

ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Mentoring and developing the healthcare workforce is a challenging and rewarding task. Learning firsthand from the experiences of peers, leaders, and mentors is essential for professional development and this needs to happen consistently in our busy and complex healthcare practice environments. We present a real-world application of podcasts as a low-cost, sustainable platform for professional and leadership development and mentorship of the healthcare workforce by the healthcare workforce.

OBJECTIVE: The purpose of this practice improvement project was to explore effectiveness of using podcasts for mentoring and leadership development by sharing professional life experiences and teaching by example.

METHODS: This digital intervention was implemented within a large quaternary care academic medical center, in the United States. Faculty Development leadership within the General Internal Medicine division created a series of podcasts to learn from the professional journeys of mid and late-career physicians and scientists. Each interview focused on the individual's professional experiences, successes, and failures, as well as the lessons learned along the way. Each podcast episode was 15-20 minutes in length and was made available to all staff within the division, and thus far have received over 1,000 hits (views and audio downloads). Three brief surveys addressing efficacy and satisfaction with the podcasts were. One was targeted to the non-physician staff members, one to physician staff members, and one to the eight interviewees to gauge their satisfaction with participation in this podcast series.

RESULTS: Among the non-physician responders of the survey, 50% indicated they had listened to at least one podcast episode of the series and 55% of them indicated that it had impacted their personal career and life goals. Among those who indicated they had not listened to any podcasts, the biggest reason provided was lack of time. Among the physician responders, over 80% indicated they had listened to at least one podcast, but again, among those indicating they did not listen to any podcast, lack of time was the biggest hurdle. Among these responders, over 78% indicated that the podcasts had impacted their life choices. Key messages which resonated the most from responders included: 'taking one day at a time', 'focus on the human dimension', 'everyone has struggles', and 'persistence and hard work pay off'. The responders to the interviewee-targeted survey indicated that all interviewees were satisfied with their podcast and when asked if and what they learned about themselves through the podcast experience, they indicated the following: 'the experience was life-affirming', they 'enjoyed the reflecting of their past experiences' and 'there is more resilience in me than I ever realized'.

CONCLUSION: Podcasts are an effective means to promote mentorship and professional leadership development through the dissemination of staff experiences. They allow for ongoing and asynchronous learning and development in a busy healthcare environment. Our podcast interviewees expressed their vulnerability with honesty and encouraged the listeners to embrace this without judgment. In many respects, the lines between mentors and mentees were blurred as we learned about staff experiences and journeys. We found that podcasts are a sustainable way to integrate leadership development in settings with limited resources and allow for wide dissemination across different professional roles within healthcare.

PODCAST OVERVIEW

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Within the division of General Internal Medicine (GIM) at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, a novel approach was employed to introduce faculty and staff to more experienced faculty, utilizing a podcast: Grace, Inspiration, Fulfillment, Timeless, Soulful (GIFTS)

GOALS OF THE PODCAST

The purpose of the GIFTS podcast is to allow insight into the journey of each guest faculty (mid to late career) interviewed on their journey to arrive at where they currently are in their career --mentors teaching by example.

KEY THEMES OF THE PODCAST

- Resiliency
- Tenacity
- Prevailing through adversity
- Peer-to-peer learning
- Lessons learned over a career
- Advice for colleagues

INTENDED AUDIENCE

- General Internal Medicine colleagues and staff
- Physician and allied health staff
- Anyone seeking personal and professional growth

METHODS

PRODUCTION LOGISTICS

- **Platform:** Zoom
- **Duration:** 15-20 minutes
- **Frequency:** Goal of monthly delivery of new podcasts
- **Takeaways:** End with one or two takeaways from the guest/interviewee

DELIVERY AND SHARING WITH STAFF

- Consistent introduction and messaging for all podcasts identifying goals
- Audio and video versions made available on our internal video exchange
- New episodes highlighted within a weekly staff newsletter, collected series spotlight on staff website, and email blasts

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

- Time to plan, connect, record – due to the busy work schedule of the interviewers and interviewees, the podcasts were at times rescheduled and 'new' podcasts occurred every 2-3 months rather than back-to-back.
- Access to editing resources
- Currently – it is internally posted limiting the audience.
- From the listener's perspective – two key limitations were time to view the podcast during work hours and access through the internet outside of work since the podcast was only available internally at work.

INTERVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

"The most important part in global medicine is that we should tailor our knowledge and practice to the patients' needs, and this is the main driver for a high-quality medical practice. We need to understand our stakeholders, our patients' needs, and this concept is already described by the Mayo Brothers from the last Century -the needs of the patients come first - which is the Mayo model of care. That concept brings joy at work. Every time you feel like you are taking care of your patient and seeing their recovery, it is really a major fulfillment of joy."

"I always marvel at what Epic does not tell me. When I walk into the room, I see much more than what Epic ever tells me. There is a human being. The human being is more than a problem list."

"My greatest joy is walking onto the floor every day knowing people love what they're doing because they find meaning in their work. That is important to continue with that joy in work."

"Work very hard when you're at work and when you're not at work, relax very hard and enjoy life"

"Mayo is not a monolith, organization, or buildings, it's the people that are dedicated to serving a greater good and taking care of patients. I hope we never lose that because Mayo is really a compilation of all of us playing our role and doing our best for a common mission. I am really proud to be a part of that".

"I know you will always be a wonderful clinician, but to be successful at Mayo, I want you to expand your horizons to more than just a clinician, where you can excel in research and education, as well as in an administrative role. By doing so, you will not be burned out with the practice of medicine."

INSIGHTS FROM A PODCAST HOST

"Being human and fallible is what we embrace. It is invaluable to learn from each other and to understand that as we keep learning, we keep growing. A good balance of controlled restlessness without helplessness is what we all strive for."

"We may not achieve everything that we desired but when we examine our lives more closely, we appreciate that we achieved far more in the aggregate, as a group, than we ever imagined. A balance of understanding what we achieved, and what we did not, can be mutually beneficial, as it keeps us humble and human."

"One message that rang clear and loud from the podcasts was a feeling of gratefulness, camaraderie, and effort to reach out to colleagues with the message that it is okay to experience a journey that appears "zigzag" as it gives an opportunity to experience the beauty of people and places around us. This is something that we would not have experienced if our career progression were a straight line."

KEY TAKEAWAYS BY STAKEHOLDER

INTERVIEWEES

When the interviewees of the podcast were surveyed, they were all satisfied with the experience. When asked what they learned about themselves they indicated:

- 'The experience was life-affirming'
- 'They 'enjoyed reflecting of their past experiences'
- 'There is more resilience in me than I ever realized'

LISTENING AUDIENCE

Over 78% thought the podcasts made an impact on their life choices. The takeaway from the podcasts, among those who viewed at least one episode, was:

- 'taking one day at a time'
- 'focus on the human dimension'
- 'everyone has struggles'
- 'persistence and hard work pay off'
- 'their stories resonate with mine'.

IMAGES

Podcast interviewee and host (two of several) caught in action! Acquired from a Zoom podcast interview.



INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



CONCLUSION

Successful podcasts help create a community of listeners unified by meaning and purpose. Podcasts are cost effective, easily accessible and expand one's experience, knowledge, and mind. Listening to well-done podcasts can grow and mature our minds, in addition to allowing us to experience other people's perspectives and seek advice through lessons learned.

REFERENCE

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