

Keeping All the Balls in the Air: Lessons Learned

*Jayant N. Acharya, MD, DM, FANA, FAES, FACNS, FAAN
Chair and Professor of Neurology
Executive Director, Neuroscience Institute
Southern Illinois University School of Medicine*



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- None



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Personal situation

- Relatively new (2+ years) Chair
- Moved from another university
- Small department: around 30 faculty and APPs
- Structure: mainly junior faculty, no vice-chairs or division chiefs
- Reliance on partner hospitals, including some financial support
- Aggressive local competition from private practice group
- Tasks: administrative, service, clinical, educational, research, etc.



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Multitasking



- Merriam-Webster dictionary
 - The concurrent performance of several jobs by a computer
 - The performance of multiple tasks at one time.
 - Example: The job requires a person who is good at *multitasking*.



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Perceived benefits

- Increases productivity
- Saves time
- Saves money

CV/interview: "I like to multitask, in my personal as well as my professional life. I prefer to have many things going on at once. It keeps me interested and moving forward."

[Thebalancemoney.com](https://www.thebalancemoney.com); [indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com)



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Multitasking negatives

- Misnomer: Actually switch from one single task to another
- Task switch costs: Reduced performance and speed
- We inflate our perceived ability to multitask
- Distracting, slows us down, impairs executive function, more errors
- Chronic: impulsivity, impair cognitive ability?
- Heavy media multitaskers perform worse than low media multitaskers even when *single* tasking

At my age, I am good at multitasking. I can listen, ignore and forget all at once.

Madore KP, Wagner AD. *Cerebrum* 2019



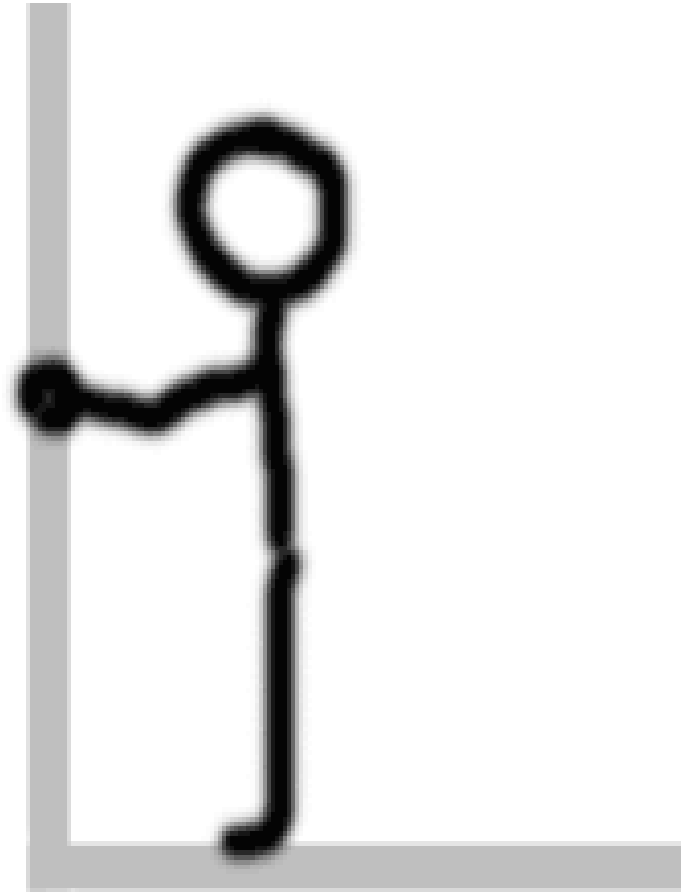
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AAGHGHGH!



