

The culture of management versus medicine

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Are doctors, good managers? Are they even trained at all to be managers?

These are poignant questions that have always arisen from the dichotomy that seems to exist between the arts of medicine for which a doctor is trained and the acts of management to which he is constantly exposed to within the hospital walls. Until a doctor actually sits down to ask the question sincerely, scrutinize his answer properly and take appropriate steps at merging the two indispensable qualities, he would constantly be faced with challenges that can be more Herculean than arriving at differential diagnoses.

These two concepts are indispensable in the life of a doctor, and that of any other health professional. They can actually be merged. More than that, really, they must be merged for full and productive society. A medical officer trained in the art of medicine must develop the skills of human relationships: these skills would help him manage the enormous resources that are his disposal for sustaining a functional health care centre.

These resources are human resources: the colleagues at work, other members of the medical team which he works such as nurses, physiotherapists, laboratory technologists etc, and even the patients that he attends to. A great deal of effort has to be put in organizing this group of people; it is in doing this that productivity is ascertained, excellence fostered and results become increasingly forthcoming. Other health care providers need be aware of this important knowledge.

Government officials who are involved in funding the health sector also need to be carried along in this train of Medicine and Management train for holistic and productive funding.

It is therefore not far from the truth that the culture of medicine and management need prompt reconciliation. The need for reconciliation is more overwhelming and irresistible as facts abound for its emergency. The differences need to be reconciled as soon as possible.

The reconciliation is possible. More than possible, it could be said that it is existing, only that it is silent. The clamor then would be for a formal and gradual or sudden erosion of the apparent dichotomy. This can be achieved through a foundational work.

No strong change can be made to a structure without an overhauling of its foundation. The medical school for the health practitioners and the other institutions of higher learning are the major places where this can be achieved. For medical personnel, education among managerial skills in their medical training can be of tremendous impact in achieving this indispensable reconciliation. For managers interested in medicine, an introductory course on medical education would also help. If it is part of curriculum, it gradually becomes a way of life that would p ages.

Apart of this consistent courses and seminars would also be of help for all health workers. These would insidiously push this point home. Really, if this is done, there would enhanced health care delivery as more managers of all

forms of resources would be produced. With these, and the general Public benefit a lot.

SOURCES

HarvardMedical School [Medicine and Management]

www. kff. org [Kaiserfamilyfoundation]