



The Path of a Chief of Medical Physics

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Why would you want to serve as a Director of Medical Physics?

- Broader scope of influence
- Ability to shape the direction of your department
- Impact on employee satisfaction

Harvard Business Review: "What's the one factor that most affects how satisfied, engaged, and committed you are at work? All of our research over the years points to one answer - and that's the answer to the question: Who is your immediate supervisor?"



Why would you want to serve as a Director of Medical Physics?

Total Employees Supervised	Number	Median Yrs Exper	Primary Income Percentiles			
			Average	20th	Median	80th
None	415	10	173.9	145.0	170.0	200.0
1-3	204	15	188.3	156.0	189.4	220.0
4-9	211	15	206.1	168.0	200.0	250.0
10 or more	189	21	245.4	182.0	242.0	300.0

Note: Salaries are in thousands of dollars.



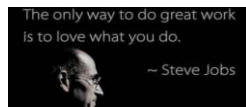
Job Considerations

- Job can be largely administrative in nature
- Significant percentage of time spent in meetings
- Need to engage in HR issues (corrective actions, layoffs, interpersonal disputes, unhappy employees)
- Dynamic of relationships with your physicist colleagues will be different



Choosing the Right Career Path

- Does this work match your interests and passions?
- Does it match your personality strengths?



How do I set myself up to become a Director of Medical Physics?

- Start planning now for where you want to be in 5 or 10 years
- Make an ongoing commitment to professional development
- Build your CV to make yourself an appealing candidate
- Grow your network of connections – “It’s not what you know, it’s who you know, and who knows you.”

“Try not to become a person of success, but rather try to become a person of value.” - Albert Einstein



What are potential employers looking for?

Applicants must have a Ph.D. in Medical Physics or equivalent discipline and at least five years of experience with board certification by the American Board of Radiology. Candidates must have proven leadership skills, a strong desire to mentor faculty and staff, and excellent oral and written communication skills.



Develop Clinical Skills

- Find good clinical mentors
- Develop a breadth of clinical skills (not too focused)
- Find opportunities to attend formal training courses
- Get board certified by ABR
 - For positions with >10 direct reports, 82.6% are ABR certified



Develop Research Skills

- Presentations and publications will help build up your profile
- Practical clinical topics still provide opportunities (local AAPM chapter, spring AAPM, JACMP, PRO)
- Find good collaborators (look to other disciplines)
- Look for grant opportunities (internal grants, corporate grants, government grants)

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Develop Leadership Skills (1)

- Get involved with your local AAPM chapter
- Get involved with AAPM, ASTRO, ABR, etc. by serving on a committee, task group, etc.
- Lead your department's ASTRO/APEX or ACR accreditation

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Develop Leadership Skills (2)

- Look for opportunities within your department:
 - Oversee students (dosimetrists, physicists, therapists)
 - Take lead with residency program
 - Head up projects (linac commissioning, new technology selection and/or roll out)
 - Participate with and possibly chair committees (quality committee, safety committee, radiation safety)
- Hospital-wide opportunities (e.g. faculty senate)

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Develop Communication and Interpersonal Skills (1)

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- Continuous improvement in English skills (particularly English as a second language). Commit to ongoing improvement and do not let skills plateau.
- Become a good listener



Develop Communication and Interpersonal Skills (2)

- Crucial Conversations: strategies for dealing with difficult conversations and negotiations
 - Having the ability to successfully engage in difficult conversations is an important skill to successfully manage relationships and results.
 - "One of the greatest arts in life is learning how to disagree without being disagreeable", William Ury



You've Got the Job – Now What? "I Wasn't Trained for This"

- We are trained as scientists. A medical physicist has likely never had a course in management, finance, or strategic planning
- You need to develop skills: negotiating deals with vendors, interviewing and negotiation with job candidates, keeping the peace among staff members, creating a fair work environment, saying "no" to requests
- Lesson: Have open and honest conversations with your employees. Do not shy away from difficult conversations.

"We all make mistakes. That's what happens when you try." - Barack Obama



Conclusions

- Surround yourself with good people
- Find your passion (patient care, research, new technology, health care administration) and point yourself in a direction to build a career around that passion.
- Improving your clinical skills, research skills, leadership skills, and communications skills will set you up for success regardless of which career path you choose.
