



# Academic Residencies for Game Designers

**Lisa Brown**

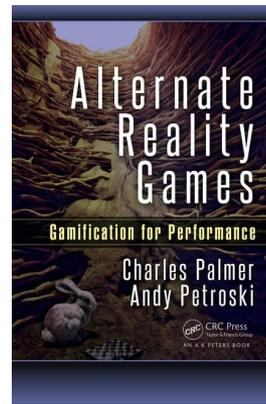
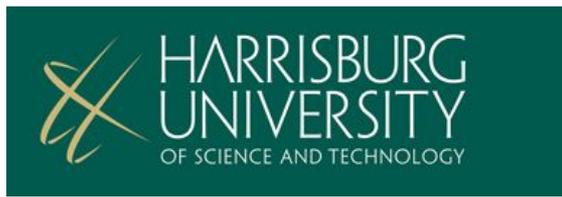
Independent Game Designer

**Charles Palmer**

Harrisburg University



# Charles Palmer





# Lisa Brown



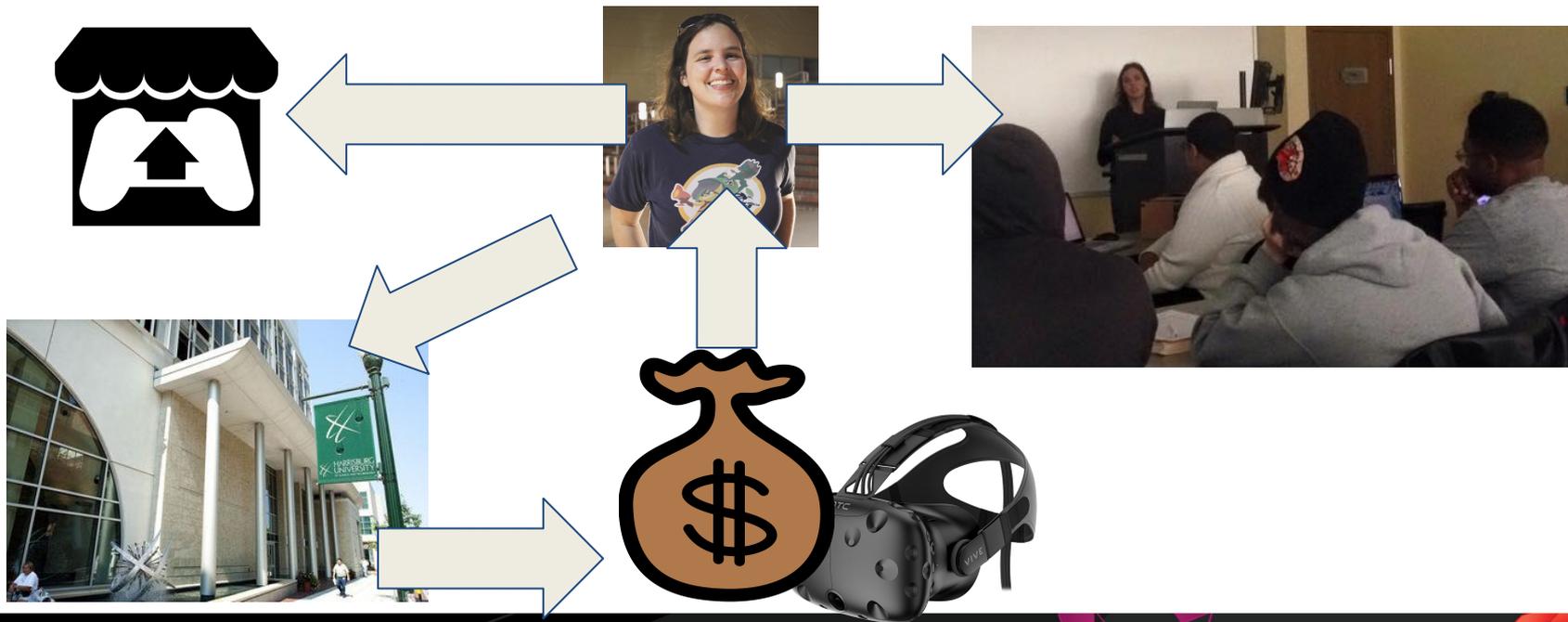


# What is an Academic **Residency?**





# What is a Residency?





# Caveat

- Not just for game designers!
- US-centric





# Benefits

- Introduce new opportunities to the classroom
- Augmenting teaching staff
- Frequently rotating talent





