
- Overcome self doubt/the impostor syndrome
- Hone your skills and manage up
- Help others become leaders
- Enjoy the journey
- Move on

“Leadership is like itching –
easy to recognize, but hard to describe.”

-Anonymous

“You are in charge, but don’t touch the controls.”

-said to astronaut Shannon Lucid
in the MIR Space Station

Leadership includes working the levers

- Goals and Strategic Planning
- Faculty Recruitment, Retention, and Inspiration
- Finance
- Space

Can I do this?

Many people question themselves!

“I have written eleven books, but each time I think ‘Uh oh, they’re going to find out now. I’ve run a game on everybody and they’re going to find me out.’”

-Maya Angelou

Winner, Presidential Medal of Freedom

Have you ever thought:

“Pretty soon ‘they’ will realize that everyone else here is smarter, more capable, more _____, than me.

OR

“The search committee made a mistake when they selected me.”

The Impostor Syndrome

My son, who is a software engineer at Google, told me about this.

The Impostor Syndrome

(from the Caltech website)

- Feelings of inadequacy that persist even in the face of information that the opposite is true
- Chronic self doubt



“Your fear of being publicly exposed as a fraud is a stress-related disorder called ‘Impostor Syndrome.’ It’s common among people in high-profile authority positions, and, of course, in actual phonies, like you.”

Turn to the person next to you:

- Do you have an example of a time you lacked confidence?
- Does the impostor syndrome resonate with you?

How did I get to be a leader?

The encouragement of others was essential!

- Hematology Section Head at Harborview
- Chief of Medicine/Vice Chair position was open
- Chief of Surgery (Ron Maier) said “You should apply!”
- I said “Who, me?”

Key Point

- Your colleague may suggest you for a job for which you don't feel quite ready – Consider it!
- Pursue the position vigor and enthusiasm and learn while you do it (or learn that you don't enjoy this type of work)

Additional Points

- Promote the careers of those around you
- Empower others and celebrate their triumphs
- You want a cadre of colleagues capable of stepping forward



“While you were out, sir, the company, rudderless and adrift, operated pretty much the same as always.”

How can I improve my leadership?

Take leadership courses

- Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine
- Harvard School of Public Health Leadership Course

Engage in reflective learning

- We all screw up and can learn from this
- “Do you or your father have any questions?”
-Learning: Ask “And how are you related?”

**Consider your mistakes experiences
and learn from them.**

“Success is nothing more than
going from failure to failure
with undiminished enthusiasm”

-Winston Churchill

Reflective Learning: A Chance to Take it to the Next Level

Ask yourself:

- How did that meeting or research talk go?
- What worked well?
- What would I do differently next time?
- What does Joanna do that works really well (or poorly)?
- Could I adopt some of her successful approaches?

“You can observe a lot by just watching.”

-Yogi Berra

Be Prepared!

- Committee meetings – read material in advance
 - FDA Biological Response Modifiers Committee
- Think about areas of opportunity/concern
- Think about solutions
- Have reasons behind your comments or questions

Bring Solutions to Your Leaders

- “This is the situation and I see three possible next steps...”
- “Here are the pros and cons of each...”
- “What are your thoughts?”

Try new things that are challenging and stretch you

- In areas of your interest that you care about
- When you have time to do a good job
- The Peter Pan principle “Most things peter out, but some things pan out.”
- You can learn on the job (not “I don’t have all the skills needed for that job.”)

Do what you say you will do (or say no)

- Perfectionism is the enemy of completion
- Time is finite
- “Straw man” concept
- All good writing is rewriting
- Deliver on your promises

Saying No

- Am I uniquely qualified to do this, or are there others who could do a better job?
- Do I have the time to do a good job?
- What will I have to stop doing in order to do this project (opportunity cost)?
- Is this project/issue important to me?
- “Let me think about this and get back to you”

Saying No

- “I can’t give this important project the time it merits”
- Think about who would be challenged and learn from the project, and recommend him or her

Finish what you start

- Have confidence in your data and move on
- “If you don’t write the paper by January, I will.” (John Adamson, my research mentor)
- Break it into small segments and complete one per day
- Set achievable goals
 - If you set a goal that is 20% more than a mere mortal can achieve, you will always be disappointed

Teams

“In the history of human kind (and animal kind too), those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed.”

-Charles Darwin

Work as a team and facilitate the success of others

- Textbook chapter “You write this section, I’ll write that section” (clarity over who does what and by when)
- Notice and celebrate the success of others

Celebrate the Success of Others

When I was a new assistant professor and my R01 was funded, the Chair of the Department of Medicine (Phil Fialkow) sent me a handwritten note of congratulations.

I still have that note...and I learned from this experience.

Celebrate the Success of Others

- Send a note/email to others when they have a success (major talk, paper, award/honor)
- “Somebody noticed”
- “Somebody cares about my career and my contributions to academic medicine”

Recall that you have impact on those around you

- “To me, the proof of a man’s goodness is the effect he has upon others.”

-WH Auden

- “People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

-Maya Angelou

We are constantly modeling behaviors for those around us

- How we treat patients
- How we refer to our colleagues, including physicians, nurses, other investigators, trainees

Coaching vs Feedback

- Coaching for better performance
- Feedback as evaluation
- You want your colleagues to coach you!
- Dr. Barbara Goff will discuss this today

Communicate AND Listen

- Communicate clearly and frequently
- Listen to your colleagues, especially those who have a different point of view
 - Abraham Lincoln's "team of rivals"
- Empower people to speak up/avoid silent dissent
 - "Help me to understand your thinking on this issue"
 - "Let's not decide until we hear from Anna"
 - "What I hear you saying is..."

Leadership

It's not about you and your achievements, it's about how you support the faculty and trainees and staff to advance the mission of the Department, the School, and UW Medicine.

Moving On

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.”

- Charles Dickens

“The times they are a’ changin’”

-Bob Dylan

“Shift happens.”

-Anonymous

Term Limits

- Time for new ideas, not a caretaker
- A natural progression, not a character flaw or a deficit in diligence
- Gives others the opportunity that you had
- Transition period – help your successor

NEJM 381:1508, 2019

“Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?”

-Mary Oliver
The Summer Day

Your Career is Your Adventure

- Enjoy it!
- Use your own internal metronome for success – do not let others define success for you
- You are in the driver's seat of your career: driving a race car vs riding a bucking bronco

Thank you!