

NATIONAL BIOSKILLS LABORATORIES PRESENTS

# How To Increase Medical Device Adoption Rates

Three Steps to Improving Your Training Event Outcomes



**By Yeshvant Navalgund, MD**

with the National Bioskills Medical Advisory Board



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BIOSKILLS  
LABORATORIES**  
Hands-on, high-tech.

# CONTENTS

---

3

INTRODUCTION

---

4

HOST AT THE RIGHT FACILITY

---

6

PRIORITIZE PHYSICIAN NETWORKING

---

8

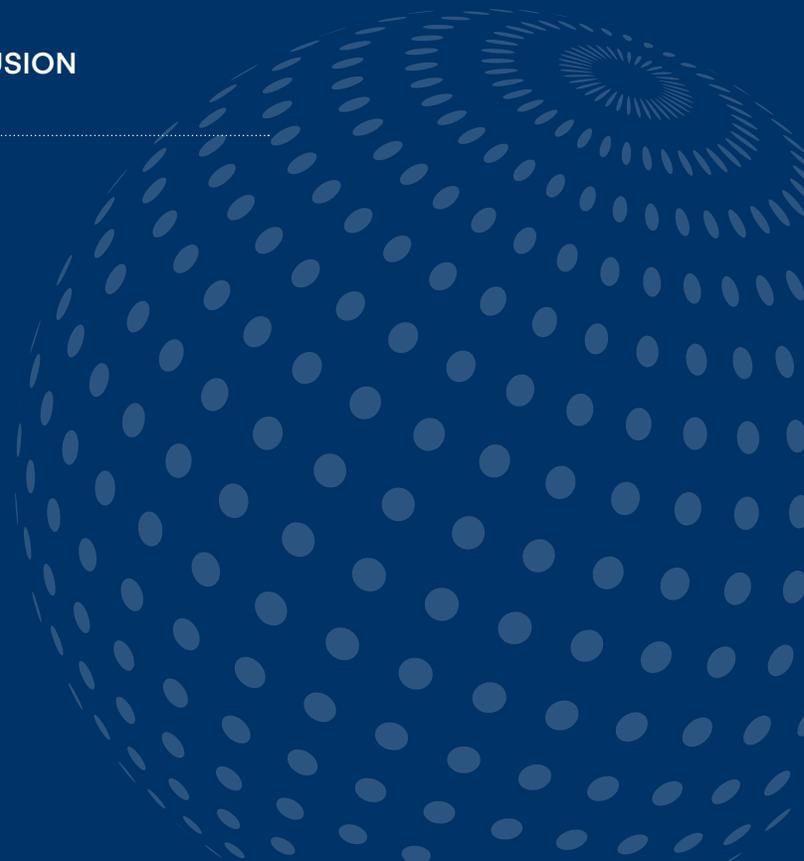
TARGET HIGH-ACHIEVERS

---

11

CONCLUSION

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# INTRODUCTION

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Physician education is a significant investment for medical device companies, and training events are an important part of any effective device launch strategy. Companies understandably want to see the best outcomes from their events at a time when education budgets are increasingly under pressure to deliver results in the form of increased adoption rates.

The fastest growing device companies, large or small, are leveraging their investments by taking advantage of some insider knowledge about how to host and get the most out of their training events.

In this guide, key opinion leader Dr. Yeshvant Navalgund, together with the Medical Advisory Board of National Bioskills Laboratories (NBL), shares three key strategies for improving event outcomes and maximizing return on investment. You'll learn how implementing three small changes in your medical education program can lead to big results in terms of physician learning, device usage, and device adoption rates.

