

Jeanne Rucker Ezell



Building Relationships Is an Essential Part of Leadership

Jeanne's friends and colleagues know her as a dedicated person focused on her family, profession, and her goals. She always has a vision and a plan, and she knows how to execute. Execution to Jeanne is not only about getting it done, but getting it done the right way. She always has the "greater good" in mind when she executes a plan. Just as important, everyone knows that she cares about what she does.

Jeanne's educational background and training certainly prepared her well for her leadership roles. She received her bachelor of science degree from the University of Tennessee College of Pharmacy, and her master of science degree and residency from the University of Kansas. She is currently the Director of Pharmacy and Residency Program at Blount Memorial Hospital in Maryville, Tennessee. Jeanne is not only a leader in health-system pharmacy practice, but also in her community as she consistently serves in volunteer leader positions.

During her career, she has understood and valued the importance of relationships in accomplishing goals, building productive cultures, and job satisfaction. She is very clear in her message that *leadership is required for successful and sustained change and that relationships that demonstrate genuine dedication and caring are an essential part of leadership.*



Dear Young Pharmacist,

I believe all pharmacists must be leaders. You do not have to be in a formal leadership role to be a leader in our profession. No matter where you work or your position, our profession needs you to be a good leader. After 25 years as a hospital pharmacy director, I find every day I am still striving to become a better leader. I share my experience in hopes that it will benefit you as a leader in your workplace.

I come from a family of hard workers, and if you were to ask any of the people I have worked with, I think they would describe me as a hard worker as well. But after more than 30 years in the pharmacy profession, I prefer to be known for the impact I may have had on people's lives rather than the fact that I worked really hard! I love that my parents instilled in me the notion that I could accomplish anything I desired if I worked hard. But in addition to hard work it takes leadership to develop a strong pharmacy service. No matter what your position, we all have important responsibilities in this profession, and how we carry them out is what really makes a difference in people's lives.

In my early days as a pharmacy director, I prided myself on good organizational and strategic planning skills, setting goals and accomplishing them, and always treating my staff fairly. I participated in Stephen Covey's Seven Habits of Highly Effective People training program and have really tried to incorporate those seven habits into my life. In 1990, I took a second director of pharmacy position with the challenge of expanding and improving pharmacy services. One of the pharmacists did medication use reviews and nursing education and another pharmacist provided medication education for cardiac rehabilitation patients, but the pharmacy did not provide any other clinical services. The nursing director was eager to implement computerized medication administration records and a complete intravenous admixture service. However, I encountered little enthusiasm for change from many of my pharmacy staff. A few people were excited about making improvements, but there were also some vocal staff who asked, "Why should we do that to help the nurses?" After that, I added *culture change* to my *needs improving* list. I soon realized that working hard planning and implementing changes was