

Introduction

IT GOES WITHOUT saying that no perfect job exists. No organization, group of people, or position on earth comes without some measure of challenges, problems, and messiness. But there are ways to deal with the world's near-constant imperfections, particularly in the workplace, and certain universal truths make it possible to find best practices and answers. So with those observations in mind, and with more than eight decades of professional experience between us, we have compiled 50 lessons to steer you thoughtfully, carefully, and with poise and grace toward, onto, and along your chosen career path as a nurse leader.

This book takes a three-pronged approach to introducing nurses to what it takes to be leaders and how to go about developing one's career. The organization of the book into a trio of themes—Manage Yourself, Manage Your Job, and Boost Your Career—is based on the refrains we have heard from nurses at all stages of their careers who have wondered what skills they need to be a successful nurse leader. Most of us can benefit from recalibrations such as returning to basic self-awareness, fervently desiring to make things better, learning to pay attention to what matters most, and matching our gifts, talents, and experience with the right organization and role.

Life, work, and everything in between should be informed by these ideas. Those who dismiss them likely will not perform well or contribute to their organization's mission, vision, and values. They may be overlooked for promotions and find it difficult to move

elsewhere, even laterally. They may be outsourced, outmoded, and outmaneuvered by others.

Success isn't something you're born with; it is carefully cultivated, mastered, and honed. The most successful nurse leaders have learned that authenticity and truth are the best path, and they have learned to *really* pay attention, to *truly* be consummate professionals, and to *wholly* be the very best version of themselves that they can be. The traits, lessons, and skills outlined in this book must be mastered for maximum personal and career success.

We all have dream jobs—those positions that lie at the intersection of our gifts, our passions, and the needs of society. When it works well, a job can fit like a glove and be satisfying to your very core. We hope that this book and its lessons will help you find the kind of professional joy you're seeking.

We wish you the best.

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