

# Disruption and Medical Careers: What can we learn from Successful Doctors?

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## INTRODUCTION

There is much advice available for medical students and junior doctors, with advice of varying quality, relevance and utility. One potentially useful, albeit dated, source is Kirby and Mundy's 2000, "Succeeding as a Hospital Doctor". This book is noteworthy in that it contains contributions from notable, successful doctors, and here these contributions were analysed in relation to these experts' views on disruption in relation to medical training.

## METHOD

Within this book are 27 contributions giving personal insights into what contributes to success in medicine. Specific reference to disruption was sought, with any relevant advice considered.

## FINDINGS

Of the 27 contributions in the book, most were from men (24) with only three from women. The doctors here included full-time clinicians, academics, politicians and media figures. Of note, only 12 twelve of these doctors (44%) refer to disruption, all indirectly. In this sample only one woman referred to this versus 11 of the men. One key piece of advice for success reported by about a third of the doctors here (n=8, 30%) is to maintain good social relationships with family, friends and partner. Other means of success referred to included hard work (n=13, 48%), luck (n=8, 30%) and willingness to learn (n=21, 78%).

## CONCLUSIONS

This work has shown that of 27 successful doctors, there are common themes in determining success, likely also helpful to cope with disruption. Of note, the one which most of these doctors mentioned is willingness to learn, which should be a fundamental basis for medical education. Given that disruption is a consistent part of life, not only of trainees and students but also their patients, the impact of the above advice is worth exploring in further detail, including at individual, organisational and national levels.

Kirby, R and Mundy, S (2000). Succeeding as a hospital doctor. The Experts share their secrets. Oxford: Health Press Ltd.