# Benefits

- Circumvents academic hiring requirements
- (No PhD required)





# Benefits

- Stronger ties to current industry practices



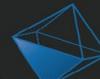


# Benefits

## Resident Perspective:

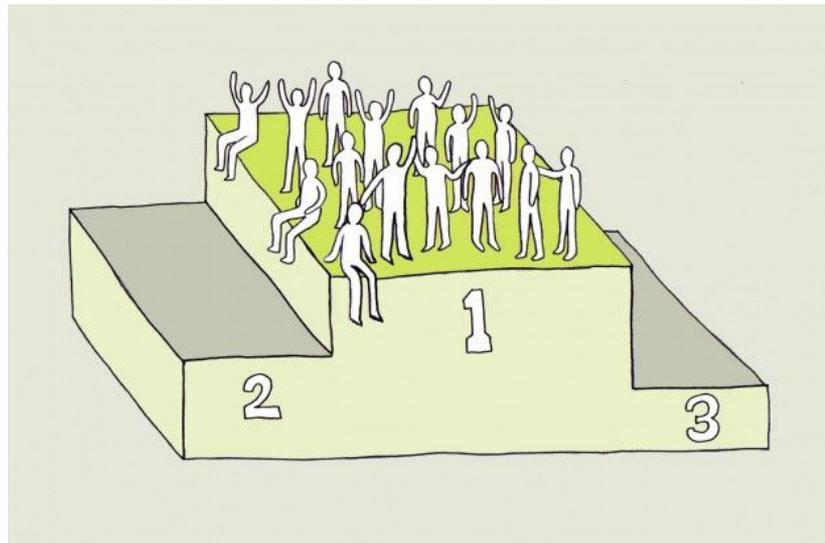
- Funding!
- Academic Trial
- Mold the next generation





# Benefits

- Wins all around!





# What will we cover today?





# What will we cover today?

1. An overview of the HU program



NYU GAME CENTER



MARYLAND INSTITUTE  
COLLEGE OF ART





# What will we cover today?

2. Quick tips for setting up your own

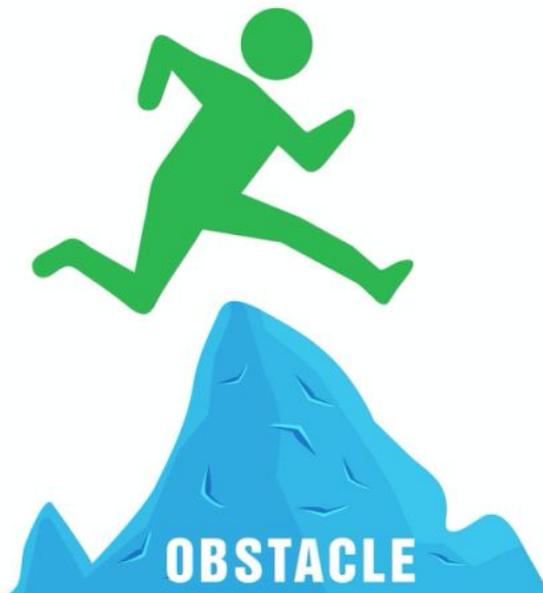
# diy





# What will we cover today?

3. Common obstacles to overcome





An overview of the  
Harrisburg University  
**Game Dev in Residency**  
Program





# Lisa's Roles as Resident





# Lisa's Roles as Resident

- Advising Student Game Projects





# Lisa's Roles as Resident

- Periodic guest lecturing in other classes
- Co-taught Game Design
- Seminar Class





