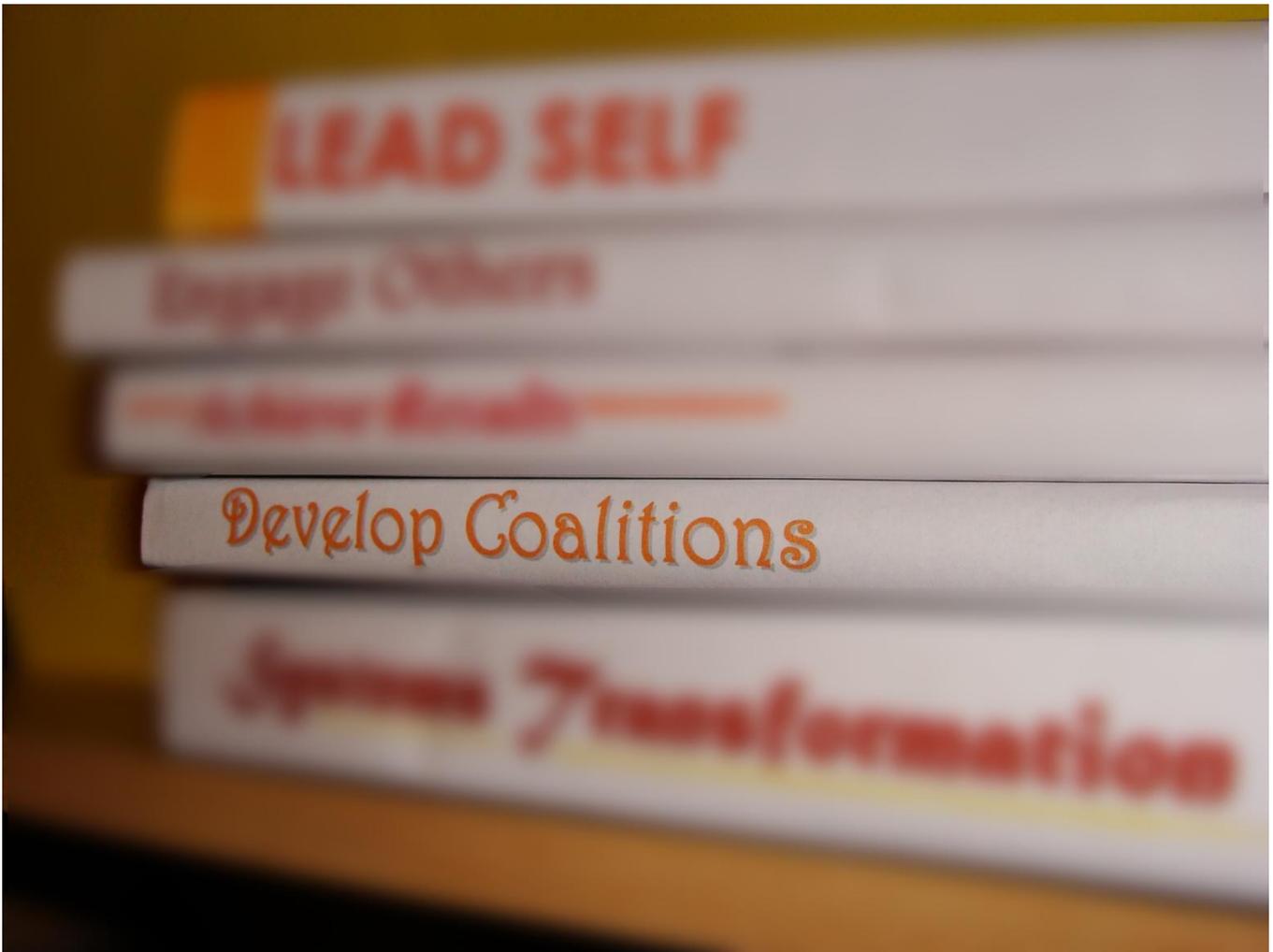


Develop Coalitions (Byte 16)

Navigate Socio-Political Environments

“A culture must be understood if one is to get along at all, as tourists in foreign lands and new employees in organizations often discover to their dismay.” – Organization Culture and Leadership, Edgar Schein. When leaders fundamentally understand a culture, they can begin to make a difference in shaping, molding and strengthening the organization.



DEVELOPS COALITONS (Byte 16)

E-mail Question: Where do you begin to teach about this complex socio-political environment related to medicine?

So where does one begin? As the class quiets down, all eyes are on me. I know where to begin. Begin with, "Physician, know thyself." (Boutin-Foster et. al, 2008, p.109.)

To be able to navigate the complex socio-political climate is always a challenge. Schools of Medicine recognize the need for physicians to treat patients of diverse social and cultural backgrounds and now offer cultural competence education programs.



There are many challenges in designing these types of courses: (1) overcoming learner resistance as students view such course work as “soft science”; (2) avoiding stereotypes and labeling groups as “others”; and (3) designing courses relevant to students’ own cultural background. The article below proposes using a theory of learning focusing on the professional culture of medicine – the language, thought processes, style of communication, customs and beliefs that often characterize medicine – as a more relevant framework to teach cultural competence education. Several strategies are suggested to engage students in class discussions about culture in medicine. These include the use of film and literature, students’ narratives describing their clinical experiences and their personal view of the professional culture of medicine and role-playing.

Boutin-Foster, C., Foster, J. & Konopasek L. (2008). Physician, Know Thyself: The Professional Culture of Medicine as a Framework for Teaching Cultural Competence. *Academic Medicine*, Vol. 83, No. 1: 106-111.

www.cornellpediatrics.org/bm~doc/physician-know-thyself-th.pdf