
13 Leadership Characteristics to Avoid in Radiology



A new article published in the Journal of American College of Radiology highlights 13 habits and characteristics of new leaders that would lead them to address situations in both ineffective and counterproductive ways, thus impeding the performance of a radiology department.

There is no doubt that the quality of a leader can have a significant impact on the performance of a radiology department. While effective leaders can attract and retain top talent and can create a positive work environment, ineffective leaders can have a devastating effect on a radiology department by impairing communication, undermining the staff's commitment, and stifling the development of the organisational team.

The 13 leadership pitfalls to avoid include:

Inadequate Training: One of the major reasons radiology leaders fail is because of a lack of training in management and leadership. It is important to understand that excellence in clinical work, teaching or research alone does not make an effective leader. There is also a need for key leadership competencies such as communication, organisational thinking, team building and nurturing the development of others.

Failure to Communicate: Another reason why leaders fail is because of a failure to communicate. Effective communication is a critical skill for a good leader. By communicating effectively, a leader can be open and transparent; can encourage bidirectional information sharing and allow members to collaborate and respond to challenges more effectively.

Inability to Delegate: This is one area where most leaders have opportunities to improve. Many are unable to do so because they do not have any kind of formal training on how to successfully delegate. Six tips to delegate more effectively include: understanding the need to delegate when one is overwhelmed with responsibilities or working long hours; hiring people to whom one is comfortable delegating; recognising the reasons for not delegating; using delegating as a way to enhance employee skills and abilities; being accountable for delegating; and letting go of a task once its been delegated.

Lack of Organisational Thinking: Often new leaders assume the leader-as-commander role and believe that they know what needs to be done and how to do it. This "leader-as-commander" model has major problems, especially in radiology as a radiology department is too complex for one individual to understand in depth. There is a need to have a hierarchy of responsibility and authority for a radiology department to function effectively.

Poor Time Management: This can cripple new leaders and can lead to bad decisions, poor performance and burnout. It is important to prioritise and create "to-do" list that are attainable. President Dwight D. Eisenhower's time management matrix is a useful tool to help manage time more effectively.

Failure to Give Recognition: This is also a common problem with new leaders as they withhold recognition of others' contributions. They tend to focus more on themselves and have a high degree of self-motivation but by failing to give recognition, they are unable to motivate their team.

Passing Judgment: This habit plagues inexperienced but energetic new leaders. They are too eager to show others what they can do but they often end up choosing quick solutions without fully investigating a problem.

Adding Too Much Value: Another destructive habit of a poor leader is adding too much value. They often feel that they are not valued members of meetings or conversations unless they keep adding value. This can often end up being frustrating for other people.

Refusing to Admit Personal Failure: Inability of a leader to admit failure is also an ineffective way to lead. This creates a culture of people who are afraid to fail and who do not recognise that much can be learned from a single failure than from multiple successes.

Overuse of the Competing Mode: New leaders have a tendency of overusing one conflict-handling mode - competing - where they try to satisfy their own concerns at the expense of the other person. This can end up making the other party feel resentful and exploited and can decrease their level of commitment.

Inability to Manage Disruptive Staff: A large number of leaders in radiology believe that rationality and goodwill can enable them to lead and avoid conflict. However, not being able to manage disruptive staff effectively can actually undermine the leader's position and make others feel that their leader does not deserve trust or respect.

Lack of Insight: This characteristic can be very devastating in a leader as it prevents him from acknowledging and improving destructive

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behaviour and can also make him appear inflexible and/or insecure.

Helping New Leaders Succeed: It is important to select leaders that have had formal leadership and management training and have the ability to deal with disruptive staff, work on teams, solve difficult problems, have communication and interpersonal skills and have the capacity to collaborate.

Source: [Journal of American College of Radiology](#)

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