Mini But Mighty Skills for Career & Professional Development & Fulfillment

Explore Your Career Opportunities



Meet Our Lead Faculty



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The Journey to Career Satisfaction

Challenges, Strategies and Finding Fulfillment



Learning Objectives

- Briefly review what we know about needs and challenges to career satisfaction
- Discuss proposed *personal strategies* to create career opportunities and satisfaction
- Discuss proposed *organizational investments* into physician wellness, including career development, as a quality indicator of healthcare organizations







A personal interest: the mid-career physician

- Largest (>50% of higher education faculty (Strage & Merdinger)) and most productive segment of faculty (Campion et al)
 - Lowest satisfaction with job (Castillo et al) and chosen specialty (Campion et al)
 - Lowest satisfaction in work-life balance (Whitcomb)
 - Experienced across specialties and in both women and men (Campion et al)
- "Mid-career Crisis Syndrome": common across many career paths— results in individuals feeling unsatisfied, stagnant or losing a sense of purpose (Castillo et al)
 - "Mid-career malaise" "Mid-career muddle" "Mid-career stall"



Why is this important?

- Inadequately supported staff members —> higher levels of burnout, reduced productivity, lower patient satisfaction, and poorer health outcomes (Bhagra et al)
- Physician job dissatisfaction: the most powerful predictor of physician departures (Brown & Gunderman)
 - Mid-career: > 2x as likely (even pre-pandemic) as early and late career to plan to leave medicine for reasons other than retirement in next 24 months (Whitcomb)
- Over the career course, how can we meet mid-career and beyond on a better path?





Issues affecting physicians: at the individual level

- Life stage challenges— noted at mid-career but can affect any physician
 - Caregiving for younger and older generations (Pifer)
 - Promoting their own health (Grant-Vallone & Ensher)
 - Partners with emerging careers (Daubman et al)
 - Find it personally difficult to change roles, give up roles, bring others along, or negotiate for expanded opportunities to lead (Fruge et al)
 - Navigate personal and professional roles and deal with challenges in juggling clinical and nonclinical responsibilities (Daubman et al)
 - We are interdependent with a wider network- ripple effects both ways





Issues affecting physicians: at the institutional level

- Noted at mid-career but can play a role in career development at any stage
 - "Off the radar screen" (Wilson)
 - "Ball will bounce by itself and have momentum" (Baldwin et al)
 - Eligibility for institutional recognition? Barriers? (Strage & Merdinger)
 - Opportunities for mentoring and career development (AAAAI)?
 - Rewards, recognition, feedback— ongoing or rare (Grant-Vallone & Ensher)?
 - Managerial tasks > authentic leadership opportunities (LaPointe Terosky & Baker)
 - Little or no formal training for leadership roles (Pifer)



Pathways to success: worth pursuing

- Faculty development: critical for continued career vitality (Catanzano)
- Physician satisfaction: enhances staff recruitment/retention; saves costs of physician turnover (Spickard et al) —> likely to provide better health care (Leigh et al)
 - ?Physician fulfillment affects patients' perception of quality of care (Brown & Gunderman)
- Individuals who feel well equipped to leverage their talent in the workplace achieve better outcomes, are more engaged, and are less likely to leave (Bhagra et al)
- Hinges on organizational culture and willingness to change that culture





What a better path might look like

• Satisfied physicians (Bickel):

approaches

- Control their work hours
- Develop diversified interests
- Maintain relationships with family
- Seek feedback from colleagues
- Proactively address their weaknesses
- Strategies to improve work experiences involve personal and institutional





Barriers to better paths

- Medical training: rigid; forging a professional identity is consuming
 - Other aspects of development are marginalized (Bickel)
- Lifestyle/accompanying financial obligations to keep up with (Rousmaniere)
- "Embeddedness": fit (extent that career is congruent with rest of life), links (extent of ties to other people/activities), and sacrifice (what would be given up) (Fruge et al)
- Culture: burnout is maintained by subtle reinforcement of esteem and recognition of one's peers for working hard and placing service to others before self-care (Spickard et al)
- Assumption that being highly skilled in a particular area, especially if demand for the skill is great, means one must persist with that work (Bickel)
- Organizational politics (Bickel)



Where does diversity and inclusion fit?



