

Perspectives of Executives and Students on Leadership Characteristics for Healthcare Managers: Does a Gap Exist?

Healthcare managers are undergoing rapid changes since healthcare reform. Preparing healthcare managers for the complexity of the healthcare industry poses a heavy challenge on healthcare organizations, CEOs, managers, and educational institutions. Healthcare is constantly changing and all future healthcare managers need to be adequately prepared for their managerial roles. In order to ensure that future healthcare managers are prepared to enter the workforce, it is important that the characteristics and skills deemed important by current CEOs in the field are similar to those of undergraduate healthcare management students that will be entering the workforce. The purpose of this study was to examine what leadership characteristics and skills are important to CEOs, and to determine if any gaps exist between the perceptions of importance of those characteristics and skills of healthcare management students.^{1,2}

A survey of CEOs in the United States (U.S.) hospitals was designed and conducted in 2007 to determine the most important leadership characteristics of healthcare managers. The survey was conducted again in 2012 to determine if those perceptions had changed since 2007.³ In 2015, a similar study was designed to assess undergraduate healthcare management students' perceptions regarding the most important characteristics healthcare executives should possess. Students were surveyed on the same topic areas that the CEOs were evaluated in the study conducted in 2012.

The study identified that there may be some potential gaps in the importance of what characteristics are essential for healthcare manager to possess. The results could help leaders in healthcare organizations and healthcare management programs develop innovative ways to address these gaps of understanding of important characteristics expected of leaders in the healthcare industry.

Key Words:

Leadership Development, Executive Development, Early Careerist

References

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