

KEYWORDS: Leadership Development, Managerial Development

DISCUSSION POINTS:

What is professional excellence?

- Progression of excellent pharmaceutical services, programs, and activities in the department has occurred over time.
- "Professional excellence is more than any destination or achievement; it includes the journey itself."

How does one establish priorities?

- "In short, it seems that today's pharmacy leader faces almost overwhelming demands to do more with less. When working harder, faster, and even smarter is not the answer, what is? I believe the answer was stated many years ago by the Vietnamese philosopher Lin Yutang: 'Besides the noble art of getting things done, there is the nobler art of leaving things undone. The wisdom of life consists in the elimination of the nonessentials.'"

What are the 7 priorities important to the journey to professional excellence?

1. Build on a core of principles
  - Two layers: central core of personal and philosophical principles and an outer layer of professional principles
2. Perfect a process for continual learning
  - Learn new information, problems, and professional challenges; analyze information; question conclusions from analysis; and take action on the basis of the first three steps.
3. Harness technology and information systems
  - "Pharmacy leaders must harness these powerful technology and information systems by assuming professional responsibility for control, quality, efficiency, and safety."
4. Balance fiscal realities with patient care
  - "The pharmacy leader who continually excels in this brutal economic environment will successfully balance fiscal realities with patient care by remembering at least three critical points: fiscal responsibilities must receive as much attention and effort as clinical and technological programs; consider the even greater overall costs that result from inappropriate drug therapy; balance fiscal reality with concern for quality patient care."
5. Be a leader extraordinaire
  - "Behind every excellent professional staff is a courageous, competent, principle-centered leader with a vision so clearly stated and shared that it becomes the staff's own."
  - "Successful leaders create a learning culture within their organization"
  - "Leaders must be clinicians, and clinicians must be leaders."
6. Establish a new practice model for pharmacy
  - "A successful professional is always people-centered"
  - "It is essential to consider the whole patient"
  - "Evidence-based drug therapy- It's about patient outcomes"
7. Kindle the fire within
  - "Every successful leader and professional I have known, studied under, or worked with has invariably had an unquenchable zeal for practice, or a 'fire within' as Covey et al. described it."
    - Stand on Principles
    - Engage in continual learning
    - Study heroes
    - Associate with winners

- Enjoy the journey
- Focus on others
- Pass it on

What are your core principles? How do these affect your professional career?

- “The first and most critical priority is that all other professional priorities be built around a personal center or core of principles.”
- “This core includes our personal fundamental values and beliefs, which become the basis for our goals, communications, actions, and responses.”
- “In today’s chaotic health care world, we are constantly challenged in both direct and subtle ways to question, if not abandon, our core of principles for material or personal gains and sometimes even for career survival.”

Provide examples of how you have established your continual learning process.

- “To effectively handle constant change while continuing to pursue excellence, the successful professional leader invariably develops and perfects a personal process for continual learning and decisive action.”

Why should ‘harnessing technology and informatics be a core principle? How has technology/automation changed the practice of pharmacy?

- “Excellence in pharmacy practice now and in the future depends on how we, as pharmacy leaders, use automation technology and information systems.”

Think about some colleagues of yours and identify what makes them professionally excellent in your eyes. Are their priorities demonstrated through their actions? Which aspects of their practice style would you like to emulate?

TAKE HOME POINT: “Today and for the foreseeable future, it appears that we will confront continual challenges and almost overwhelming change that could easily disillusion and distract us from our primary purpose of patient care. To avoid that possibility and to ensure our continuing journey to excellence, let us remember and teach: It is always a matter of priorities.”

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