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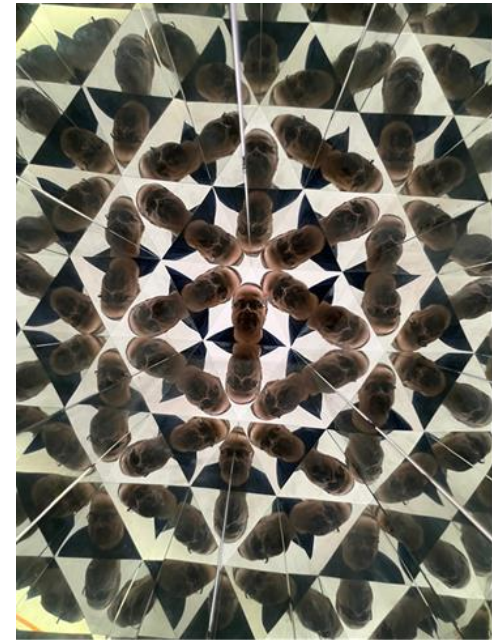
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Multitasking skills

- Find a way to manage the many items on our to-do lists. Don't simply switch between them in a chaotic and disorganized manner. Instead, develop the capabilities to manage multiple tasks while still being focused, productive, efficient, and meeting our goals and deadlines.
- Skills
 - Organization
 - Prioritization
 - Delegation
 - Time management



Indeed.com



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How to improve multitasking skills

- Make a to-do list
- Prioritize tasks: Eisenhower matrix
- Group similar tasks
- Reduce distractions
- Monitor progress
- Delegate as needed

The key is not to prioritize what's on your schedule, but to schedule your priorities — Stephen Covey

	Urgent	Not urgent
Important	Do Tasks with clear deadlines and consequences if not completed	Decide Schedule tasks without a deadline but that bring you closer to your long term goals
Not important	Delegate Tasks that need to get done but don't need your expertise	Delete Tasks that distract you and don't add any value



Tools and apps

- Ntask
- Microsoft To-do
- Teux Deux
- Any.do
- Toddledo
- Habitica
- Evernote
- Eisenhower
- Bear
- Antnotes
- SomeTodo
- I Done This
- ActiveInbox

From www.indeed.com



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Staying on tasks

- Set realistic goals
- Set aside dedicated time to do focused deep work
- Time blocking, focused work at certain times or days
- Add in buffer time if possible
- Take regular breaks: Pomodoro technique
- Mindfulness and meditation
- Reflect and adjust

"The older I get,
the earlier it gets late."



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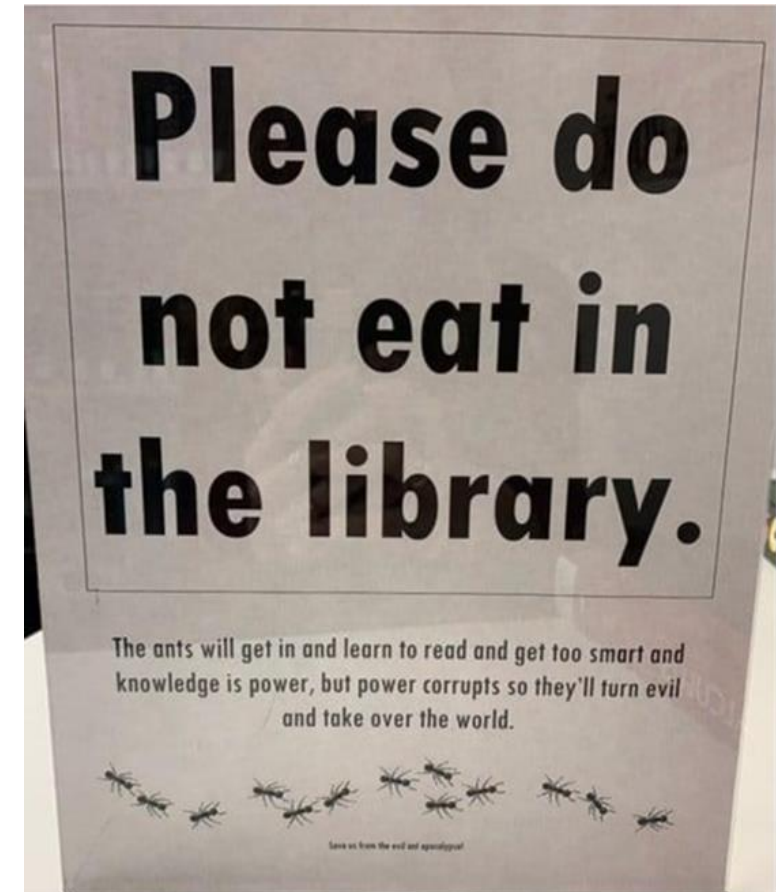
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Decision making

