



Nirali Rana, PharmD

Leadership Roles Allow You to Be Present at Work and at Life

If you want to learn how to oversee 70 community pharmacies, conduct and precept community pharmacy residency programs, and remain active in professional organization leadership while raising children, then you will enjoy this letter. Nirali encourages you to be active in the political process and join non-pharmacy healthcare organizations as well as pharmacy organizations because there is strength in numbers for achieving the end goal—continuous improvement of patient care.

Nirali Rana is currently Area Healthcare Supervisor, Boston, Walgreen Company. Previously, she was District Pharmacy Manager for Walgreen. She received her PharmD degree from Northeastern University.

Nirali's advice is: ***Effective delegation is the key to success. Involvement in organizations including ASHP, APhA, and internal business resource groups will help you to recognize the obstacles that we all face and find ways to overcome them.***



Dear Young Pharmacist,

“Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.” —Theodore Roosevelt

One of the best decisions I made in my life was to attend Northeastern University School of Pharmacy. Being a pharmacist is extremely rewarding and impactful. Those who are able to do what they love every day are incredibly blessed. Throughout pharmacy school I experienced several facets of the pharmacy field, but community pharmacy always felt like home to me. It's where I developed relationships with my patients, where I truly felt and saw my impact, and where I found my family at work. I have a HUGE family both professionally and personally.

As you grow into your professional careers, make sure you network and develop relationships with people who can be your advocate, teacher, and friend. Along the way, you will also have coaches, mentors, and sponsors. You may be thinking: What's the difference between a coach, mentor, and sponsor? The simple answer is this: a coach talks *to* you, a mentor talks *with* you, and a sponsor talks *about* you. Make sure to take full advantage of these relationships. As my career has developed, I've been able to fulfill all of these roles.

If you LOVE people, people LOVE you, and you LOVE working in a community pharmacy, then you owe it to the profession to work in a community pharmacy. I thoroughly enjoyed managing several pharmacies, but I felt a need to grow into an expanded leadership role so I could have a greater impact and influence change. Our community pharmacists need to be supported in a manner that positions them to provide excellent patient care. It's not an easy job and deserves more credit than it receives. If you're doing it just for the money, you'll never be happy. It's not fair for you, your patients, or the employees that work alongside you.

Community pharmacists are the most accessible healthcare providers; however, pharmacists are not recognized as such. This baffles me. According to IMS Health data, the United States incurs \$300 billion in healthcare expenditures due to medication adherence issues. We continually see studies of pharmacists having an impact on patient care and decreasing healthcare expenditures. I envision a world in community pharmacy where our time with patients is valued. Patients should have the opportunity to see pharmacists, and pharmacists should have the opportunity to see patients. My hope is that by the time you read this letter, we have made the first steps in enacting federal legislation to include pharmacists as healthcare providers. The next steps will be in changing the infrastructure of healthcare to streamline the inclusion of pharmacists as an integral part of the healthcare team.

It is essential we use our skills, training, and experience to benefit patients. My goal is to help you achieve this through my letter. As difficult as it may be, the importance of providing medication therapy management and immunizations on a consistent basis is crucial to demonstrate the impact of our profession. Our daily priorities can easily push these activities aside, but we need to find a way to educate our patients and work together to better advocate for those patients, our profession, and ourselves.

I would highly recommend strengthening your skills in people leadership on a continual basis and increasing your EIQ (emotional intelligence quotient). There are many books and articles on this topic. Sign up for daily or weekly emails from Fastcompany.com, *Harvard Business Review*, Mindtools.com, Gallup.com, and HRDQ.com. These tools, along with your supervisors and human resources personnel, will supply the skills you need to lead a high-performing team. Using