

EXECUTIVE TRAINING FOR ACAPS MEMBERS

In order for leaders in the field of Academic Plastic Surgery to succeed, they need to develop “executive” skills, but often these qualities are simply learned on the job or passed down from mentors. It is the intent of ACAPS to make this skill-set easier to obtain, and a subcommittee has met over the past few years to address this request.

The definition of EXECUTIVE is “a person with senior managerial responsibility in a business organization. Thus, Division Chiefs, Chairs, and program Directors are all “executives” to varying degrees and it would stand to reason that “executive training” in the broader world of business would be helpful, especially in these changing medical times.

The most direct way to obtain formal executive training is to go back to school. Several of our members have obtained advanced business degrees, like MBA’s or Masters in Medical Management, but these endeavors are time consuming, expensive, and out of reach for most of us. Most business schools offer weekend schedules for such degrees, but it is a challenge to run a Division, be clinically active, and still attend these courses, not to mention the reading and group projects that must also be completed. A reasonable compromise is the Harvard Leadership Course for Academic Health Care Leaders. This two-week course is essentially like a sampler of the types of courses one would complete in a formal MBA program. The experience is an intense one, organized around the Harvard case study model that emphasizes broad audience discussion about selected cases. Expect to work very hard for the two weeks you reside in Boston on the campus of Harvard’s School of Public Health. There are lectures in finance, accounting, communication, organizational processes, and strategic planning, amongst others. Many home institutions will sponsor you to attend such a course. A few years ago, Dr. Scott Levin organized a successful weekend leadership retreat for ACAPS, organized in much the same manner but over 2 days. This probably should become a recurring opportunity. Additionally, many institutions have in-house leadership training programs. The University of Rochester has such a course, offered to selected leaders within the institution, and is held over a yearlong period. Executives from within the Healthcare System give various lectures about their experiences in leadership. Even if executive training is not strong in these programs, attending them at one’s home institution is highly suggested, as professional contacts with Hospital Leadership can be forged.

Aside from attending a course or program, one can and should read as much as one can regarding leadership and executive behavior. We have included the reading list for the Harvard Leadership Course; several assignments are considered the classic references. Particularly helpful was the book “Renegotiating Healthcare” by Leonard Marcus, which clearly outlines strategies in negotiation, and offers a no-nonsense approach to negotiation. (Two other classic books about negotiation are “Getting to Yes” and “Gorilla Negotiating”)

The very popular “The 5 levels of Leadership” by John Maxwell is a concise quick read that will change the way you approach leading. This publication should practically be

required reading before embarking on any leadership journey. Several of his books are also quite helpful, and can easily be read on a plane going to a meeting.

Since leadership and executive behavior is predicated on possessing high levels of emotional intelligence, one should also read Daniel Goleman's books on EQ. The subtitle says it all, "Why it matters more than IQ". One cannot over study this topic – the skills to deeply understand yourself, to not overreact, to be able to read people, and other elements of EQ are all critically fundamental for successful leaders.

Another exciting and popular vehicle for obtaining executive training information is on MOOC's, or Massive Open Online Courses. These free courses are now offered in almost any subject and are extremely popular. You can search for the course you want at www.mooc-list.com. For example, Harvard's online courses can be searched at www.extension.harvard.edu/open-learning-initiative. Many of the courses have been videotaped and you can watch selected lectures at your leisure. Several free courses are offered at www.edx.org, which is a venture between MIT, Harvard, UC Berkley, and other institutions of higher learning. Most of these courses are of general interest, not specific to executive training, but a recent course in statistics was quite helpful. The Cornell Experience is well advertised on the web and looks to be well developed www.ecornell.com/certificate-programs/healthcare-training/executive-leadership-for-healthcare-professionals-certificate/crt/SLNC02. It is likely, that business schools will offer such courses in the future and one can simply select from standard business school courses such as finance, accounting, managerial economics, strategic planning, leadership and organizations, marketing, operational management, decision modeling, and the like. There is also another online resource – the Arbinger Institute for Leadership has an online video course. The video series might be the best if you are looking for an online application. Through a series of 4 modules and 46 total videos, the viewer is introduced to Arbinger's application in 5-10 minute pieces at a time. This can be watched daily/every other day to continue to learn a principle then apply the concepts afterwards in the workday or at home. www.arbinger.com

The subcommittee for executive training also uncovered a few other resources that might be of use to our members and they are attached below. You might find the attached PDF's useful reading on subjects such as High Performance Medical Groups, and the New Performance Standard, both from the Advisory Group. Two additional articles by Zismer are also included in this attachment that concern employment by an integrated health system, and the structure of organization in such health systems.

The suggested material mentioned above is just a starting point for obtaining additional executive education. As mentioned, most leaders in Plastic Surgery learn on the job and from mentors whom they trust. We hope that this site can point you in the right direction so that your specific executive and leadership needs can be met. It is hoped that this site continues to grow and act as a living dynamic repository of information for our

membership. Please contact me with any suggestions and additions you see useful for this purpose.

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