# Lisa's Roles as Resident

- Organizing extra learning opportunities





# Lisa's Role as Resident

- Summer Game Academy





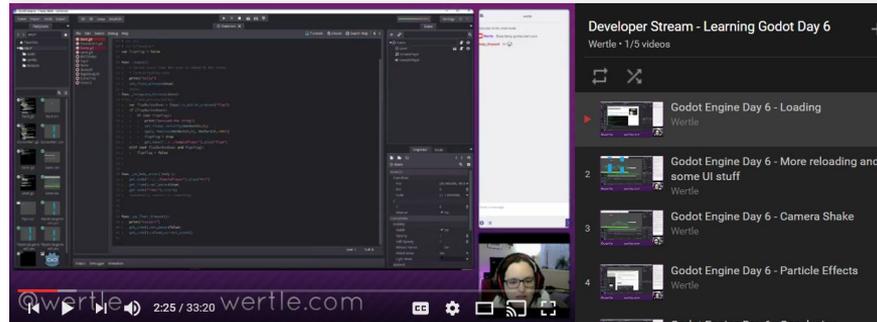
# Lisa's Projects





# Lisa's Projects

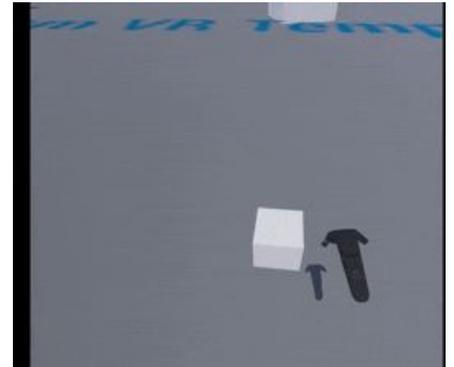
- Prototyping and learning new tools



Godot Engine Day 6 - Loading



Wertle





# Lisa's Projects

- Streaming and Writing

The screenshot shows Lisa Brown's Patreon profile. At the top, it says "Lisa Brown is creating content to help you make better games". There are "Share" and "Tweet" buttons. The profile features a "Camera sample content" tag with 16 posts. Below that are "TAGS" for various content types like "patron updates", "streams", "analysis", "game jams", "playable games", "interviews and podcasts", "talks", and "feedback". The "TYPE" section shows "Public" (88) and "Patron Only" (60) content, with price filters for \$10 (2), \$20 (1), \$30 (4), and \$5 (48). A "By Month" dropdown is at the bottom left. The main content area shows two posts: "Residency Recap" (Jan 23 at 5:40pm) and "Patron Update #53" (29 patrons · Jan 16 at 1:20am). The "Residency Recap" post includes a "Continue reading" link and a "1 Like" count. The "Patron Update #53" post includes a "Continue reading" link and a "\$5+ patrons" badge. On the right, the "REWARDS" section lists two tiers: "Pledge \$1 or more per month" (6 patrons) and "Pledge \$5 or more per month" (23 patrons), each with a "Become \$1 Member" or "Become \$5 Member" button.