- RAPID model
 - Recommend
 - Agree
 - Perform
 - Input
 - **Decide:** Single point of accountability
- “A good decision executed quickly beats a brilliant decision implemented slowly.”

Rogers P, Blenko M. HBR Jan 2006



Email clutter and overload

- Set specific email check-in times.
- Prioritize, Prioritize, Prioritize!
- Use filters and folders.
- Unsubscribe ruthlessly.
- Implement the Two-Minute Rule.
- Use email alternatives



From Ilija, www.mailbutler.io



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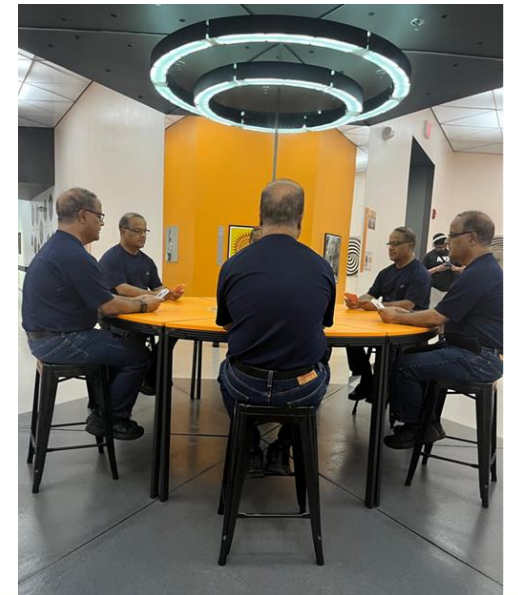
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Lessons learned

- True multitasking is not possible or beneficial, but multiple tasks often need to be completed in short periods of time
- Small departments have special issues with multitasking
- Organization, prioritization and time management are key. Delegate if needed, but there can be challenges.
- Lists/apps are helpful but should be dynamic and flexible and progress needs to be monitored
- Set realistic goals, and also keep time for focused work and buffer time.
- Avoid impulsive decisions, but don't wait too long. Have a clear idea about the decision-maker
- Emails can take up a lot of time; have a method for dealing with them in a balanced way.
- Take care of yourself including your own health
- Address your personal goals, and spend quality time with family and friends



