



# Preface

“A profession without leaders from within that profession is simply not sustainable.”

In 2018, I had the honor of supervising two PharmD students in research rotations who were interested in understanding why pharmacists seemed so unwilling to take on leadership roles in the profession. These students, Davin Shikaze and Muhammad Arabi, went on to publish an interesting study focused on community pharmacists’ attitudes, opinions, and beliefs about leadership in their profession. A key insight from this study related to what it means for a profession to actually have leaders who come from—and are of—that profession. As PharmD students, Shikaze and Arabi succinctly summarized the problem of leadership in pharmacy.

Since then, I have had the honor of working with many students and practitioners who have had similar interests and questions regarding leadership, their profession, and how pharmacy is evolving. These individuals have a vested interest in ensuring the pharmacy profession grows, thrives, and continues to remain integral to health care systems everywhere. They also passionately believe in the importance of leading themselves, their peers, and their profession forward and not

relinquishing control or autonomy of their collective future to others who may not have such a significant investment in the pharmacy profession or its fate.

These individuals remind me of why the future of the pharmacy profession is so bright, but also why it is essential we vigorously safeguard that future by ensuring that we cultivate the next generation of leaders from within our profession. The 2018 study by Shikaze and Arabi highlighted a central concern for many pharmacists with respect to their own leadership potential and role: a lack of confidence in their personal knowledge and skill to manage the real-world and complex human resource management (HRM) issues that are part and parcel of leadership today. This study was, in many ways, the starting point for this book, which seeks to help pharmacists and regulated pharmacy technicians gain confidence in dealing with some of the more challenging aspects of leadership, administration, and management in pharmacy by demystifying the complexities of organizational theory and behavior.

This book is roughly divided into two sections. The first section focuses on classical organizational and behavioral theories in ways that I hope will be relevant to pharmacists and pharmacy practice. Understanding these theories and gaining confidence in using the vocabulary and thinking associated with organizational theory can help make HRM less mysterious or intimidating. The second section of this book focuses on practical applications of this theory in areas such as hiring and recruiting, performance assessment, managing mental health issues in the workplace, and—one of the most challenging situations in all HRM—dismissal and termination. Together, this theory-and-applications approach will, I hope, build knowledge, skills, and confidence to better manage whatever human resources (HR) challenges may arise, and help inspire readers to consider their role in leadership, administration, and management.

While it is true that, as Shikaze and Arabi conclude, “[a] profession without leaders from within that profession is simply not sustainable,” it is also true that the single most important element for success in any business is the human capital that drives daily practice. In pharmacy, this includes the pharmacists, regulated pharmacy technicians, pharmacy assistants, and other staff who manage the complex business that is at the heart of medication therapy management (MTM) and drug distribution in all health systems today, including community-based pharmacy practice settings. In order to succeed as a business, an organization, a nonprofit, or even a sole proprietorship, it is essential to have effective, ethical, and principled HRM.

Over the years, I have had the privilege of meeting with thousands of pharmacists and pharmacy technicians from diverse practices in all parts of the world. This is a profession filled with dedicated, energetic, compassionate, and caring individuals who make real and impactful differences to their patients and their communities every day. While the importance of direct patient-care activities cannot be overstated, it is also important to remember that these direct patient-care activities are only one (albeit very important) part of what makes a great profession like pharmacy. I hope this book provides you with opportunities to reflect on how important HRM is to success in today's health system and business worlds. I also hope that it will provide you with tools to enhance your own confidence, knowledge, and skills in HRM activities within pharmacy practice and in other areas. Finally, I hope a book like this may inspire at least some readers to consider the opportunity to take on greater roles in leadership, administration, and management in the pharmacy profession.

— **Zubin Austin**

### *For Further Reading*

Shikaze D, Arabi, M, Gregory P, Austin Z. Community pharmacists' attitudes, opinions, and beliefs about leadership in the profession: An exploratory study. *Can Pharm J*. 2018;151(5):315-321