Late Career Leadership Experiences and Lessons Learned

Brent Wagner
Executive Director, American Board of Radiology
bwagner@theabr.org
Aging and Cognitive Reserve
Richard B. Gunderman, MD, PhD, Donald M. Bachman, MD

- “Crystallized intelligence, which consists of what we have learned over our lives about a particular discipline, profession, or trade . . .”
- “Their neurons are generally more interconnected than those of mice that lived in standard environments.”

“Although there is substantial (and at times heated) debate on the issue of general radiology vs subspecialization, it is . . . becoming increasingly difficult (if not impossible) for any single radiologist to remain highly proficient in all areas of our specialty.”
Late Career Leaders:

- Expanded perspective
  - The ecosystem of healthcare delivery
  - The value that we offer as imaging professionals
    - Economics
    - Population health
    - Consultants as part of a clinical team
Late Career Leaders:

- Expanded perspective
  - How we serve our stakeholders:
    - Hospital administration and the governing board
    - Support staff
    - Medical staff
    - Patients
    - Trainees (students, residents, fellows)
    - Our colleagues
Late Career Leaders:

- Expanded perspective
- Inherent obligations to mentor and coach
  - Common themes:
    - Patience
    - Adopt a long time horizon
    - Know when to say “no”
    - Synergies with colleagues
    - “80% of life is just showing up”
Late Career Leaders:

- Expanded perspective
- Inherent obligations to mentor and coach
- More roles in state and national arenas
  - Based on
    - Track record
    - Refined interests (as a subset of broad experience)
    - Long-term relationships
Late Career Leaders:

- Expanded perspective
- Inherent obligations to mentor and coach
- More roles in state and national arenas
- More opportunities to benefit from mistakes
  - Because... *we’ve made more mistakes.*
Late Career Leaders:

- Expanded perspective
- Inherent obligations to mentor and coach
- More roles in state and national arenas
- More opportunities to benefit from mistakes
- Enhanced sense of purpose
  - Incorporating many elements highlighted above, what is your “why”?
“. . . [optimal individual behavior] depends on three nutrients: autonomy, mastery, and purpose. [It] is self-directed. It is devoted to becoming better and better at something that matters. And it connects that quest for excellence to a larger purpose.”

Daniel Pink in
Late Career Leaders:

- Expanded perspective
- Inherent obligations to mentor and coach
- More roles in state and national arenas
- More opportunities to benefit from mistakes
- Enhanced sense of purpose
- Increased focus on what is most rewarding
Late Career Leaders:

- Increased focus on what is most rewarding . . . for you as an individual.
  - Teaching?
  - Quality and safety?
    - Peer learning?
  - Team-building?
  - Service line enhancements?
  - Innovation at a system level?
Late Career Leaders:

- Expanded perspective
- Inherent obligations to mentor and coach
- More roles in state and national arenas
- More opportunities to benefit from mistakes
- Enhanced sense of purpose
- Increased focus on what is most rewarding

Thank you!