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Soft skills needed for pharmacists. How can we gain these skills!

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It is a known fact that Pharmacists are largely encouraged to develop the scientific areas of their career, adding value and new benefits to our lives. Less encouragement, however, is given to their personal development; understanding how to connect, build valuable relationships with others and manage the team, the communication in the pharmacy. Management and interpersonal skills are rarely included in the Pharmaceutical curriculum at universities and yet these skills are crucial when faced with the responsibility of managing teams. Systems and processes have to be implemented to lead a team successfully and without an understanding of leadership and communication skills this can be extremely challenging. A very well know that: "In order to be a good professional, a pharmacist should possess "a combination of comprehensive therapeutic knowledge, experience, problem-solving skills, and judgement" (Burke, et al., 2008). And in a recent survey soft skills were rated as more important than the hard skills (Aasheim & Williams, 2009). And lastly Hewitt Sean (2008) and Tobin (2006), quoted in (John, 2009), state that soft skills are non-technical, intangible, personality specific skills which determines an individual's strength as a leader, listener and negotiator, or as a conflict mediator. Soft skills are the traits and abilities of attitude and behavior rather than of knowledge or technical aptitude. Here in the UK, the NHS is aware of the importance of the soft skills, that's why the requirements for the pharmacist's job is to have an excellent communication skill, good customer skills, willing to supervise others, team work, have leadership skills, able to deliver knowledge to the new employees. And all these skills have to be up to date with annual continuing professional development (CPD). The balance between technical excellence and interpersonal skills is what truly makes a difference in the experience for service users and staff.

Biography

Aref Alabed graduated as a qualified Dentist in the Ukraine during 2005, setting up his own dental clinic in Jordan that he operated for 3 years. He was then offered a position in a Dental clinic in KSA. He held two roles there; dentist and center manager. The 5 years spent in the management role gave him an opportunity to begin to understand business operation and he decided to study for a Master's in Business Administration. He was awarded MBA with Merit from the University of Northampton in England. Then he moved to Jordan to work as a Director for Marketing for the largest chains of pharmacies in Jordan (105 pharmacies) and during his trips all over the world he opened the International Medical Training Academy based in London which focus at the interpersonal skills for the healthcare professionals with a wide range of courses for the Pharmacists.

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