Managing & Leading

44 Lessons Learned for Pharmacists

Paul W. Bush and Stuart G. Walesh

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Acknowledgments

Jack Bruggeman, ASHP Acquisitions and Special Publishing Director, created the opportunity to write this book when he recognized that managing and leading pharmacists was similar to managing and leading engineers. With the assistance of the health system pharmacy residents at the Medical University of South Carolina, Dr. Stuart G. Walesh’s book, Managing and Leading: 52 Lessons Learned for Engineers, was rewritten to be applicable to pharmacists.

Drs. Heather Kokko, Kuldip Patel, Christopher Fortier, Jennifer Jastrzembski, Matthew Maughan, and Carolyn Smith revised lessons, adding new content and references to weave the pharmacy perspective throughout the book. They drew ideas and examples from many past and current pharmacy leaders, including several Harvey A. K. Whitney Award recipients.

Co-author Paul Bush notes that his wife, Julie, provided guidance, critiques of ideas, and support throughout the project. Co-author Stu Walesh acknowledges the cooperation of ASCE Press and recalls the authors, former students, seminar and workshop participants, clients, colleagues, and friends who contributed to the original managing and leading book.
**About the Authors**

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Bush is a member of ASHP, ACCP, and APhA. He has served as member, board member, chair, and president of state and national committees and organizations. In 1999, he received the Distinguished Alumni Award from Wayne State University; in 2001, he was elected Fellow of the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists; and in 2005 he received the South Carolina League of Nursing Award for Excellence.

**Dr. Stuart G. Walesh**, Ph.D., P.E., Hon.M.ASCE, has over 40 years of engineering, education, and management-leadership experience in the government and private sectors. He earned a B.S. in Civil Engineering at Valparaiso University, an M.S.E. at The Johns Hopkins University, and a Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He has functioned as a project manager, department head, discipline manager, marketer, professor, dean of an engineering college, and independent consultant.

As an independent consultant, Dr. Walesh provides managing, leading, engineering, education/training, and marketing services. Clients include professional service firms, government agencies, and professional societies. Managing and leading are of special interest including the extent to which basic managing and leading principles apply to various disciplines. Accordingly, Walesh was pleased to have the opportunity to co-author this book for the use in the pharmacy profession.

Walesh is a member of and has chaired state and national committees and groups within various professional organizations. In 1995, he received the Public Service Award from the Consulting Engineers of Indiana; in 1998, the Distinguished Service Citation from the College of Engineering at the University of Wisconsin; in 2003, the Excellence in Civil Engineering Education Leadership Award presented by American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE); in 2004, he was elected an Honorary Member of ASCE; in 2005, he was elected a Diplomate of the American Academy of Water Resource Engineers; in 2007, he was named Engineer of the Year by the Indiana Society of Professional Engineers and received a Distinguished Service Award from the National Society of Professional Engineers.
Foreword

I find this publication a significant and unique addition to the pharmacy literature which should be considered not only by current leaders but by all pharmacists, PGY1 residency directors, and Colleges of Pharmacy students and faculty. I am pleased that it is a concise and practical handbook that I recommend be on every current and aspiring pharmacy leader and manager’s desk. Paul Bush has brought to this publication his 30 years of experience in pharmacy leadership and involved his current and past administrative residents to bring it a view from the “younger generation of leaders and managers.” They should be commended for their efforts.

Pharmacy leadership and management has never been as demanding, multifaceted, complex and critical as it is today and hence the need for this information. Current formal “Big L” leaders (Director, Associate, Assistant, Coordinator, Supervisor, Lead, etc.) and managers must daily juggle:

- Working effectively with people, both their staff and others throughout the organization
- Being financially responsible for a major part of the organization’s expense and revenue budget, most of which they and their staff don’t directly control, i.e., write medication orders
- Making sure all the ever changing regulatory and legal “bases” are covered for medications which are everywhere in the organization, not just in the pharmacy
- Ensuring that medications do not harm patients everywhere they are used
- Develop and maintain good working relationships not only with the medical and nursing staff but with administration, finance, and virtually every other organizational department
- Lead the organizational efforts to improve the medication use system for all the patients, from procuring, prescribing, dispensing, monitoring through medication administration and appropriate charging
- Anticipate and innovate to ensure patients benefit from the new developments in health care
- Keep up not only with the barrage of information such as e-mails, voice mails, journals, newsletters, push news, list serves, but their own self-development
- And other duties as assigned

While these varied responsibilities may seem daunting, they also require a highly scientifically educated and trained person to be able to switch into the art of leading and managing where there are very few true principles as there are in science. Many current and aspiring pharmacy leaders and managers
have not benefited from formal training in the art of leading and managing pharmacies. Likewise these skills are not just needed by the formal “Big L” leaders, but every pharmacist as a “Little L” leader on their shift or in their practice needs to employ the leadership techniques found in this book to ensure their maximum impact.

