

**LEADERSHIP 101: KEYS TO SUCCESS IN ACADEMICS**  
**THAT THEY DIDN'T TEACH YOU IN SCHOOL!**

Jonathan Davis, M.D.  
CORD Academic Assembly 2017  
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

---

Leadership skill development is a crucial component of success in education and academics. This presentation will provide useful pearls, as well as identify avoidable pitfalls, that are foundational to effective leadership in medical education and academic EM.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Define strategies to build a highly effective education team
  2. Describe how to effectively manage a team, lead a committee, and run a meeting
  3. Identify how to effect positive change at your institution
  4. Learn how to incorporate emotional intelligence into your leadership repertoire
- 

- I. Introduction
  - a. Academics is academics
    - i. Crosses disciplines, crosses medical specialties
    - ii. “an inert gas that can fill any volume given to it”
  - b. Leadership is leadership
    - i. Crosses domains, crosses industries
    - ii. There is no “I” in team
  
- II. Definitions
  - a. **What is Academics?**
    - i. Academics is scholarship
  - b. The traditional definition of **scholarship** has been expanded:
    - i. Boyer. Scholarship Reconsidered. Carnegie Foundation, 1990.
    - ii. Foundational aspect: Peer Review
    - iii. Teaching and learning
      1. That is evaluated by others
      2. E.g., teaching evaluations, course evaluations
    - iv. Application and engagement
      1. With results that can be shared
      2. National committees, white papers, etc.
    - v. Integration
      1. Synthesis of existing information
      2. Comprehensive reviews, textbook chapters

- vi. Discovery
    - 1. Traditional definition
    - 2. Original research, bench or bedside
  - c. Opportunities for scholarship exist at every level
    - i. Spectrum of medical education from undergraduate (UME) → graduate (GME) → continuing (CME)
    - ii. UME – involvement with medical students
    - iii. GME – involvement with medical residents and fellows
    - iv. CME – faculty development and maintenance of certification
  - d. What is Leadership?**
    - i. Elevating the game of others
      - 1. Not the lone wolf
      - 2. The power of synergy
    - ii. Lead by example
      - 1. Be the boss that you would want to have
    - iii. Teach by example
      - 1. Be the teacher that you would want to learn from
    - iv. Others are taking note...set the tone, be genuine, demonstrate compassion
- III. Building your success in academics – your “street cred”
- a. Lead by example
    - i. Just get involved! Speaking, writing, networking with colleagues (local, regional, national, international)
    - ii. Get the word out
    - iii. Establish yourself as a completer
  - b. Find a niche
    - i. Alternatively, let a niche find you
    - ii. True expertise comes with time
  - c. Academics does not equate to overextension
    - i. But, embrace serendipity
    - ii. Remain vigilant for key opportunities for growth
    - iii. Make yourself invaluable to your system
- IV. Foundational Leadership Skills – “synergy” with others
- a. Committees and Meetings**
    - i. Fundamental skill and expectation of leaders
    - ii. Can have tremendous impact on you and your team’s ability to excel and succeed
    - iii. No one ever taught us how to do this!
    - iv. Key themes:
      - 1. Meeting advance prep and follow-up are equally (if not more) important to the meeting itself
      - 2. Give all a voice

3. Set the example, set the expectations
- v. Step 1: Have a plan, prepare well in advance for your meeting
  1. Often more important than the meeting itself!
- vi. Step 2: Identify key participants
  1. Presence of stakeholders and/or decision-makers when prudent
- vii. Step 3: “Send” the invitation
  1. Solicit interest, pre-assign tasks
- viii. Step 4: Immediate peri-meeting prep
  1. Communicate changes
  2. Share bios/participant photos
- ix. Step 5: Lead the meeting
  1. Start on time
  2. End of meeting ritual: go around the horn
- x. Step 6: Post-meeting follow-up
  1. Proactively manage post-assignments

**b. Effecting positive change at your shop**

- i. Change is tough
  1. Never underestimate the impact of change on a team!
  2. Impact on individuals, collateral impacts, collateral damage
- ii. Actively manage the process
  1. Gain buy-in by speaking to stakeholders
  2. Pre-vet contentious issues
- iii. Adapt your mindset: Change is a process, and not a quick dispo

V. Lessons in Academic Leadership

- a. Just get over yourself!
  - i. No matter how good you think you are, you undoubtedly have a lot to learn
  - ii. No matter how bad you think you are, you are probably much better than you think!
  - iii. Balance and moderation are keys
    1. Remain reasonable, consistent, equitable, and transparent
- b. Tee-up *others* for success
- c. Open-door, open-dialogue
  - i. Learn to listen
  - ii. Gather intel, reflect...then decide
    1. Resist the urge to hyper-reply to email
    2. Avoid getting cornered into snap decisions
- d. Identify and alleviate “pain points”
  - i. Focus on removing barriers so others can succeed
- e. Generate “promoters”

- i. From the marketing world: “How likely are you to recommend us to a friend?”
    - ii. Promoters, better than passively satisfied, and certainly better than detractors
  - f. Manage your state
    - i. We live in a fish bowl – establish the mood and tone for the team
    - ii. Be a giver (and not a matcher, or even worse, a taker)
  - g. Craft the culture
    - i. Culture emanates from the top down
    - ii. Clear, consistent, transparent, equitable
  - h. Focus on the vision
    - i. Invest in creating a vision for any team
  - i. Keep an adaptive mindset
    - i. Surround yourself with healthy dissent
  - j. Work hard & have fun in the process
  - k. Under-sell and over-deliver
    - i. Under-delivering leads to demoralized, disengaged, and appearance of dishonesty
  - l. Not everything that is valuable can be measured
    - i. Make it meaningful, make it impactful, make it “valuable”
- VI. The academic leader
  - a. Provides opportunities
  - b. Stimulates ideas
  - c. Removes barriers

---

## References / Further Reading

Collins J & Porras JI. Building Your Company’s Vision. Harvard Business Review 1996 Sept-Oct. Available at: <https://hbr.org/1996/09/building-your-companys-vision>

Ashkenas R. Let Your Customers Streamline Your Business. Harvard Business Review 2013 (Sept 4th). Available at: <https://hbr.org/2013/09/let-your-customers-streamline>

Reichheld FF. The One Number You Need to Grow. 2003 Dec. Available at: <https://hbr.org/2003/12/the-one-number-you-need-to-grow>

Grant A. In the Company of Givers and Takers. Harvard Business Review 2013 April. Available at: <https://hbr.org/2013/04/in-the-company-of-givers-and-takers>

McChrystal S, et al. Team of Teams: New Rules of Engagement for a Complex World. New York (NY): Penguin Random House, 2015.

Rosen B. Grounded: How leaders stay rooted in an uncertain world. San Francisco (CA): Jossey-Bass - Wiley, 2014.