

# LEADERSHIP LESSONS FOR CHIEF RESIDENTS

David Della-Giustina, MD, FACEP  
Professor of Emergency Medicine  
Program Director, Yale EM Residency

Jessica Walrath, MD  
Chief Resident 2016-17  
Yale EM Residency

## WHAT IS LEADERSHIP?

*The art of understanding motivations, influencing people and teams, and communicating purpose and direction to accomplish stated goals while improving organizations*

Mark Hertling: [Growing Physician Leaders](#)

## FIRST UNDERSTAND YOURSELF

- Good leaders know themselves
  - Who you are
  - What are your personal values?
  - What are your strengths?
  - Where do you need improvement?
- What motivates you to lead?

## LEARN TO LEAD ONE PERSON FIRST

- Dyadic leadership: one-on-one leadership
- Patients and / of their family members
- A junior resident or student on your team
- A nurse or tech on your team
- It grows from there

## FOUR TRAITS OF GOOD LEADERS

1. Presence
2. Service
3. Communication
4. Humility

## PRESENCE

- Looking the part of a leader
- Action, words and manner in which you interact with your team
- Exuding confidence and compassion but not cockiness
- Being available for your team even when they do not need you

## SERVICE

- The residents in your residency are your residents
- You need to learn and understand their motivations and issues
- It is your job to:
  - First, listen to their concerns and address them
  - Protect them from negative influences / pressures
  - Help them in navigating the various issues of the residency
  - Lead and educate them to becoming the best EM physicians possible
- All of this comes at a cost of your time and some of your other commitments

## COMMUNICATION

- Ensure that you have an appropriate plan to disseminate information and objectives to your residents
- Do not lead by email
- Schedule face-to-face meetings planned at certain intervals
- Hold unscheduled meetings when larger issues arise that need attention
- Large group as well as smaller group and individual discussions
- Use other leaders to communicate – formal and informal

# HUMILITY

- You will never always be right
- Always be willing to listen first before making a judgement or decision
- Ask for help from others in the residency or your leadership when you need it
- Apologize when you make a wrong or less than favorable decision

# SUMMARY

- Remember this: It is a privilege to lead residents
- Be available in person as well as indirectly for your residents
- These are your residents – fight for them
- Have a solid communication strategy
- You are not perfect and you are not alone