- Women: productivity may be influenced by family and/or work–life choices— literature shows that this does not adequately account for gaps in mid-career representation
 - Systemic forms of bias prevent women from achieving that anticipated by their education, training, and academic accomplishments (Lewiss et al)
- Paucity of sponsors of underrepresented identity (Farlow et al) [people of colour, LGBTQ+, cross-sectional identities]
 - Lack of transparent, intentional sponsorship processes
 - Inequities associated with recruitment, retention, advancement of diverse individuals
- Prior research: gender concordance between mentor/mentee pairs is not a prerequisite for effective mentorship (Oh et al).
- Mentorship paired with Sponsorship



A word about physician coaching

- A career coach can facilitate reflection and new directions (Bickel)
 - Facilitates contexts/tools for planning/support continued growth (Eib & Miller)
- Coachees gain empowerment via cognitive shifts in career (Grant-Vallone & Ensher)
 - Recognize and consistently make choices that support cognitive career ideal
- Anticipatory guidance define what broadening or scaling back might entail (Bickel)
- Recent study: 88 mid-career practicing physicians —> 6-month coaching intervention —> demonstrated decreased burnout and decreased emotional exhaustion (Fishman et al)
- Transformative at mid career facilitate critical self-reflection on specific development needs or career dilemmas; catalyze problem-focused interventions (Catanzano)





Personal strategies for career development

- Clarify your VALUES before setting your goals— they should ALIGN
- Set goals—assess available opportunities—how to qualify for them (Rosenfeld)
- Shed responsibilities that don't support goals; nurture better connections (Daubman et al)
- "Growth" mindset (Strage & Merdinger): embrace learning/experiences; resilience
- Find mentors/sponsors/coaches (Murphy) outside institution (Daubman et al)
- Job-crafting (Grant-Vallone & Ensher): to increase variety, meaning, fulfillment
- Mine professional medical associations for helpful resources (Rosenfeld)
- Treasure your accumulated professional experience and the clinical judgment that flows from it (Emmons). Work on your wellness!







Institutional investment into physician wellness



- Health care provider well-being: important metric of a high-quality health system (Singh et al)
- Interventions to increase work–life balance— family-friendly policies (Lall et al)
- Flexible work arrangements: (Mazaheri et al) promote well-being/reduce burnout; enable some control over when, where, how much work; associated increase in productivity
- Monitor experiences of mid-career faculty— different programs within the same department can be vary in offerings (Baldwin et al)
 - Exacerbates inequities in how we support or fail to support faculty
 - Chairs and department members acknowledge differences in resources/professional growth opportunities within their units — distribute resources, particularly those focused on professional development, so that all faculty benefit



Institutional investment into career development

- Organizational support for career development: most strongly correlated with career satisfaction (Collins II & Sanford)
 - More strongly related to career satisfaction than salary and promotion
- Placing the onus for career design solely on the individual neglects the historic and powerful role of institutions in shaping a faculty career (LaPointe Terosky & Baker)
- Recognition by campus administrators for faculty accomplishments (Stage & Medinger)— career-level specific awards & grants
- Targeted faculty development programs (Campion et al)
- More guidance/broader spectrum of available career paths (Bickel)





Conclusions

- There are numerous factors that impact career satisfaction at the individual and institutional levels
- There are numerous measures that can be taken at the individual and organizational levels that can enhance career development, career satisfaction and physician wellness
- Physician coaching is a personal and institutional investment that has proven benefits
- Overall it takes a multi-pronged approach, including culture shift, to get results!





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Literature Review

- Searched Google, Ovid MEDLINE, PubMed for all articles combining any form of the words mid-career, mid career physician, physician, career development, equity, diversity, inclusion, burnout,
- Without date or language restrictions
- Exclusion criteria included the inability to obtain the full text or English translation
- References of selected texts were manually reviewed for additional relevant articles

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