# Lisa's Projects



# PRACTICE

Game Design In Detail

NYU GAME CENTER | NEW YORK CITY





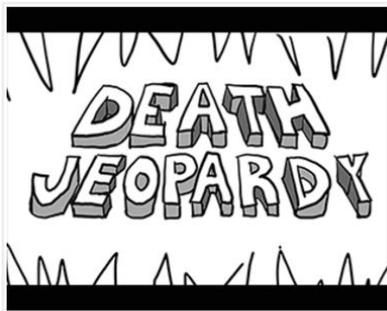
# Lisa's Projects

- Continued consulting





# Lisa's Projects



## Death Jeopardy

Made on Train Jam for an audience of one  
Other



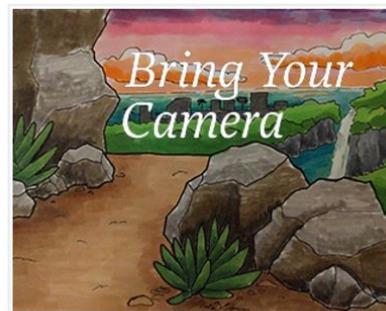
## Imperfection

Impish take on an old childhood game  
Action



## How to Kill a Project

An exploration of abandoned games  
Other



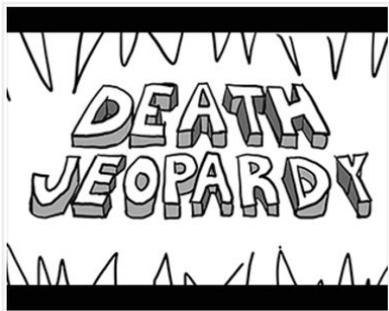
## Bring Your Camera

Go for a stroll, and bring your camera this time.  
Adventure



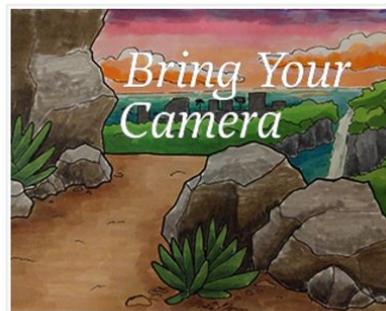
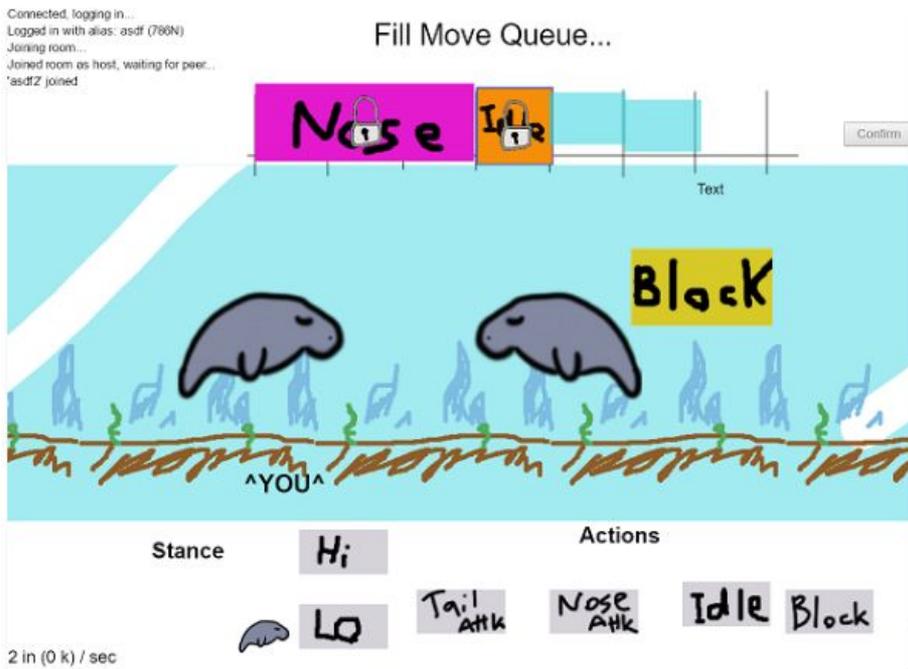


# Lisa's Projects



## Death Jeopardy

Made on Train Jam for an audience of one  
Other



## Bring Your Camera

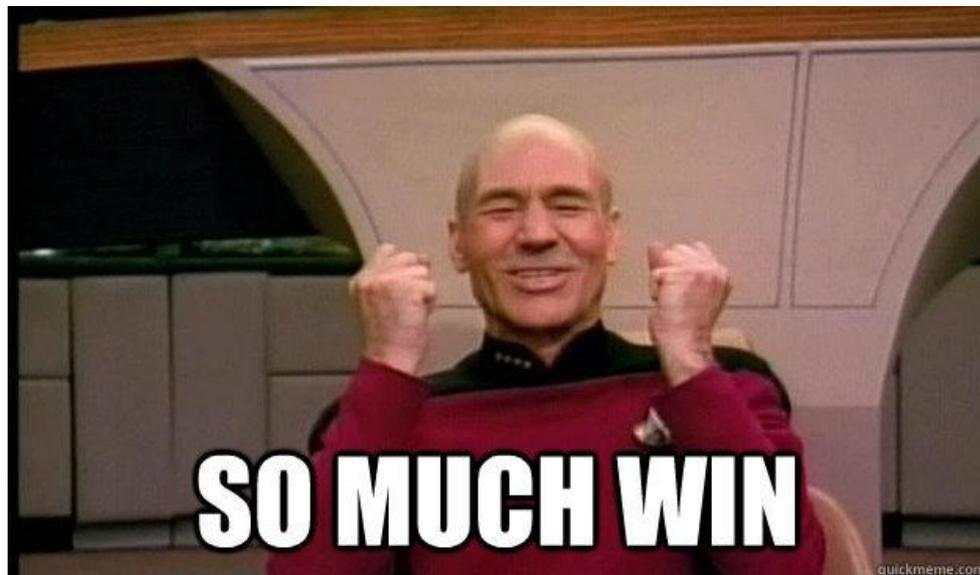
Go for a stroll, and bring your camera this time.  
Adventure





# Resident Conclusion...

Wins abound!





# Student Testimonials

“She had great contacts and always connected us with someone who would help us if she couldn't. She would also give fantastic feedback on anything we gave her. She did everything to help us.”



“She would always go the extra mile to help us with finding information or with contacting other designers, and was willing to spend hours helping us solve problems with our games.”





