

FROM THE EDITOR

On Success in Academic Medicine

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After nearly 30 years at the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine, I have participated in, facilitated, and led numerous faculty development programs at our institution. I often encounter junior and mid-career faculty who, despite years of excellence and dedication to their chosen field as clinicians, educators, and researchers, express frustration with the promotion process and the perceived lack of appreciation for their work.

There is a different metric by which medical school faculty are judged, and it is often not apparent to new and even mid-career faculty. Here, then, is a list of attributes for success in academic medicine. The list is my own, compiled from my own educational journey as well as from personal observations and interactions with the promotions process and key stakeholders in that process. With it, I aspire to highlight the unique expectations of academic medical centers and the challenge inherent in achieving balance between professional lives and career aspirations. Comments and critiques of this approach will be welcomed by me and may appear in a future issue of *Forum*.

I would like to thank the numerous teachers, mentors, and research colleagues I have had over the years

at Case Western Reserve University, SGIM, and the American College of Physicians for influencing my vision and enhancing my ability to attain my personal career goals.

10 Habits of Successful Medical School Faculty

1. Be excellent at what you do whether it be patient care, teaching or research, and realize that “being excellent” is basically doing your job. This is the expectation. If you weren’t excellent, you wouldn’t be here.
2. Understand the mission of your institution (i.e. school or hospital), and find your place in it. Find a way to make unique contributions to that mission.
3. Discover something you are passionate about in your field, and share your passion.
4. Be strategic about your career development. Choose finite definable goals, and work to understand the path to achievement of those goals. Be humble. Seek mentorship and accept criticism with an open mind and with the goal of continuous personal improvement.
5. Keep your skill set sharp. Whatever the stage in your career, seek out opportunities to learn and grow your toolkit of “executive functions,” including leadership, scholarship, negotiation, collaboration, communication, and networking, to name a few.
6. Get outside your home institution and *do something* (e.g. academic presentations, mentoring, advocacy, leadership).
7. Pay it forward. Find opportunities to be a mentor and a sponsor. When your plate gets too full, delegate projects to others you have trained to be future leaders of the agenda you have initiated. Let sponsorship of others be a mechanism for multiplying the impact of your projects.
8. Look out for trainees and junior faculty. If you witness injustices in hiring practices, delegation of teaching assignments, opportunities for leadership, and career advancement, advocate for change from within your institution.
9. Develop your network, maintain relationships, and facilitate collaboration among your contacts.
10. Promote your projects, share your successes, and make the impact of your work known.