



Preface to training in minimal access surgery

A few years ago, it came to mind when both of us were teaching a minimal access (laparoscopic) surgery course in the Cuschieri Skills Center in Dundee, Scotland, that here we were, teaching young surgeons the basic and advanced skills in colorectal surgery and that we had never been taught how to do so. Were we doing it correctly? Were we getting the message across as we intended? What exactly should the goals of teaching minimal access surgery be and mean to the students and teachers? Yes, we had been mentored by reputed surgeons who during their distinguished careers had glittering stars of achievements and by their example and seeing them work and explain what they were doing, gave us insight of how to do the same. Certainly we were awed by their manual dexterity and sense of orientation but had not given any thought how we, their students, could propagate the same knowledge to our own students.

So the idea was born to create a document designated to do just that. We looked at the problems and sought out the experts to try to solve them. The result is this book. Of course, teaching evolves and some of the information might be old but not out-dated: the essentials do not change. This book is for those teachers who want to have a new scope of teaching methods; it is for accomplished surgeons who are called upon to teach, and it is for the learner, who wants also to become a teacher. With this translation, we hope to reach out to the Mandarin Chinese community, and, based on our teaching experience for the last 30 odd years, share with the Chinese-speaking minimal access surgeons our conception of how to understand the goals, how to teach, and how to train the trainers in minimal access surgery.

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Nader Francis, MD

*Department of Surgery, Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Yeovil, UK.
(Email: nader.francis@ydb.nhs.uk)*

Abe Fingerhut, MD

*Section for Surgical Research, Department of Surgery, Medical University of Graz, Auenbruggerplatz 29, 8036 Graz, Austria.
(Email: abefingerhut@aol.com)*

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