
Book Review

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We may have a favorite leadership book, but most of us have learned that we need more than 1 such book in our library. Leadership is a continuous learning journey. One element of our learning is to challenge our own thinking by learning from different successful leaders. Books are good tools for doing just that. As health care reform unfolds, nurses are being asked to lead beyond nursing, beyond the hospital, even beyond their own community or country. There are 3 recent books to consider for reflection, wherever you are in your journey.

Nursing Leadership From the Outside In, Greer Glazer and Joyce J. Fitzpatrick, editors, 2013. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company. Softcover, 282 pages, \$65.

Two editors. Twenty-three leadership lessons from diverse leaders. This book draws on 3 avenues of expertise in leadership: perspectives from leaders in other disciplines and settings who work with nurses; commentary from one of nursing's most respected leaders; and an academic nurse leader to pull it all together. There are 26 contributors in all. Seeking insights from such a diverse group challenges nursing's insular approach to learning. They explore key areas such as the strengths and weaknesses of nurse leaders and leadership values for interprofessional collaboration. They also examine the Robert

Wood Johnson Executive Nurse fellowship values for excellence and strategies to advance health care reform on a national level. The authors use the Institute of Medicine report on *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Healthcare* (Institute of Medicine, 2011, National Academies Press) as a driving force for this assessment. The thoughts from these diverse leaders will give you pause to think. Examples are as follows:

- Capture the market for least invasive therapies and evaluations. (Martin Alpert, MD, businessman, p. 15)
- Disavow ourselves of the perception of inferiority and avoid working from the shared mentality of an historically disempowered profession vis-à-vis medicine. (Amy Blue, Ass't Provost, Academia, p. 21)
- Nursing care is at the core of humanity. (Barry Smith, MD, Foundation President, p. 214)
- Knowledge is power and there is room at the table for those who possess the knowledge. (Cromwell, Economist, p. 66)
- Positive regard within the ranks of nursing is key to the future of the profession. (Louise Woerner, Business owner, p. 245)
- And from the editors, "But most of all, leaders need to look carefully within themselves and develop the confidence, based on a set of principles of their own devising, to inspire others to work toward a common set of goals" (Greer Glazer, RN, Dean and Joyce Fitzpatrick, RN, Professor, p. 243).

While this book was developed for graduate students in the DNP program, there are many nurse leaders along the health care continuum

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who will benefit from this unique assessment of nursing leadership.

Leading Valiantly in Healthcare ... Four Steps to Sustainable Success, Catherine Robinson-Walker, 2013. Indianapolis, IN: Sigma Theta Tau International. Softcover, 296 pages, \$39.95.

One author. One 4-step process. One intensive journey of introspection. There are times when we are called to step up and lead ... from the bedside to the boardroom. To be truly prepared, we must reflect deeply upon our own leadership strengths and weaknesses. This book is for that time and that person ready to prepare themselves for the inevitable waves of change, ones that require courage, resilience, and knowledge.

This author has drawn on years of experience and writing about women in the leadership role to develop a new framework for leadership now, in these most challenging times. The author first lays the case for why valor. She then takes us through an understanding of what leadership valor is, giving us 15 concrete attributes of the valiant leader. We then examine what is called "the six leadership seductions." A leadership seduction is "a powerful 'hook' usually an unconscious temptation, habit, or operating strategy that is not helpful in the current situation" (part I, chapter 2, p. 30). Seductions can happen to any leader. We are now ready to hear the Four Steps of Leadership Valor (part 1, chapter 3, p. 57).

1. Initiate (Choose Self-awareness)
2. Illuminate (Reveal 3 levels of reality and Recognize seductions)
3. Curate (Create your plan and Calibrate your approach)
4. Integrate (Your wisdom)

Popular short-read books might end in part I. This author authentically understood the work needed to apply to this framework to one's own leadership situation. The rest of the book richly helps the reader recognize the perils in any journey but, more importantly, how to incorporate theory into practice. At first glance, it would appear that this book is for senior leaders. Once our new frontline leaders learn the technical part of their job,

they would greatly benefit from starting this work, earlier in their leadership development. While the framework is new and challenging, the author provides vignettes along the way to help us better understand how it applies in reality. This book is like having your own coach ... on your desk, anytime you need it. Have the courage to at least read the book.

Lean In ... Women, Work, and the Will to Lead, Sheryl Sandberg, 2013. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf. Hardcover, 228 pages, \$12.81 on Amazon.com. (*Note:* Proceeds from this book are going to Lean In, a nonprofit organization that encourages women to lean in to their ambitions and to other charities that support women.)

One author. One dynamic career path. Lots of insight. If you are a female nurse looking to get on boards, become a chief nursing officer (CNO), chief executive officer (CEO), or chief operating officer (COO) at an organization or in a system, this book will give you insights from a woman who has served at high levels in multiple organizations, such as Facebook, Google, and United States Treasury Department. "The blunt truth is men still run the world" (p. 5). Not that you should open your next meeting with this quote from the author, but it does draw you into the book. The jewels in the book actually force you to look at yourself and decisions you make, a prominent theme from experts in leadership.

The author presents compelling evidence about the gap in women/men concerning position, power, and compensation. This conversation is slowly making its way into our upcoming generations' visions and goals. Examples of evidence are (p. 5) as follows:

- 21 of Fortune 500 CEOs are women.
- 14% of executive officer positions are held by women.
- 17% of board seats are held by women.
- 18% of elected congressional officials are held by women.

For your discussion groups, contrast these with the Institute of Medicine report on *The Future of Nursing* (p. 235)

- In 2000, 60% of CNOs reported directly to CEOs. In 2002, 55% reported to CEOs.

- 2007 biennial survey of hospitals and health systems found that 0.8% of voting board members were CNOs whereas 5.1% were vice president of Medical Affairs.
- In community health systems, nurses make up 2.3% of boards compared with 22.6% physicians.
- Men currently make up slightly more than 7% of nurses.

While the challenge for nursing to *Lean In* may be with physicians, the gender issue will need further study. The leadership lessons are similar for both. This may be why the author titled the chapters as tips and never used the word “women” in the titles. So male nurses, you may learn from this book as well. My favorite chapter titles are as follows: “Sit at the

Table” (chapter 2, p. 27), “It’s a Jungle Gym, Not a Ladder (chapter 4, p. 52), and “Don’t Leave Before You Leave” (chapter 7, p. 92).

“ . . . Women rarely make one big decision to leave the workforce. Instead, they make a lot of small decisions along the way Of all the ways women hold themselves back, perhaps the most pervasive is that they leave before they leave.” (p. 93)

After engaging in Robinson-Walker’s introspection on your own leadership, you find that you want to be on boards, be a CEO of a hospital or system, or have more influence in the C-Suite, then *Lean In* is your next book. Humor is woven into these frank discussions for women, making for an enjoyable read as well. Do not wait until the latter part of your career. This book is for those at the beginning, middle, or even last.