# Residencies at other schools

- Recent
  - Eastern Kentucky University
  - NYU Game Center
  - Maryland Institute College of Art
- Past Programs
  - UC Santa Cruz
  - Full Sail





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## Setting up and Running YOUR Residency





# Setting up a Residency

## 1. Convincing the Administration





# Convincing the Administration

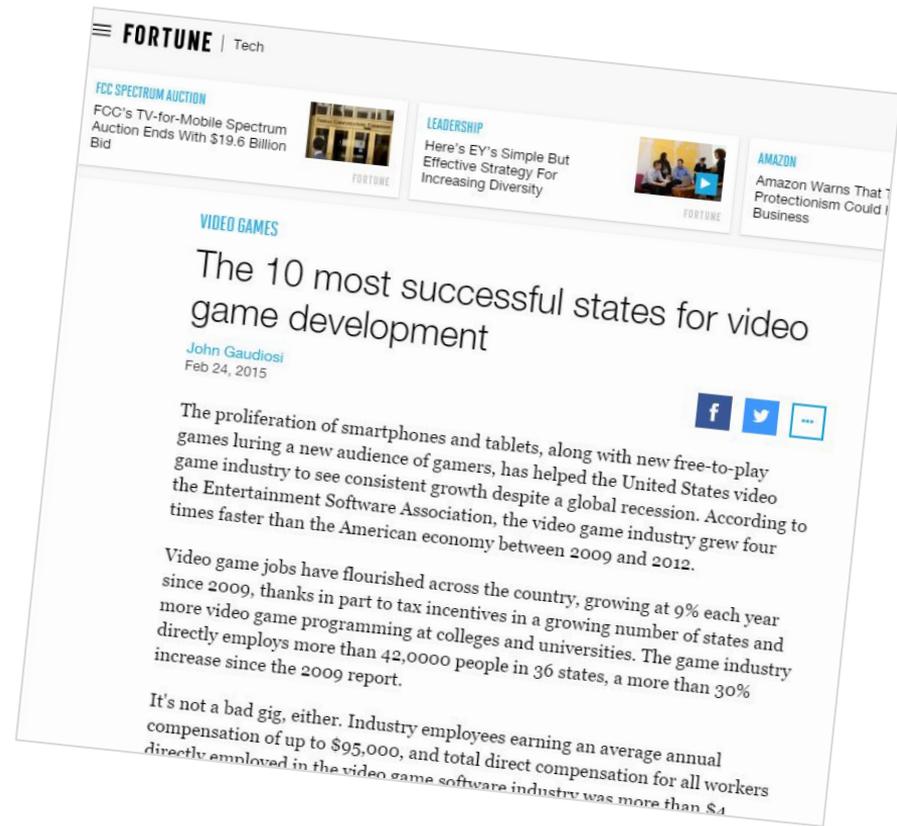
## *Funding options*

- Endowment
- Annual budget
- External grants





**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY  
& ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT





# Convincing the Administration

- Tie Residency to Program Goals
  - Program Goal 4: *Production and Teamwork Skills*
  - Program Goal 6: *Professional Skills*





# Convincing the Administration

## Professional Development for Faculty

- Improving skillsets
- Inspiring collaboration





# Convincing the Administration

Long term relationships with residents

- Potential recruiting
- Expanded network





# Setting up a Residency

1. Convincing the Administration
2. Adapt to your Resident





# Adapt to your Resident

- Shape program to resident's strengths/interests





# Adapt to your Resident

## John's style

- Unity development
- Production
- Business and funding
- Formal class structure





# Adapt to your Resident

## Lisa's Style:

- Design thinking
- Industry professionals
- Advising/mentoring
- Informal Learning opportunities

