

Leadership and influence 487

Leaders possess SMART goals and can accomplish them. They can make decisions, take initiative, be innovative, and communicate effectively with their team members. Being a Doctor of Medicine made me appreciate how taking initiative can save lives. The following examples show how I lead and influence others' lives.

As a student in my fourth year, and part of the Public Health module, I was part of a group that had to deliver a presentation about health problems among different segments of low socioeconomic societies. I took the lead and suggested converting that presentation into a field activity to explore the most common health disorders in children in El-Fayoum, Egypt. My suggestion was accepted by the Head of the Community Health Department at my University, who facilitated my team's access to the University Hospital's facilities and resources. The activity lasted for 3 weeks. Initially, I outlined an action plan, delegated tasks to 12 team members, and allocated resources for each sub-team. I oversaw the whole activity and participated in examining children. Chairing the data analysis team, the findings suggested that anemia was the most common treatable disorder among children in that city. Consequently, I led the team to deliver a campaign to raise families' awareness of anemia, its dangers, and how to prevent it. Additionally, I coordinated the provision of iron supplements to children with anemia. Four months later, follow-up visits were made, and luckily, anemia symptoms significantly declined, and the children's general health and performance improved considerably.

After graduating from Medical School in Egypt, I returned to Palestine and began working as a general doctor in the Emergency Department at a local hospital. Due to the political situation in Gaza, the healthcare sector has been severely affected. At times, hospitals experience a huge shortage of emergency specialists against the number of patients. Despite the challenging environment, I have succeeded to use my skills in time management, problem-solving, and resilience to effectively participate in managing and serving over 100 patients daily. One night, I was on a night shift when a patient came with the following symptoms: difficulty breathing, swollen lips and throat, and facial swelling; all because of an allergic reaction. The patient was in a critical condition and no emergency specialist was available at that moment, therefore, I began administering the appropriate medication and admitted him immediately to the Intensive Care Unit. I was not able to contact the specialist at that time, so I took initiative and completed all the procedures. I spent the whole night monitoring him, checking his vital signs, and preventing complications from happening. The next morning, the patient started to respond to his medication and became better. The Head of the Department congratulated me on my courage and said that I saved this patient's life.

I am proud of my achievements and confident that joining the Chevening community is the next step for taking my leadership capabilities to the next level.

Relationship-building and shared learning 490

I believe in the positive impact of relationships on my life; therefore, I strive to establish further relationships that help me meet new people and reinforce existing relationships. This has always helped me exchange knowledge, updates, and news about mutual interests.

In 2015 and during my third year at medical school, I was awarded the Leonard Education Organization (LEO) Scholarship. This enabled me to have access to the senior management of LEO. The Organisation works to prepare Palestinian scientists, educators, and executives for the future by providing scholarships to young Palestinians. Through LEO, I had the chance to meet their partner institutions in Egypt and discuss how the organisation can expand its services to include more students from Egypt. As an LEO scholar, I had the opportunity to expand my professional network with diverse medical practitioners in Egypt, Palestine, and Canada. Sharing ideas and experiences has always been a great source of motivation for me to achieve bigger goals. To pay the favour forward, I guided many younger LEO scholars. Using Zoom meetings, I shared lessons from my experience as a Palestinian student in Egypt. Until now, I have kept good contact with LEO, and its scholars all over the world.

Being an international student in Egypt has its challenges. However, I am lucky to have had the opportunity to make friends from Syria, Alegria, Egypt, Yemen, and Nepal. This experience provided me with a better understanding of their cultures. The experience also presented me with access to network with famous medical figures such as Dr Nadine (family name?), the Head of the Obstetrics and Gynecology Department, the field of medicine I am most interested in.

During my final year, I was assigned by the Dean of Student Affairs at Cairo University to create and lead a committee consisting of international students to supervise the organisation of an international celebration day. The celebration is held every year to support diversity, enhance students' understanding of other cultures, and encourage home students to network with international students. Alongside being the leader of the Organising Committee, I also represented Palestine in the celebration with other 4 students. The team represented Palestinian traditions, heritage, food, and music.

As a result of my internship in the Obstetrics and Gynecology Department, I developed a strong relationship with a senior Palestinian physician who was a resident doctor at Kasr Al-Ainy Hospital in Egypt. My relationship with her was characterised by trust and respect. I was privileged to attend and assist her in many surgical operations. This experience has strengthened my passion for reproductive medicine and motivated me to pursue a master's in this field.

