

Foreword to the First Edition

HUNDREDS OF BOOKS are available to students and the business community. Many offer incredible insights into specific best practices of running an organization. Books on leadership, management styles, lean operations, and motivating and cultivating your workforce are readily available. There is also a subset of business books that dive into the particulars of the healthcare field. Books and speakers are plentiful for those who wish to learn how to navigate the ever-changing environment that is healthcare management. What has been lacking, until now, is a guide for students that bridges the gap between their academic pursuit and their first leadership role in healthcare.

More than theory, *The Emerging Healthcare Leader: A Field Guide* is your road map for that journey. A refreshing and practical tool, this should be your handbook, your back-pocket how-to resource as you traverse the early years of your leadership career.

In their engaging and authentic style, authors Laurie Baedke and Natalie Lambertson offer valuable insight, real-world examples, and sage wisdom that many do not accumulate until decades later in their careers. Additionally, what they so courageously share is the truth that successful people often fail. While Natalie and Laurie have achieved admirable successes, positions, opportunities, and accolades, they've also stumbled and misstepped along the way. Their willingness to share those experiences so that others can learn from them is a hallmark of great leadership. Each author has a proven track record of success in her short career.

I had the pleasure of meeting Natalie as my first fellow for the Poudre Valley Health System in Fort Collins, Colorado. She was an outstanding student and employee, and I could see her passion for healthcare way back then. She keeps good company, as through her I've had the opportunity to meet and get to know Laurie at the annual Congress of the American College of Healthcare Executives, where they've both served as faculty for the perennial favorite session "Developing the Next Generation of Leaders: Lessons from the First 10 Years."

This book is an undeniably compelling body of work, born from that successful Congress session. For good reason, students flock to that session to soak up the content, which has encouraged and equipped so many early careerists in healthcare administration over the years. Brimming with practical suggestions, lessons learned, stories, and anecdotes, the book offers wisdom from which newcomers to the field and industry veterans alike can learn.

Civil leader and philosopher Mahatma Gandhi once said, "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." It has been a pleasure and a privilege to observe Natalie's and Laurie's journey. Their passion for investing in emerging leaders (those just a few short steps behind them), their commitment to excellence and personal development, and their tireless enthusiasm to serve and mentor give me confidence that the next generation is in good hands. Healthcare needs great leaders—strong, humble, capable individuals who will rise to serve this profession. This book is a resource to equip them.

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