Developing Leadership, A Reflection

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As a pharmacy student, we are pushed to be well rounded in our academics and extracurricular activities. The ideal candidate should have good grades, be involved in organizations, be involved in research, be able to balance personal life, and show leadership skills. Contrary to the saying “born to be a leader,” no one is born knowing how to be a leader; leaders are made.

A leader is made through hard work and experiences. You can read about being a leader all you want, but you’ll never fully grasp the idea until you have experienced it. I was not very involved as an undergraduate student. When I started pharmacy school, I pushed myself to get involved and run for positions, but I failed. It hurts to fail and the feeling of rejection is extremely discouraging; it abandons all hope and motivation to get back up and try again. But I thrived through my pride and emotions to run for a position again when granted the next opportunity. I was afforded the chance to serve on two e-boards my PS-2 year; Director of Professional Relations and Membership Chair. Though these roles may not have been large, they truly taught me the basics of working on a team. I was forced to learn how to e-mail professionals, work with other e-board members, and coordinate events.

When working in a professional setting, you must remember that each person is a human being with their own life, so it is important to be able to relate to those you lead. You must consider that people have different learning styles and different work ethic. A leader does not lead by telling others what to do, but instead teach them on how to tackle tasks and lends support.

I’ve learned through holding various e-board positions that I truly want to motivate and assist others. I want to help others reach their fullest potential in whatever they do such as working on projects or coordinating an event. I am there to work alongside others, not tell people what to do. It is more important to listen to what people want than to just meet the minimal standard. Many students have the urge to become more involved but do not know how to reach out for opportunities. The most effective way to promote leadership is to inspect the characteristics of others and follow by example. If students are more exposed to what other leaders are doing, motivation will be instilled in them. We are enrolled in pharmacy school for the very short amount of time (3 years) and are thrown into academics, extracurricular activities, and still have our lives; there is much difficulty to juggle and prioritize activities. A good leader knows when to listen, when to be supportive, and when to allow others to lead.