

Whitney Mortensen

PharmD, MBA, BCPS



Taking the Path Less Traveled

Whitney exhibits many characteristics you would expect of a high performer, including dedication, efficiency, and intelligence. What makes Whitney stand out is her open mind, ability to get people on her side, and keen insight in most situations. Whitney's ability to grow and improve is amazing. She has a unique way of learning from any situation and then using that experience to keep improving. With Whitney, each day is literally better than the last.

Whitney is currently a drug information specialist at Intermountain Healthcare in Taylorsville, Utah. She completed her accredited postgraduate year (PGY) 2 health-system pharmacy administration residency and her accredited PGY1 pharmacy residency at Intermountain Healthcare located in Murray, Utah. Whitney earned her PharmD degree from Roseman University of Health Sciences, College of Pharmacy, and her MBA from Roseman University of Health Sciences, College of Business, both located in South Jordan, Utah.

Whitney's advice is: ***Make decisions about your career based not on what you feel you should do but what you truly want to do. In my opinion, that is the best way to build a fulfilling and meaningful career.***

Dear Pharmacy Colleague,



As with many pharmacy students, I was uncertain which area of pharmacy would be the best fit for me. To make a more educated decision about my career path, I tried to gain an understanding of pharmacy practice in a variety of areas. I considered all sorts of possible options ranging from ownership of an independent community pharmacy to clinical veterinary pharmacy. My career interests had always been diverse, so I wanted to gain experiences in different settings and special-

ties. I remember explaining to many preceptors and mentors that I liked to dabble in different areas of practice but had not found a specialty I was truly passionate about. I spent some time working as an intern at a community pharmacy chain but realized that that was not the best fit for me. I knew it would be essential for me to keep my options open. I also knew obtaining additional clinical training would be key. It was a gradual process that led me to decide postgraduate training (residency training) was my best option. It would allow me to investigate various clinical areas and to make an informed decision about my future. After making this decision, I still found myself at an impasse. I pondered: *What type of residency program would provide me with the most growth opportunities and job prospects as a new pharmacist?*

I enjoyed many of the advanced pharmacy practice experiences (APPEs) I had as a student, but at the end of the rotation I was always more than ready to move on to something new. I applied to residency programs that would allow me to gain experience in various clinical areas caring for both adult and pediatric patients. I also applied to some health-system pharmacy administration programs. I was working on a Master of Business Administration degree concurrently with a Doctor of Pharmacy degree and had always known at some point I would want to move into a formal leadership position. The decision to apply to different types of residency programs was driven by my desire to have a broad understanding of many different pharmacy settings. I received all that and more when I matched with the two-year health-system pharmacy administration residency program at Intermountain Healthcare. Completing a residency is beneficial in terms of developing and expanding your skills as a clinician. This clinical knowledge, while its importance cannot be overstated, is not the most crucial thing I gained from residency training.

IMPORTANT SKILLS THAT TRANSLATED DIRECTLY TO PROFESSIONAL ROLES

The most important skills I learned in residency now help me to effectively work and function in a professional setting. Balancing responsibilities on rotation with longitudinal projects and tasks pushed me to improve my time and project management skills, as well as my ability to work efficiently. An essential skill was learning to appropriately prioritize work with multiple preceptors from different rotations. Another part of this was learning to say “no.” Residency was the first time in my life where I was presented with more opportunities than I could pursue. I had to think carefully about when to take on additional assignments so I would not neglect my other responsibilities. At first, it was difficult to adjust my way of thinking to achieve this, but it was essential so I could consistently produce high-quality work.

Residency taught me how to work autonomously. If I had identified barriers or needed clarification on the expectations or scope of a project or presentation, the onus was on me to seek out additional information and ask questions. Working through