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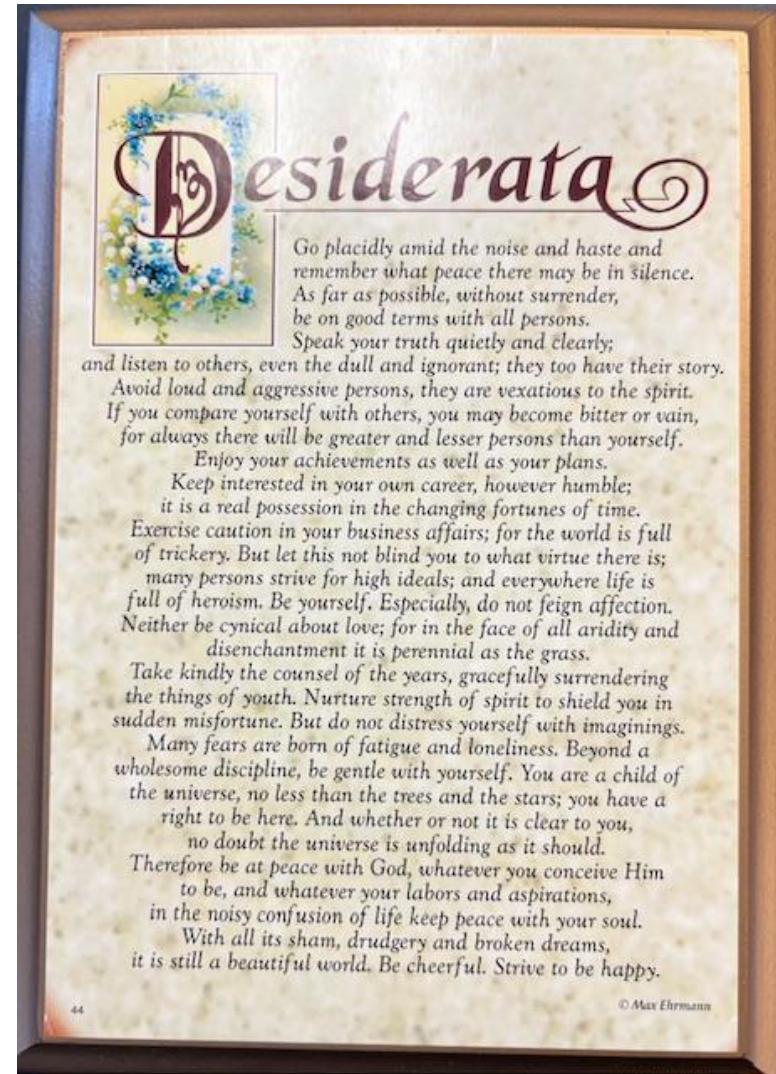
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Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself.

Whatever your labors and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with your soul.

With all its sham, drudgery, **multitasking** and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world.

Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.



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AUPN Chairs Session II on Multitasking for the Neurology Chair: Balancing Multiple Priorities

**A personal perspective on prioritization, procrastination, and
planning.**

Justin C. McArthur MBBS, MPH, FANA

*Professor/Director, Department of Neurology, Johns Hopkins School of
Medicine*



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No disclosures relevant to this presentation



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Objectives

A personal perspective on prioritization, procrastination, and planning.



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Case study #1

Senior faculty member with multiple complaints over years regarding creating a hostile work environment.

- Mistakes that I made made:
 - Did not escalate to SoM Office of Institutional Equity
 - Attempted personal coaching
 - Permitted to continue in a leadership role
 - Did not engage sufficiently with lab members
 - A failure of **prioritization, procrastination, and planning**



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Prioritization

- Understand **YOUR** personal drivers

Who do I want to be ?

What are my strengths and weaknesses ?

How can I enhance strengths and close gaps ?

Practice these skills

Develop supportive and trusting relationships

Most importantly with Neurosurgery/service line concept



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Prioritization matrix

The Urgent Important Matrix Quadrants



Prioritization matrix



Prioritization ~ what should you do ?

- Establishing the culture



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Environment and culture

- **Belonging uncertainty** ~ Stanford psychologists Geoffrey Cohen and Greg Walton have found that “**belonging uncertainty**”— the “state of mind in which one suffers from doubts about whether one is fully accepted in a particular environment or ever could be” — can afflict all of us.
- **DEI** ~ engagement and commitment is essential by the Chair
- **Imposter syndrome** ~
 1. **The Perfectionist.** Has to be absolutely perfect.
 2. **The Expert.** Doesn't know everything about their field.
 3. **The Natural Genius.** Doesn't believe that he/she is naturally intelligent/competent
 4. **The Soloist.** Had to ask for help or advice.
 5. **The Super-person.** Hardest worker.



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Environment and culture

The right intellectual framework for effective diversity work is pluralism. Pluralism starts with a celebration of the fact that we live in one of the most diverse societies in history. The job of the university is to help young people from different backgrounds **learn to work and live together**. (Would you really want to hire someone who spent his college years learning how to demonize, demean and divide?)

David Brooks, NYT 2023



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Prioritization ~ what should you do ?