Effective pharmacist leadership, both “Big L and Little L,” is crucial to the continuing evolution of pharmacy services. Having separated from early medical practitioners as the unique knowledge of specific medications developed, past pharmacy leaders saw the need for pharmacists to apply their drug knowledge to help patients minimize diseases. In health-systems this evolution included compounding intravenous admixtures, developing unit dose drug distribution systems, handling investigational drugs, utilizing formulary systems to promote rational cost effective prescribing, compounding radiopharmaceuticals, moving out of the pharmacy to practice in the patient care areas along side physicians and nurses, computerizing systems, integrating automation, and championing patient medication safety. Only pharmacist leaders can continue this evolution into the future because they understand where the unmet needs are. My leadership published research \((AJHP\ 2005)\) has shown that over the next decade 80% of the current health-system directors of pharmacy and 77% of the middle managers anticipate retiring. These data also indicate that there may not be enough interest by current practitioners to fill these vacancies with pharmacists. The most often cited reason for not being interested in leadership positions is too many competing responsibilities and having to give up their clinical practice. If there are not enough pharmacists to take on these vacant leadership positions then non-pharmacists will have to be utilized which may not be in the best interest of patients and pharmacy staffs.

This book as a primer and handbook can assist leaders, managers and all pharmacists to be more effective. It is filled with non-pharmacy quotes that offer a philosophical backdrop to each topic or lesson. The 44 lessons are conveniently organized into eight parts; personal roles, goals and development, communication, learning and teaching, improving personal and organizational productivity, meetings, marketing, building mutually beneficial employee-employer partnerships and the broad view. Each lesson very effectively contains pharmacy examples, suggestions for application and using the material, related lessons, sources cited in the lesson for further study, suggested supplemental sources, e-newsletters, and applicable websites. The use of key concepts tables make it easy to use as a just-in-time resource.

There are the typical topics you would expect, such as, how to set goals, using questions in communication, establishing culture, the difference between leadership and management, etc but there are many unique topics that add dimensions not usually found in such publications. The following are a few examples.

- Too much of a good thing. Avoiding the pitfalls of too much experience.
- Courage: real and counterfeit. Rising change and confronting the unknown.
• Afraid of dying, or not having lived? Realizing our dreams instead of living with regret.
• Balance high tech and high touch. Mixing technology with human contact.

Readers will benefit from the variety of “pearls” that will enable them to be more efficient and effective no matter what their job responsibilities.

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January 2008
Preface

Managing and Leading: 44 Lessons Learned for Pharmacists is designed to help health system pharmacists manage and lead primarily in their practice but also in their community and other activities.

The 44 lessons in this book present useful ideas for ways to more effectively work with staff or colleagues. Many of the lessons include content that is directly related to memorable and sometimes challenging situations that we have experienced during our careers. Each lesson contains an essay that offers at least one idea or principle for honing management and leadership effectiveness. Following each lesson are pragmatic suggestions for ways to apply the ideas using application tools and techniques such as action items, guidelines, do’s and don’ts, checklists, forms, and resource materials including articles, papers, books, e-newsletters, and websites. The goal is to enable you to practice even better stewardship with who you are and what and who you know.

Many approaches to use of this book are possible, the most obvious of which is to consecutively read all 44 lessons on one or more sittings. A more focused approach is to select a lesson or group of lessons from the Contents or Index that resonates with your current need. A third option is to select one lesson each week and work through the lessons over 11 or 12 months.

Upon reading a lesson, you may determine its message has potential value for you. If so, commit to putting the underlying ideas or principles into practice, at least on a trial basis, and experiment with some of the suggestions. Perhaps you will leverage the lessons into a new life-long management and leadership habit. Even if you don’t change your method of working, you will have examined and confirmed it on its merits.

Counseling, teaching, training, and mentoring are other possible uses of Managing and Leading. The lessons in the book can be utilized for staff aspiring to gain managing and leading positions or to improve their supervisory skills. This could be facilitated by establishing a weekly or monthly “leadership forum” focusing on one lesson during each session.

The book can also be used by preceptors for student health system pharmacy management experiential rotations or postgraduate year one residency training. Individual students or residents could be asked to review selected lessons and offer their views in an administrative rounds or journal club setting. Managing and Leading could also be used as a supplemental text for pharmacy management courses. Finally, mentors might assign their protégés one or more related lessons for self-study and discussion.

Managing and Leading: 44 Lessons Learned for Pharmacists is intended to support current leaders and encourage pharmacists, residents and students to pursue management and leadership roles within and outside of their profession.

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