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# HOST AT THE RIGHT FACILITY

## Location, location, location.

*That common phrase also applies to medical device training events.*

*Consider what kind of message the overall training event experience sends to physician attendees and trainers. Companies that make event decisions based on the lowest facility cost may be missing out on some of the most important benefits to be realized from hands-on training: benefits that are critical for achieving successful outcomes. From the moment physicians walk in the front door of an event venue, they are forming opinions about the host company.*

“The most effective way to train physicians in proper use and safety of a new medical device is hands-on cadaver training in a dedicated cadaver lab facility”

Physician Training Best Practices Survey, February 2019

## FACILITIES, STAFF, AND SERVICES SET THE TONE

As a practicing surgeon and physician trainer, Dr. Yesh Navalgund has attended and trained at hundreds of events in his career. He and his colleagues on the Medical Advisory Board of National BioSkills Laboratories collectively have years of firsthand experience training thousands of surgeons. They know that when physicians feel uncomfortable or unsafe at a training location, they simply do not focus on learning. They are often distracted by their environment, which negatively impacts their learning experience as well as their confidence in the host company.



On the other hand, when surgeons are treated like VIPs from the moment they walk in the door and when they see a dedicated facility that observes the highest standards of safety and service, they feel secure and relaxed. When tables and equipment are set up with the meticulous precision of a hospital operating room, they feel at home, confident, and ready to get to work. That means they pay more attention, learn better, and leave with more respect for the host company.

It's not hard to guess which scenario leads to safer device use, more device use, and wider adoption. Education managers who are investing in an event to bring physicians together to learn should demand that that investment work as hard as possible for their company.

**Bottom line:** The facility, staff, and services provided at a device training event all combine to set the tone for the day, and it starts the minute physicians walk in the door. It impacts the overall quality of their event experience, which in turn directly impacts the engagement and interest in the host company's device, its usage and adoption rates.

### AT A GLANCE:

Hands-on training in a dedicated cadaver lab is the most effective way to train for proper device use and safety.

Small companies and start-ups are using hands-on training to outperform their larger competitors.

The tone of the training experience impacts learning outcomes and adoption rates.

The quality of the facility and staff affects physician perceptions of device company brands.



# PRIORITIZE PHYSICIAN NETWORKING

*The quality of the training experience itself isn't the only factor that affects outcomes. What happens during the **downtime** at training events—the unscripted times between didactics and labs—also has a big impact. The informal networking that goes on between colleagues around the coffee station and the lunch table matters just as much as the curriculum.*

## HOW NURTURING NATURAL PHYSICIAN FRIENDSHIPS HELPS DEVICE COMPANIES

Why is physician-to-physician networking critical to good outcomes at a training event? Experience has shown that physicians who have a positive and pleasant impression of their training environment feel more relaxed and comfortable. Enjoying an unhurried meal in the company of their peers, they talk to each other more. Physicians feed off of each other's excitement and motivation, swapping stories, sharing techniques and questions about the medical device, creating energy and buzz. Collegial friendships are formed over discussion. After the event, they tend to stay in touch, using each other as resources and continuing to share experiences around the product.

“Using multiple data sources to measure the rich set of peer relationships formed by physicians, we find that peers can exert significant influence over physician technology adoption decisions.”

*PLOS ONE*, October 2018

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0204826>

## HIGH-QUALITY ONE-ON-ONE TIME

The more they talk with each other, the more physician attendees become engaged and excited to learn and share experiences. Throughout the training day, physicians share thoughts and reactions with their colleagues, and they also become more open and candid with their hosts. They offer opinions, information, concerns, questions, and ideas. Device company representatives learn things that they wouldn't have been able to find out any other way, including ideas for new uses and exposure of their company's device.



**“I’ve personally seen instances when I’m training where two or three physicians will share strategies to work more effectively within insurance or healthcare networks guidelines.”**

*– Dr. Yesh Navalgund, Medical Director, National Bioskills Laboratories*

At a training event, device companies get three or four hours of dedicated time with clients that they are unlikely to get in any other setting. That's a lot more than the 10 minutes in a physician's office, where he or she is more likely to be protective of their time and turf. A training event is neutral ground, in an environment that's primed for questions and learning. So companies can better assess their clients' wants and needs and learn about strengths and weaknesses of their product—or their competitors'.

### AT A GLANCE:

Physicians who connect in person at training events build lasting organic networks that encourage device usage, adoption, and referral.

Device company reps who spend time with physicians at offsite training venues benefit from the open sharing enabled by neutral territory and unopposed schedules.