- Advocacy for your faculty and staff
- Collaboration with other departments
 - In all spheres of the tripartite mission, and philanthropy
- Service recovery
- Advising re “opportunities” for your faculty (and yourself !)
 - Committee work can be career-building
 - Should not be a “life-sentence”
 - Bargain one opportunity for another



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Procrastination vs “get it done”

- Know what works **for YOU** in terms of time management
- Clinical responsiveness, both for yourself and your faculty
 - Clinically active chair
 - Lead by example
 - Delegate when appropriate



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Procrastination vs “get it done”

- Chat-GPT for letters ? (lacks a personal touch, can be biased and always do a **final** review).
- Active or planned procrastination
 - gather and process more relevant information before making a decision
 - sending a message to requestor
 - *“your crisis is not necessarily my crisis”*



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Planning

- Over-communication is essential
- Strategic planning for the department
- Financial planning for the department
- Individual career planning
- Planning for philanthropy

Dwight Eisenhower ~

“Plans are useless, planning is essential”.



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Anatomy of a Crisis (as understood by JCM)

- ~ 2022 JHU identifies a deficit in SoM that had accreted over decades
- Central deficit ~\$XM, with \$XM “held” in departments in unrestricted accounts
- Intense activity to reconcile accounts resulting in “sweeps” of unrestricted funds.
- JHHS and JHU commit \$XM each for SoM support
- New accounting principles introduced with **no deficit budgets allowed**
- **New funds flow model introduced**

Case study # 2

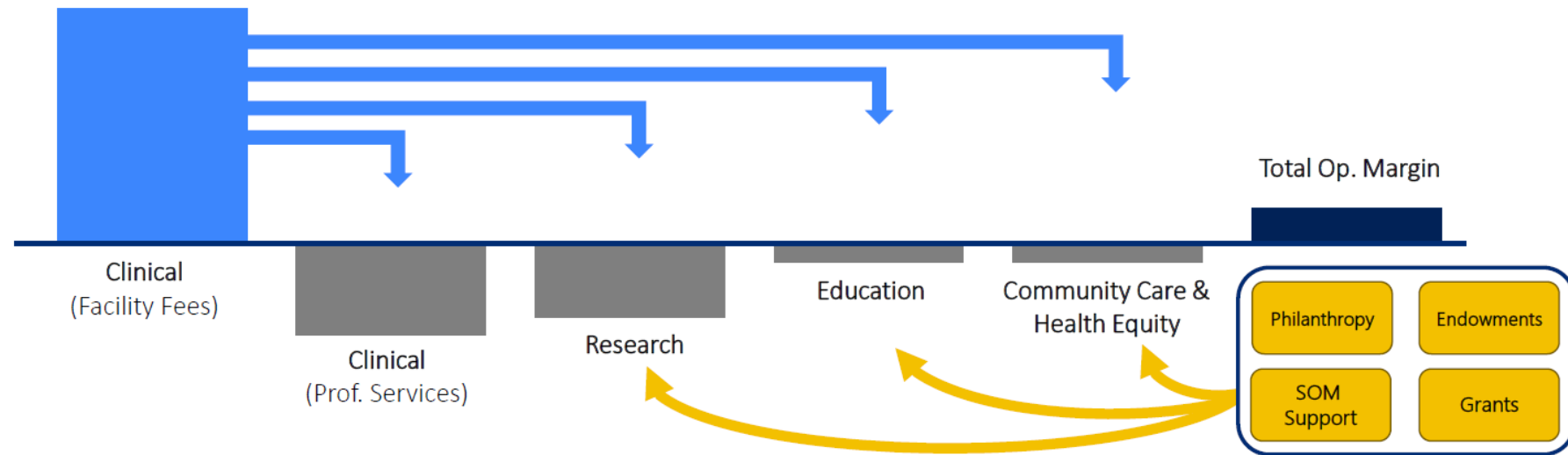
Explanation of funds flow to faculty.

My mistakes:
1. Less than full understanding.
2. Poorly explained.
3. Didn't individualize it.

