

## Michael D. Sanborn

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### *Making Difficult Career Decisions*

Mike is the leader that every board of directors wants in a senior executive role in their organization. He is the ultimate professional and a great leader with a tremendous ability to develop and execute a strategic vision. Mike's successful career is a testament to these abilities. His other admired characteristics include his thoughtful and reflective analysis of difficult situations. Thus, the thoughtful approach to making difficult decisions that he shares in his letter is not a surprise to anyone that knows him.

Mike currently serves as the President and CEO for Baylor Medical Center in Carrollton, Texas. His previous experience includes direct patient care and administrative and pharmacy leadership positions in large health systems and academic medical centers. He certainly gives back through his involvement in a number of community and professional activities including serving in leadership roles for the Metrocrest Chamber of Commerce, American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, American Heart Association, United Way, and others.

He received his bachelor of science and master of science degrees from the University of Kansas where he also completed his residency training in pharmacy administration. He has enjoyed a very successful career and, of course, has faced several crossroads during his career. From those experiences he offers very thoughtful advice: *objectively analyze the situation and distill the decision down to the elements that are most important to you.*



Dear Young Pharmacist,

**C**ongratulations on choosing a profession that will provide you with an endless number of career opportunities. Some of the most rewarding yet challenging crossroads that you will face will be related to job opportunities that come your way in part because you are a pharmacist. For that reason, I would like to share three stories of my more challenging career situations and then provide three important pieces of advice for you to consider when you are faced with a new job opportunity.

My first story is about how I got into management in the first place. It was completely happenstance and initially against my will. My first job out of pharmacy school allowed me to fulfill my dream of being a clinical pharmacist in cardiology at a large academic medical center. I literally could not wait to go to work every day to be involved in the direct care of patients. About six months after I started this job, the lead cardiology pharmacist left and I was asked to lead the team (which essentially meant that I was responsible for developing the schedule and resolving issues). Despite some reluctance, I enjoyed it more than I thought I would. Six months later, my supervisor, who was responsible for managing all 27 clinical pharmacists on the various patient care teams, took a job at another hospital. Despite my being only one year out of school, I was approached by the assistant director of pharmacy and asked if I would interview for the clinical supervisor position. The decision to do so was challenging because I knew that I might be leaving a position that I truly loved for something with which I had very little experience. Nevertheless, I interviewed, was offered the position, and chose a path of management. That decision transformed my career.

My two-year residency in pharmacy administration leads me to my second story. After residency, I stayed on as an assistant director, but my ultimate goal was to become a director of pharmacy. After a few years, I was offered a director's position in Florida that I accepted and sincerely enjoyed. Several years later, an opportunity arose with a large company that provided health-system pharmacy management services