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[Classifieds](#)

[Issues](#)

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Mandatory Musts for Physician Leaders at the Top of Their Game

The collaboration amongst healthcare's key stakeholders has never been more critical for healthcare delivery than it is today. Yesterday's competition has become today's collaborator. The newly insured pose new challenges for managing care delivery. The term "customer" has been greatly expanded to mean much more than patients and their families. Innovative business models continue to evolve with accountable care entities, managed care and other entities that establish and drive healthcare deliverables. Lastly, uncertainty of the political landscape is the wild card also clouding the vision of where healthcare is going.

The need for physicians to continually evolve their business acumen to support the delivery of quality care in a changing landscape is today's imperative. Equally as important, is knowing where to go to stay on top of the industry ebb and flow of change.

The following guidelines may prove helpful in navigating these turbulent waters:

Cover the basics first

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Stay at the top of your clinical game by maintaining appropriate clinical board re-certifications and other specialized and advanced training required to be your clinical best. Staying engaged in the professional medical associations that support your specialty is an imperative.

Leverage the learning from health institutions you are affiliated with

Whether you are an independent practice or belong to a large group owned by a health system, take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered to you as a part of a group or as a result of your admitting privileges. It is important to stay connected with ongoing education and information relevant to how your system will continue to evolve. This also provides valuable internal networking opportunities with system leadership and peers. The opportunity to shape your future is to be part of the discussion. Step up for a leadership role in organizations or health systems that you are affiliated with.

Engage with vendors and innovators

Especially in the health IT space, physicians continue to play a very active and vibrant role in evolving the efficiencies and effectiveness of technologies that enhance workflow and new processes. Driven by a physician's love of data and science, many of the best new technologies and workflows have emerged from a growing number of physicians coined as "Doctrepreneurs." This new evolving breed of physician is close enough to the problem to see innovation, yet factual and credible enough to be heard in a crowded healthcare space.

Attend industry events and workshops that offer a different perspective than your own

Whether it be a program on retail health or the efficiencies of managed care, physicians cannot divorce themselves from aspects of the care continuum that pose delivery in a different model. This is a valuable place to learn and find opportunities of possible synergy. Understanding the why beyond your own viewpoint is invaluable.

Invest time with healthcare associations that focus on healthcare and physician leadership

Chicago is the second biggest home of professional healthcare associations, outside of Washington D.C. We are the national corporate home to American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE), Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA,) Healthcare Information & Management System Society (HIMSS) and American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA,) the American Medical Association (AMA) and American Hospital Association (AHA) to name a most mighty line-up. All of these organizations have large annual conferences, all with

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local chapters that provide opportunities for education, learning about best practices elsewhere and other collaboration specifically designed for physician leaders. Becker's Healthcare is another Chicago-based organization with a solid monthly publication and exceptional educational program offerings, also with a physician learning track.

Find an association home that emulates who/where you want to be

Whether it be new research, emerging trends or a dynamic panel presentation on a topic that is near and dear to your heart. Vow to become strategically connected. Be part of dynamic and important new dialogue. Chicago Healthcare Executives Forum (CHEF) the largest chapter of ACHE, recently featured ground breaking research just completed by the Institute of Medicine on Diagnostic Medical Error, referred to as the latest challenge in patient safety.

Dr. Mark Graber, President/ Founder of Society to Improve Diagnosis in Medicine, shared these important findings and facilitated next level discussions on a panel that also included Dr. Ronald Wentz of the Joint Commission and Dr. Jay Bhatt, of the Illinois Hospital and Health Association. Staying connected with vibrant and relevant health organizations keeps you abreast of important new information that will impact healthcare delivery.

Emulate and learn from best physician leaders close to home

Physician thought leaders are a valuable resource we have great access to in our marketplace. Leaders at the top of their game are always willing to share their time and talent with the industry. CHEF has made a practice of instituting an annual awards program whereby the association seeks nominations for vetting stellar accomplishments in many areas of Chicago healthcare. Recent award recipients include Dr. Anthony Tedeschi, President of Weiss/Tenet Regional Leader. Previous award recipients also include Dr. Lee Sacks, CMO of Advocate healthcare and also MCHC/IHHA for their CAP 2 innovations project that provides resources for integrating APRN and Pas into care. Many health IT and other service awards are also recognized every year. Consider the great work being done in your own organization, worthy of nomination for next year.

As the current President of CHEF, I am most well versed with the opportunities afforded through our local ACHE chapter (www.chefchicago.org.) With almost 2000 members, CHEF offers vibrant learning and engagement opportunities for healthcare leadership, which is extremely relevant and important for physicians, whether they be hospital CEOs, clinical leaders, diagnosticians or doctrepreneurs.

Staying at the top of your healthcare game has never been more important. There is way too much information to filter and assimilate on your own.

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Make a commitment to yourself to implement the recommendations in the aforementioned paragraphs. Most importantly, find an association home that offers you new learning and the opportunity to cross pollinate dynamic ideas and processes across associations to the betterment of your practice and your patients.

By [Georgia Casciato | FACHE](#) | March 31st, 2016 | [Healthcare Leadership](#)

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