Introduction to Funds Flow

Academic Health System Mission Cross Subsidization

Illustrative Operating Margin by Mission



Note: Research and Education funds flows often come in the form of Central SOM support, leveraging surplus funds generated through clinical activities.

What can you do to help the department ?

- Be kind, patient and courteous
- Don't charge supplies or equipment to **deficit** budgets
- Use the most restricted funds for **legitimate** expenses
- Anticipate funding gaps and work with leadership
- Work with development on philanthropic prospects
- Optimize your clinical practice
- Support our trainees
- Forecast the need for faculty recruits and replacements



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Planning

- “Rosenthal table” ~ to encourage self-reflection on career development

	2024-2025 (Current academic year)	Future	How Dr. McArthur Can Support Me
Clinical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 2023-June 2024 2 (6) days clinics/week 24.5% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ General movement ◦ Botox (IHOC) ◦ Sleep disorders at Howard County (RLS + RBD one ½ per month) • Ataxia Center (6%) • Inpatient consult service (5 weeks) 12.5% • Movement disorder inpatient consults • Moonlighting at Howard County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 2024-June 2025 1.5 (6) days clinics/week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ General movement ◦ Botox ◦ Sleep disorders at Howard County (RLS + RBD one ½ per month) • Ataxia Center (6%) • Inpatient consult service (4 weeks) 10% • Movement disorder inpatient consults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Medical Education, Scholarly Activity/ Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clerkship Director (35 + 18% from SOM Precede) • OA Co-Director • Pre-Doc Co-Director • AAN Award – 2024 Neuroscience is Rewarding College Internship Scholarship Recipient <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Mentorship program for undergrad student • Co-director of The Hospital – A Health Systems Science Interprofessional Clinical Elective • Faculty Advisor for SIGN • Director, Dier Housestaff Preceptor Program • USMLE Scholar-ix Bricks Exchange <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Partnership with Harvard Neuro CD with plans to globally disseminate curriculum • IEE Innovation Selection Committee • IEE abstract selection committee and presentation moderator • Growth Mindset and Feedback Literacy Workshop for TIW – developed and taught curriculum to 120 2nd year medical students • EPA Task Force Core Leadership Team – in charge of implementation efforts under mentorship of Jules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clerkship Director (35%) • College Advisory Program Faculty (20%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Met with Mitchell Goldstein who runs the program and he is aware of my interest ◦ Will apply when there is an opening • Increase National Engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Working with Parkinson's Foundation on understanding learner preferences in curricular design and delivery of CME courses (intentions to publish) ◦ Creating an online presence through the NDEC • Increase International engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ ScholarsRx Program - Applying for ANEE scholarship • Present/Publish results of work with Parkinson's Foundation • Present/Publish results of work of CRN Assessment Rubric – AAN grant • Trying to become more involved with faculty development (Dan Skarupski agreed to mentor me on this) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Interviewed me twice for faculty factory podcast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering taking on a Clerkship Assistant Director • Looking to become more nationally involved in med ed -opportunities? • Will email clerkship 2023-24 evaluation • Should I present the clerkship data at an upcoming Director's meeting or faculty meeting? • Reapplying for the Helder Award for 2024-2025 [apparently, the committee was impressed with my application last year and encouraged reapplication] • Bernadette will share calendar invite with you for Precede



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Planning

- Faculty advisor system with annual written review, and action items.

Offerings to consider for your requested skills development and resources:

- **LAD Academy Leadership:** The LAD Academy offers leadership courses for developing leadership and supervisory skills. Learn more here: <https://facultyaffairs.jhu.edu/career/lad/curricula/>
- **Networking:** Academic Impressions, offered through the LAD Academy, offers a course for building your career network. Register for this self-paced course here: <https://www.academicimpressions.com/building-your-career-network/>

Please consider prioritizing time over the next year to participate in these offerings or others as an investment toward achieving your goals and ultimately investing in your career progress. We fully support your journey and will continue to provide information in the future on any new offerings and information.

