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Leadership: Three Key Employee-Centered Elements with Case Studies - Editor's Commentary

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Leadership: Three Key Employee-Centered Elements with Case Studies – Editor’s Commentary

This issue begins a four-part series, a serial of sorts, on leadership. The serial is adapted from the book, *Leadership: Three Key Employee-Centered Elements with Case Studies*, by Marc Summerfield. Mr. Summerfield has self-published this book* and has shared it with *INNOVATIONS in pharmacy*, granting permission to disseminate its content through our journal. Mr. Summerfield has practiced hospital pharmacy for almost 40 years, serving as Director of Pharmacy at The University of Maryland Medical Center for 12 years. He is now President of Summerfield Consulting.

Mr. Summerfield recognizes that volumes have been written on the topic of leadership. In formulating his book, he decided to focus on one aspect of leadership – the relationship between a positional leader and employees, specifically the interface between the front-line leader and his/her staff (his/her “direct reports”). Mr. Summerfield’s premise is that this interface often tips the balance toward success or failure, especially for the novice leader. He illustrates each element with a case study.

The book’s introduction and first chapter are presented in this issue of *INNOVATIONS in pharmacy*. The Introduction explains the book’s purpose. Chapter I summarizes the nature of leadership and serves as a foundation for the three ensuing chapters: “Connection,” “Gratitude,” and “Responsiveness.”

We are reprinting this book for several reasons. First, one of the goals of our journal is to present material related to leadership in pharmacy. In our first issue of *INNOVATIONS*, we extended an invitation for “submissions that address any aspect of leadership that seeks to support innovation within the profession of pharmacy.”¹

Second, Mr. Summerfield is a pharmacist, and the pharmacist’s perspective on leadership is not common and one that we wish to help disseminate.

Finally, this material is relevant to our profession. We firmly believe that the change and innovation that is required for pharmacists to fully contribute their skills and expertise to the medication use needs of patients will be realized through the efforts of actively engaged frontline practitioners. A healthy, dynamic relationship between positional leaders and practitioners is required to identify and implement the innovations that can transform practice.

Most pharmacists, upon graduation, enter organizational life, either in a hospital, in a community pharmacy, in industry, in

an entrepreneurial venture, or in academia with little leadership knowledge, training, or experience. Some pharmacists are promoted into formal leadership positions. Others adopt an informal leadership role by virtue of their personality, credibility, and passion. Some have expectations thrust upon them, and others thrust the expectations upon themselves. Either way, they find themselves ill-prepared for what they must do or want to do. Sharing Mr. Summerfield’s work is one way to help close the gap between aptitude and expectations. We look forward to sharing the ideas and experience of other authors mined from this same vein.

The next three issues of *INNOVATIONS* will include one chapter each, addressing “Connection,” “Gratitude,” and “Responsiveness.” In addition to reprinting each chapter, we have asked Mr. Summerfield to prepare an epilogue for each chapter that specifically connects the content of chapter to leadership in pharmacy.

One note regarding the terminology used in this work. Previously, we have shared our thoughts on the relationship between “leadership” and “management,” identifying areas of overlap and distinction.¹ While this work is focused on relationships between supervisors and frontline staff and “manager” is a title frequently attributed to the supervisory role, Mr. Summerfield has chosen to use the term “leader” instead of “manager” or “leader/manager,” recognizing that the two roles are inextricably linked.

*Todd Sorensen, PharmD,
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*The book is available on www.amazon.com.

References

1. Sorensen TD, Traynor AP, Janke KK. Inviting Scholarship in Leadership in Pharmacy. *Innovations in Pharmacy* [serial online]. 2010; 1(1):1-6. <http://z.umn.edu/INNOVATIONS>.