

American Association of Physicians In Medicine  
"Leadership Tuesday"  
Session 4: Selfless Servant Leadership

Tony Cucolo, Jennifer Johnson and Jim Goodwin  
Summer 2019



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## Icebreaker

Table discussion:

Who is the best leader you've ever seen?  
Why?

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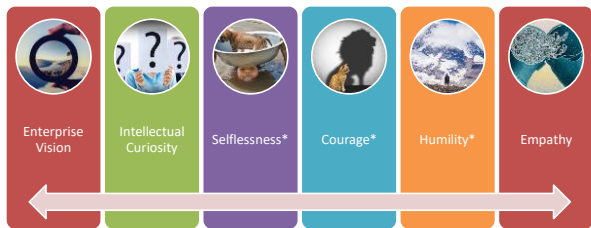
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### From Session 1: The Recommendation to Harden Your Soft Skills



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Selflessness

- 21<sup>st</sup> century demands servant leadership...selflessness is the essence of servant leadership.
- You place yourself last – or at least behind everyone and everything in your organization.
- The best leaders are last in line for any “good deals” – “leaders eat last” is a descriptive mantra for this -- but here is what some folks miss: the best leaders are also FIRST in line for the bad deals. (Bosnia...tent, shower, vaccine)
- Selflessness means you must make decisions based on what is good for the organization...not necessarily what is good for you.
- It also means you seek every opportunity to help a peer.

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Selflessness and Selfless Servant Leadership  
 come naturally where *professionals* operate  
 in accordance with a  
*professional ethic.*

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Are we a profession? What professions do...

- Provide a **vital service** to society which society cannot provide for itself – but must have to flourish.
- Maintain and work with **expert/abstract knowledge developed into human expertise**...not routine or repetitive work...requires years of study and experiential learning. Professions create and expand this expert knowledge, and ensure rising generations in the profession maintain their expertise.
- Earn and maintain **the trust of their constituents/society** by the effective and ethical application of their expertise.
- Has incorporated an ethic as a means of **internal social control**. Professional ethics develops the most powerful means of controlling individual behavior in large groups functioning under ambiguous conditions.
- Because of the earned trust and the acknowledged internal control, professions are granted **relative autonomy** in the application of their expertise.




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Professional Ethic

- Imbuing a professional ethic
  - You are blessed to lead – and therefore also be the stewards of – a true profession.
  - Professions are comprised of people with unique expert knowledge who **have the trust** of those with whom their profession is practiced.
  - **Stewards of professions** know that if trust is lost, they are no longer professionals.
  - The understanding of the components of professional behavior is absolutely key and critical in developing leaders who are stewards and sustaining the profession.




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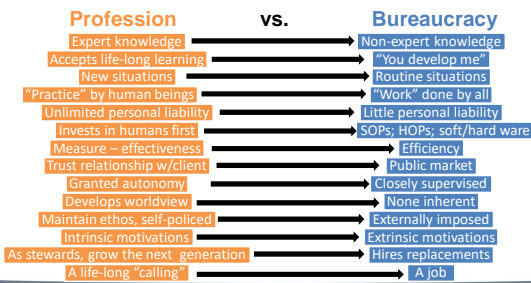
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## Relevance to the Profession Jennifer and Jim

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## Tips and techniques for exercising selflessness and servant leadership.

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### Reflexive Humility

- Builds trust and establishes professional reputation; prove you are not superior to others; prove you have empathy for those with whom you interact.
- Minimize stories about yourself.
- Take the shot.
- Be the anonymous hero.
- Be quick to compliment.
- Gut check: how do you treat those who have no impact on your success?
- Place your peers above yourself.

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### Be the Courageous Friction Reducer

- Coach, encourage, take a shot at the “RA2 Drill” (described) or at least a set of terms of reference.
- Deny bystander mentality; ask questions; discover/uncover misunderstanding or garbled instructions or intent.
- Establish/be the keeper of a “rumor mill” or manage “rumor intelligence.”
- Regarding friction, act with prejudice (assume there is friction even if there is the slightest indicator).
- Take first shot at fractured relationship repair; then raise issue and get help if you cannot resolve.

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### Be a “Professional Listener”

- Listen to understand, do not listen to respond.
- Listen with empathy:
  - Listen and Confirm, then Act.
  - If uncertain, ask, “What is your desired outcome? If you were the boss, what would you want to have happen?”
- You may be faced with ignorant, uninformed, or professionally lazy entities pushing information to the boss. Politely and professionally force them to explain/support the information:
  - “What makes you say that?” and “What is your source?”
  - “Well, okay, let’s play that out...keep talking...” (have them walk to you an outcome)

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### Assign a Guardrail and Moral Agent

- Foundation is your own exceptional personal behavior.
- Guardrail:
  - A special status of trust and expected candor;
  - Allowed (required) to tell the boss when she/he is doing something wrong, inappropriate, or that which had or could have a negative effect on the organization or himself.
- Moral Agent:
  - Widely used term for the same role.
  - One who is capable and feels responsible to acting rationally with reference to right and wrong.
- “Guardrail” may be a more acceptable term; consider requesting this status with your boss.

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Practical Exercise:

What are other ways to show selflessness and exhibit servant leadership in our workplace?

How can we reward and reinforce such behavior?

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Closing thoughts from leadership "scar tissue."

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“The best I’ve ever seen...”

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“The Best I’ve Seen”

- Saw the *bigger picture* / larger purpose
- Knew systems and processes well, but were not slaves to them and drove *improvements*
- Were *comfortable* – in fact, almost enjoyed – *chaotic and ambiguous environments*
- Accepted a *change in direction* positively and effectively
- Operated at the top levels of the “*knowledge pyramid*” and enabled decision making
- Displayed no sense of entitlement or of being owed something; always *deflected praise*
- *Sought personal advice* about their place in the profession but never indicated title or position were the focus of desire
- Had a very strong *positive reputation* among their peers based on never failing to help one in need

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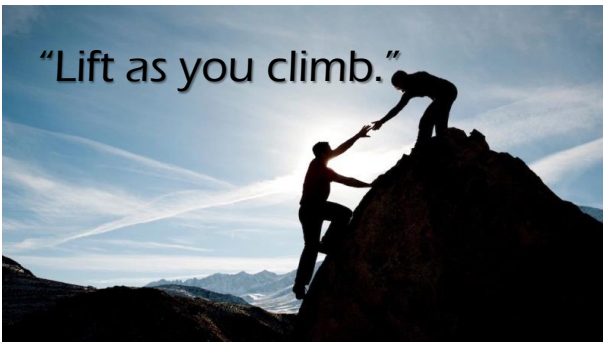
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“Lift as you climb.”



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# AAA-0

(Anything, Anytime, Anywhere, Bar Nothing)

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