



Leading Yourself

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Introduction

As a pharmacist you have the ability to be part of something bigger. You have the opportunity to positively affect the lives of the patients you serve. Your pharmacy education has provided you with the foundation and knowledge and you should be ready to practice those skills in the real world. When the time comes to do so, will you be ready to lead? In order to lead you will have to look inward and discover your inner strengths and weaknesses. In order to lead practice you will have to start the process of introspection and self-evaluation. This chapter will focus on the importance of leading yourself to achieve the success you desire.

The ever-changing healthcare environment is providing pharmacists with the opportunity to challenge the norms of the past and come up with new and exciting ways to care for our patients in the future. Our profession's ability to move forward is on the shoulders of new practitioners and seasoned professionals alike. As you look at your abilities and visualize how you will influence change in the profession, you must understand what skills you possess and how you can use them to move change forward.

Every pharmacist has the opportunity to make a difference and you possess the foundation needed to be successful. As you reflect on your abilities while reading through this chapter, identify areas where you feel can be a catalyst for change in the profession. Leadership is not about being out in front of others; it is however, about knowing yourself in a way that will help you make a difference in the lives of the patients that you serve. Will you be up for the challenge when it is knocking at your door?

What are the things that can make you successful in both your personnel and professional life? Looking through the glass with a positive attitude is a trait that can help you overcome whatever is placed in front of you (Case 8.1). It is important as you take the initial steps to becoming a leader. If you think you can, then you are more likely to be successful in accomplishing your goals or tasks. Some of the most effective leaders across the country make others believe through their actions that the future contains hope. The hope that our patients deserve better and that you will deliver on your ability to rise to the challenges needed to overcome the barriers that prevent this from occurring. As you lay the foundation for success with a positive attitude you should consider a few other traits that will separate you from your peers in your quest to achieve your goals. Personal confidence, accepting responsibility, and following through with action are important first steps to leading yourself.

Confidence, or more aptly self-confidence, is an important trait that should be toward the top of your list of abilities that must be self-evaluated. To trust one's ability to assess a situation adequately, make decisions about the situation, and then to act on those decisions to produce the desired outcome is an important task. As with most skills the more this is done with the desired results the easier it is to feel good about the process.

Accepting responsibility is another important trait to possess, which can result in having the capability of making rational decisions on one's own as well as holding one accountable for those decisions. Maturity and responsibility go hand in hand. Responsibility to one's self must be modeled when making process decisions. It makes no difference what the process is, whether it is furnishing medications to a patient or obtaining your certification as a board-certified pharmacotherapy specialist.