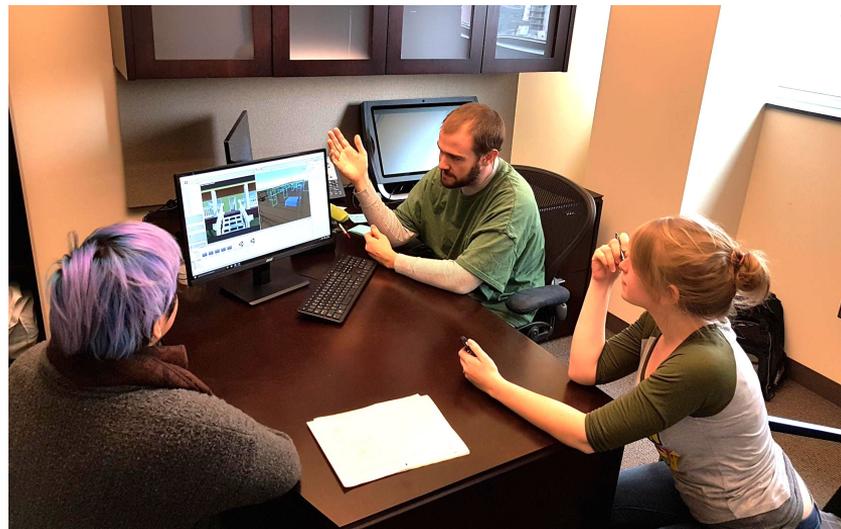




# Adapt to your Resident

## Mike Stout

- Project advising
- Mentorship
- Client work





# Adapt to your Resident

## Jerry's Style (EKU)

- Experimental Hardware
- Physical Prototyping
- Narrative





# Setting up a Residency

1. Convincing the Administration
2. Adapt to your Resident
3. Flexibility is Key



**FLEXIBILITY**

Not every situation is covered in the training manual.



# Flexibility is Key

- Freedom of schedule





# Flexibility is Key

- Encourage the resident to continue their professional work



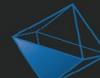


# Flexibility is Key

Help them navigate academic hoops

- Co-teaching
- Help with grading
- Manage funding expectations
- School year scope





# Flexibility is Key

- Students are hard! Help your resident





# Flexibility is Key

- Supporting attendance of industry events
  - Manage expectations

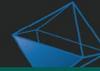




# A few other tips:

- Budgets can change, so be flexible
- Shop around
- Find opportunities to share your resident with other programs or departments





# CHALLENGES





# Challenge: Reaching the right applicants

- Too many applicants from pure academic background
  - Where it was posted
  - Wording
- Emphasis on teaching - scared people away





# Solutions

- Mind your words
- Get listing posted where talent is actually looking
- Foster direct relationships





# Challenge - Availability

- Most people can't leave their job
- Semesters never line up well with development cycles





# Solutions

- Catching people in transition
- Studio sabbatical





# Challenge - physically relocating

- It's hard to get people to leave their base of operations
- Specific problem to schools not in hubs





# Solutions

- Can you provide housing
- Cover relocation expenses
- Be flexible about letting people travel
- Communicate all these things!





# Conclusion

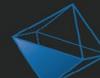




# Conclusion

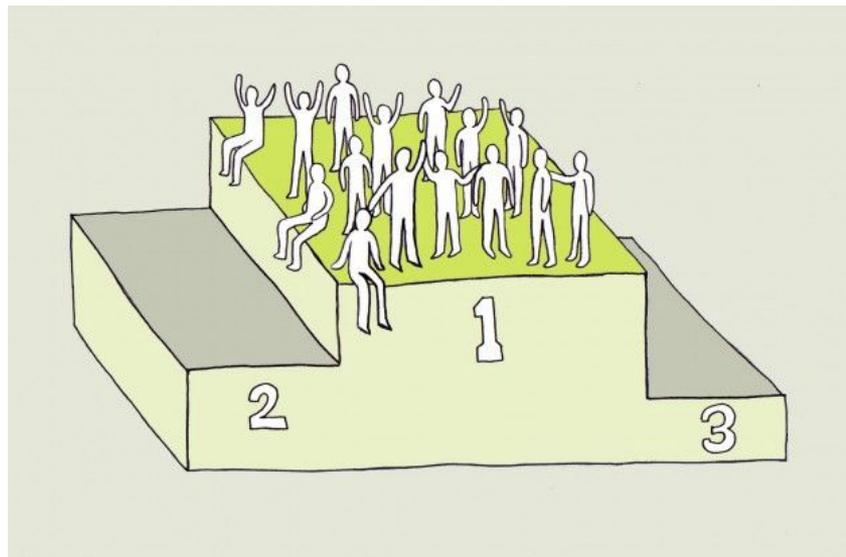
Setting up a successful residency requires flexibility within the academic structure to allow the resident to thrive (and subsequently bring the best experience to the students)





# Conclusion

Wins all around!





# Thank you, questions?

Charles Palmer



@charlespalmer

Lisa Brown

@Wertle

Please check your email and complete the

**SESSION EVALUATIONS!**

