Leadership in Health Care

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A few insights from some recent research on weak spots in effective influence

Not just how to make the best decisions yourself, but also how to more effectively influence others to make the best collective decisions.

Others you need to influence are not only those below you in the hierarchy -- but also peers, those above you in the hierarchy, and your patients.
What Makes a Good Leader?

Take a moment and think about your own experience:

- Think of two or three adjectives or phrases that describe a good leader you have known as a follower. Now think of two or three adjectives or phrases that describe a bad leader you have known.

As I go through a research-based leadership model developed at Duke and some recent data from medical settings, see how your experience matches the literature and results.
Some initial observations

Three ways we motivate and direct people in organizations:

Management of Incentives: “Do this to earn more” (or to avoid punishment)
  Positive features—relies on self-interest, if incentives well-designed, system is self-monitoring
  Negative features—breaks down if system is seen as unfair; danger of “rewarding A while hoping for B”

Authority: “Do this because I’m your boss”
  Positive features—relies on hierarchy alone; quick
  Negative features—relies on acceptance of the hierarchy; can prompt “slow rolling;” declining in influence.

Leadership: “Do this because it is the best thing for us to do”
Some initial observations

- Leadership = Guidance and motivation through meaning and identity.
  - Definition: *Exercising influence over others in the pursuit of a goal*

- The leader-follower connection is a relationship that is a natural and basic component of all societies.

- In both hierarchical and nonhierarchical contexts we need leadership for sustained coordinated action.

- Like any skill set, leadership skills can be learned and improved.
The Sitkin-Lind Leadership Pyramid
Core focus of the domains

- Acting responsibly
- Raising optimism & enthusiasm
- Providing resources, feedback, and protection
- Creating vision and giving direction
- Showing concern and understanding
- Clarifying who we are and how we work together
Leadership consequences: Each domain has distinct effects

- TRUST
- CREDIBILITY
- COMMUNITY
- INITIATIVE
- HIGH ASPIRATION
- STEWARDSHIP
Physician Leadership Matters to Patients Too

Two surveys about recent medical experiences
Asked questions based on six-domains model translated into physician-patient encounters
Also asked about:
- Satisfaction and intention to return to same doctor
- Compliance with medications, treatment suggestions, and referrals
- Optimism and attitudes about future health

Moderate to strong correlations between physician leadership and each outcome variable
Physician Leadership Matters to Staff

Physician leadership scores predict staff assuming responsibility, staff initiative, and staff striving for improvement.
Physician Leadership Matters to Patients

Rx & Treatment Compliance

Satisfaction & Retention

Attitude & Optimism

Physician leadership scores predict patient compliance, attitudes, satisfaction, and retention.
Physician Leadership of Staff

Leadership Ratings

- Personal: 5.5
- Relational: 5.5
- Contextual: 5.5
- Inspirational: 5.5
- Supportive: 5.5
- Responsible: 5.5
Physician Leadership of Patients

Leadership Ratings

- Personal: 4.5
- Relational: 4.5
- Contextual: 4.0
- Motivational: 4.0
- Supportive: 4.0
- Responsible: 4.0
“Leadership can be thought of as a capacity to define oneself to others.”
— Edwin H. Friedman, rabbi & family therapist

“As a leader, you're probably not doing a good job unless your employees can do a good impression of you when you're not around.”
— Patrick Lencioni, author
Personal Leadership

- Demonstrate that you have the competence and vision to lead to success
- Be authentic: Let your values and personality show in your actions
- Make your dedication to the team evident to all
- Effect → Credibility
Relational Leadership

“Leadership is about empathy. It is about having the ability to relate and to connect with people.”
— Oprah Winfrey

“I ain’t never learned nothing by talking.”
— Lyndon Johnson
Demonstrate concern, understanding, and respect for others

Be seen as fair

Effect $\rightarrow$ Trust
Contextual Leadership

“The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality.”
— Max DePree, former CEO Herman Miller

“There's nothing more demoralizing than a leader who can't clearly articulate why we're doing what we're doing.”
— Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner
Contextual Leadership

- Focus and simplify
- Build a sense of coherence to enhance clarity of roles and functions
- Create a sense of identity
- Effect → Sense of community
Inspirational Leadership

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.”
— John Quincy Adams

“A man does not have himself killed for a half-pence a day or for a petty distinction; you must speak to the soul in order to electrify him.”
— Napoleon
Inspirational Leadership

- Promote a climate of excellence and innovation
- Exhibit enthusiasm and optimism
- Effect \( \rightarrow \) Raised Aspirations
Supportive Leadership

“Giving people self-confidence is by far the most important thing that I can do. Because then they will act.”

— Jack Welch, former General Electric CEO
Supportive Leadership

- Give accurate feedback to individuals and teams—Build a sense of “efficacy”
- Secure needed resources
- Promote accountability, not blame
- Effect \(\rightarrow\) Appropriate initiative
“If ethics are poor at the top, that behavior is copied down through the organization.”

— Robert Noyce, founder of Fairchild Semiconductor Intel, inventor of the integrated circuit

“Leadership is a combination of strategy and character. If you must be without one, be without the strategy.”

— H. Norman Schwarzkopf, General (ret), U.S. Army
Responsible Leadership

- Encourage balanced action
- Model ethical behavior
- Demonstrate responsibility
- Effect → Stewardship
The leadership pyramid matrix

Balance

Action

Foundation

More personal  More structural
A distinctive approach

**Behavioral**: Leadership is what you do, not just who you are. Change what you do and you can change your leadership style. Thus, our approach is actionable.

**Focus on Effects**: Each domain is keyed to a specific leadership effect.

**Comprehensive**: Most leadership approaches focus on just a few aspects of leadership – ours integrates the many aspects of leadership.
Leadership domains and effects

- **Stewardship**: Responsible
- **Inspirational**: High aspiration
- **Supportive**: Personal
- **Contextual**: Relational
- **Trust**: Credibility
- **Community**: Initiative
Questions? Comments?

Did I miss some of the things you thought of when I asked you to think about good and bad leaders and doctors?

Research presented here is still ongoing—suggestions (and participation in the research!) are welcome

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