

Pre-Pharmacy Lecture Series
Kelly Maughn Notes
Retail Pharmacist
Wal-Mart
3-30-06

Attendance: 11

I. Background:

- A. Performed his undergraduate education at Weber State University. Almost completed a double major in psychology and chemistry before entering pharmacy school.
- B. Attended and received his pharmacy degree from the University of Utah.
- C. Since graduation he has experience working at McKay Dee hospital, and also worked in a governmental pharmacy (mental hospital).
- D. Currently works full time at the Wal-Mart in Harrisville and part time at IHC north pharmacy.

II. Retail pharmacy versus clinical pharmacy.

- A. Retail pharmacists need to be able to work with a wide variety of people, having differing educational backgrounds, including “simple folks.” Requires patients and flexibility. Clinical pharmacists work mostly with nurses and doctors.
- B. As a pharmacist you need to be able to take criticism, and have the integrity to do what is right under pressure. This is especially true in a hospital setting. You need to be able to work under pressure.
- C. Risk. When a clinical pharmacist makes a mistake, the effects are almost always immediate since most drugs are administered by IV. Mistakes by retail pharmacist can be more prolonged in cases where refills may be involved.

III. Advantages of retail pharmacy:

- A. At least half of the time involves work with people. The law states any new prescription a customer receives requires consultation with a pharmacist.
- B. A pharmacist is often the first contact a person will make to ask about a medical problem. Therefore, a pharmacist needs to know whether to advise the individual to see a doctor or not. (Screen and evaluate)
- C. It is easier to leave your work behind at the end of the day.
- D. Retail pharmacists often have input into business decisions.
- E. Most retail pharmacies offer signing bonuses, and the pay is much better than in clinical or governmental settings. Lots of job opportunities.
- F. Lots of opportunities to work extra shifts to earn more money.
- G. Retail pharmacists have more free time, and have more flexibility in their schedules.

IV. Challenges of retail pharmacy:

- A. Pharmacists work with sick people. Sometimes they take it out on those around them.
- B. Without knowing much about a patient's background, pharmacists sometimes need to make judgement calls to prevent drug abuse. A pharmacist has the right to not issue a prescription to a customer, but may face discrimination law suit.
- C. A pharmacist's job is to be very critical all day long. Sometimes it is difficult to avoid carrying this mind set over to one's personal life.
- D. Burn out and turn over rates are relatively high. Retail pharmacies are concerned about high volume, which creates a high demand on pharmacists.
- E. Regardless of seniority, you need to be willing to work all shifts.

V. Advice to students applying to pharmacy school

- A. Do something that sets you apart from the rest of the field of candidates.
- B. Accumulate lots of service experience.
- C. Fill positions that others elect or appoint you to.