Planning for Promotion

It is never too early to start planning your road to Promotion & Advancement!

Please visit the JHU SOM Office of Faculty Development Site for the following important resources:

- **Promotion Criteria and Examples of Successful CV's & Nomination Letters:** https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/fac_development/career-path/appointments/
- **CME Workshop - 80065119 - Become Your Own Academic Career Design Architect: Mapping Your Authentic Road to Success 12/6/2024**
Friday, December 6, 2024, 10:00 AM - 1:30 PM
80065119 - Become Your Own Academic Career Design Architect: Mapping Your Authentic Road to Success 5/16/2025
Friday, May 16, 2025, 1:00 PM - 4:30 PM



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Planning for philanthropy

- In Neurology, usually based on a long-term relationship with patient and family.
- It's all about the relationship
- Listen for cues
- Critically important in a time of diminishing clinical revenues



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Philanthropy mistakes that I have made

- Not involving development officers
- Mixing clinical care and development pitch
- Not thinking big enough
- Not providing adequate stewardship
- Balancing stewardship with “concierge care”



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Thank you!



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How to Win Friends and Influence People as a Neurology Chair? Let Faculty Lead

*Gwenn Garden, MD, PhD, FANA
Distinguished Professor and Chair
Department of Neurology
University of North Carolina*



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Paid Advisor:

- **Lilly**
- **Eisai**



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Multi-tasking Feels Impossible

- So maybe don't try.....
- Can we delegate the work ?
 - Will the work get done the way I want?
- Will faculty share my ideas/values?
 - Will faculty of different backgrounds, perspectives and motivations lead in a uniform direction?
- Are faculty motivated to take on leadership?
 - Yes, but.....



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What is distributed leadership?

- Decision-making and influence are dispersed throughout the organization.
- Key characteristics of distributed leadership include:
 - ✓ Delegation of authority and decision-making
 - ✓ Collaboration and teamwork
 - ✓ Shared responsibilities
 - ✓ Culture of trust and empowerment
 - ✓ Utilization of diverse skills and perspectives



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Distributed Leadership Pros and Cons

- Pros

- Faculty empowerment, ↑ morale
- Faculty development, ↑ succession planning
- Improved acceptance of new mandates (everything comes from the grass roots)
- Improved implementation
- Less time from Chair

- Cons

- Slows decision making
- Can be bogged down by concern for “fairness”
- Consensus may not land on your vision
- May require iteration to meet institutional goals (= more chair time)



The value of a common mission

- Enables trust
- Provides a “touch stone” when addressing conflict
- Facilitates buy-in for institutional asks
- Animates faculty driven endeavors and enterprises
- Supports inclusivity/suppresses divisional and generational rivalries
- May help recruitment and retention



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How to find your departmental “True North”

- Share your values
- Ask for input
- Integrate institutional culture and reflect institutional purpose
- Delegate creation of a mission statement
- Hold a retreat



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Organizing committees

- Pick the best possible leader
 - Sometimes committee chair = vice chair
 - Meet with committee chairs at a regular cadence
- Committees have multiple responsibilities
 - Generate ideas
 - Communicate new programs and policies
 - Implement new programs
- Require committee participation in your compensation plan
 - Members describe participation in annual review
- Provide administrative support
- Consider a budget or revenue source



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Committees you probably need

- Education
 - Many sub-committees: UME, GME, CME, each residency program, etc.
- Faculty Satisfaction
 - More than just compensation
- Clinical Practice
- Quality Improvement
- A&P



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Committees that are very nice to have

- Mentoring/Faculty Development
- Community Outreach
- Health Equity (+/- DEI)
- Awards
- Research
 - Needs vary by structure and size of research enterprise
 - Human subjects research advisory committee
 - Dispersing residual/IDCR
 - Proposal review
 - Research Day
- Others....



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Summary

- Let go of the reigns
- Find a common path
- Let faculty pursue what drives them and they will do a lot of the work for you.



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