Making That Leap to Leadership

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Membership in the Medical Physics Leadership Academy (will be discussing some resources today)

Advocate for equity, diversity, and inclusion
What’s your relationship to leadership?

Have you always been drawn to leadership? Team Captain, First Chair, SPSS President?

Or have you felt that you didn’t have the skills to be a leader? Not enough experience, not the right personality?

Or maybe you’re somewhere in between – happy to lead, if necessary, but don’t seek out opportunities.
My own experience...

- Work in a group of 35: physicists, admin, techs, physics assistants, IT staff
- I’m the most “Junior” physicist (11 years)
- 2018 I was asked: do you want to supervise the IT group?
The landscape at the time

Professionally:

• The IT staff was all older than me
• There had been some performance issues within the group
• I am NOT an IT expert
• I had just taken over as Co-Chair of a new professional committee
• I was thinking about going back to school

Personally:

• I had a baby
• I was pumping several hours a day
• I was TIRED
The hesitation...

Enter the Mentors!
So I took the leap

• Did I get some grey hairs? Yes
• Was it hard? Yes
• Have I learned a lot? YES!

• Interviewing, hiring, difficult conversations, mentorship, disciplinary action, project management, strategic planning, conflict management
What’s hard about being a leader (especially as a medical physicist!)

AAPM conducted emotional competency survey in 2016

- 50 AAPM members surveyed
- 360° Emotional Competency Inventory used

Several areas of growth were identified:

- Conflict Management
- Initiative
- Adaptability
- Empathy

What has helped me?

- Talking with peer mentors who were also supervisors in my office
- Classes at my institution
- Professional coaching sessions
So many resources available!

• Medical Physics Leadership Academy (www.aapm.org/leadership)
  • Website – recorded talks, case studies, podcasts
  • Live talks @ AAPM meetings
  • Cohorts – groups that meet for a year and explore MPLA curriculum together
  • Journal Club – virtual monthly meetings to discuss focused topics (e.g. empathy, self assessment, conflict management, etc.)
So many resources available!

AAPM Mentorship Program – rolling out in the coming year!
Stay tuned for an email with more information
Right now, seeking mentors

Check with your institution
Many larger institutions will have Leadership Courses available
Thank you!

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