Face-time with physicians at offsite training events builds trust, allowing for honest feedback and information sharing.

In-person network-building results in improved physician adoption and safety outcomes versus higher-volume efforts such as U.S. mail, emails, or online channels.



# TARGET HIGH ACHIEVERS

*Physicians who are self-motivated seek out new products and techniques. They come to training events eager to learn and ready to acquire knowledge and skills they can apply in their practices right away.*

*At a medical device training event, device reps are like the coaches for a team of elite athletes, and the physicians are the recruits who come out for the team. If the coaches deliver an energizing and effective training session, it will lead to mutual success. Physician “recruits” will want to join your team and play to win. If you don’t deliver a compelling training experience, they might just look for another team.*

“The physicians who attend training events are ambitious and eager to innovate. When you equip them to succeed with your product, you put their motivation to work for you.”

– Yesh Navalgund, M.D., Medical Director, National Bioskills Laboratories

## INSPIRED TEAMWORK

There's a reason elite athletes train together. The presence of highly-skilled, highly-trained peers inspires each athlete to perform at his best and raises everyone's level of performance. When they are on the same team, they also share techniques for achieving their best performance.



When companies bring these motivated physicians together for training, they put their device in the hands of the raw talent that can take it to another level. Not only do they build relationships, but they also energize and equip them to innovate. These physicians will compare notes and often find new and better ways to implement the device.

"I remember one physician from a training event I conducted who figured out a way to change the site of service for a product. This meant he could book more cases per day. He shared this with his network of colleagues, who shared it with theirs, and soon there was a dramatic spike in usage for that device company."

– Yesh Navalgund, M.D., Medical Director, National Bioskills Laboratories

## THE KEY OPINION LEADERS OF TOMORROW



From this core of high-achieving, motivated physician learners will come the key opinion leaders of tomorrow. Savvy device companies will make it a priority to spend time with them, observe how they work, and teach them how to succeed. It's an ideal way to identify the most motivated learners and the most aggressive adopters who are going to apply their learning right away. When companies build relationships and nurture that talent, their investment of resources and energy pays off by returning higher adoption rates and better device safety profiles.

### AT A GLANCE:

Physicians who seek training on new products and techniques are highly motivated.

At off-site events, device companies can identify and build relationships with physicians who will become the key opinion leaders of tomorrow.

Physicians who attend trainings are the most likely ones to come up with new use cases and innovative adoption ideas.

High-achieving physician trainees will do more procedures and achieve better outcomes.

Companies can drive faster device adoption by energizing high-achieving physicians.

## CONCLUSION

In an increasingly competitive market, both large and small medical device companies can extend their investments in medical education by implementing these key principals in their training events. Thoughtfully choosing the facility, planning informal networking time in addition to the formal curriculum, and cultivating relationships with the most motivated physician learners, will ensure they get the most out of their training events. Small changes that focus on these critical details can lead to big results in outcomes, usage, and adoption rates.

Questions and comments are welcome, please address all feedback to [info@nationalbioskills.com](mailto:info@nationalbioskills.com).



Dr. Yeshvant Navalgund

### About the Author:

Yeshvant Navalgund, M.D., is the Medical Director of National Biokills Laboratories and a practicing surgeon and a peer-to-peer physician trainer with extensive experience in advancing medical device education and technique. He is a Board-Certified physician in Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine and Assistant Professor, West Virginia University, Department of Anesthesiology, and Adjunct Professor, University of Pittsburgh, School of Anesthesia. He has authored many publications and serves on the Editorial Board of the Journal of Neuromodulation and as a Founding Member of the Pennsylvania Pain Society. He is also President & CEO of DNA Pain, and a Lecturer and Instructor for numerous national and international companies and societies.

### The National Bioskills Medical Advisory Board

is a group of the best surgeons in the U.S., key opinion leaders who train physicians on medical device use in a wide range of educational environments including universities, hospitals, and private practice. National Bioskills Laboratories regularly consults with the Medical Advisory Board as part of their commitment to transforming medical device education through physician-focused training techniques and technology.

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