As a doctor, I am always eager to build relationships with individuals within my age group as well as with those who are more experienced in the health field. This is in Palestine and everywhere else. Keeping a professional relationship, the latter group will become my allies, mentors, and supporters in the future.

Studying in the UK 492

As a Doctor of Medicine with over 2 years of experience in both Palestine and Egypt, I become aware of the challenges the healthcare sector suffers in Gaza. Due to the sociopolitical situation, there is a severe shortage of many crucial health services, one of which is the lack of clinical embryology and assisted reproduction technology (ART). As a result, patients from Gaza must travel abroad to receive infertility treatment. However, the low economic status and the unstable political situation obstruct many patients' access to treatment.

During my undergraduate studies, I developed a particular interest in anatomical studies especially reproductive systems. I got the highest grades in those modules. In the 5th year, I studied obstetrics and gynecology medicine which I found very exciting and fulfilling. I also expanded my knowledge and skills by assisting in minor surgeries and being present in operating rooms and fertility clinics. Therefore, I decided to pursue a master's in reproductive medicine in the UK.

I choose to study **MSc Clinical Embryology and Assisted Reproduction Technology (ART) at the University of Leeds**. This course provides me with strongly integrated practices and covers basic concepts in reproductive medicine incorporated with the most recent technologies. Studying at Leeds offers me the knowledge and skills needed to start a career in reproductive medicine which will be helpful to make a difference in people's lives in Gaza. The course has a special focus on techniques such as embryo evaluation and transfer, cryogenics, and ART micro-manipulation which need an advanced laboratory environment to succeed.

My second choice is to study **MSc Reproductive and Developmental Medicine at the University of Sheffield**. This course is taught by multidiscipline professionals in reproductive and developmental medicine such as the programme lead, Dr Mark Fenwick, who is currently working on the effect of endometriosis on ovarian function and fertility. Studying at Sheffield would be a great opportunity to benefit from his experience and network with him. In addition, the course covers ethical issues and international laws regulating reproductive medicine which will enable me to build strong relationships with lecturers and classmates to ensure that procedures are handled correctly and ethically safe.

Studying **MSc Reproductive Science & Women's Health at UCL** is my third choice. The course offers advanced modules which focus on a wide range of women's health-related issues while being technology oriented such as Preimplantation Genetic Testing and Developing Technology, and Prenatal Diagnosis and Screening. Being in London means a great opportunity to meet up with students and academics from around the world and benefit from their experiences.

Studying one of the above courses means having access to world-leading teaching and research. All the above universities are members of the prestigious RUSSELL Group which will enhance my career. Most importantly, however, is that studying in the UK will be a unique opportunity to transfer new experiences to Gaza. This will help decrease the burden of traveling abroad to receive treatment, instead, it will be given locally.

Career Plan 496

Having a clear career plan is a great motivation to keep me working hard and smart. My plans are not only to advance my knowledge, skills, and position but utmost to help my community and make a positive difference in the healthcare sector in Gaza. My career plans, as shown below, are divided into two parts: short-term and long-term plans.

Following completing a master's, I plan to get involved with organizations that provide basic infertility treatments in Gaza such as Doctors Worldwide. I plan to transfer new experience and knowledge to treat the maximum number of patients to provide them with the best possible care. In addition, I plan to work closely with fertility clinics and enroll in the OB-GYN program at Al-Shifa Hospital, which provides reproductive services to most women in Gaza.

It will take hard work and many years for me to gain full membership in the Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynecologists by passing all three parts of the MRCOG exam. As a member, I will have a chance to receive annual peer-reviewed resources for my continued professional development to stay on top of the latest global developments in women's health. This is helpful to inform policies and procedures in the local healthcare system in Gaza.

My long-term plan is to coordinate between Al-Shifa Hospital and Nasser Hospital in Gaza and other international organisations (such as Al-Khair Foundation) to provide advanced equipment such as ultrasound and other monitoring devices. I also aspire to work with Al-Azhar University as a lecturer and create a new programme to offer IVF Diplomas for obstetric and gynecologist practitioners. This will enable me to become a member of the Arab Society of Fetal Medicine and Surgery ASFMS.

Additionally, I plan to have my infertility treatment clinic in Gaza. I plan to provide treatment options including IVF. Later, I will expand the medical services in the clinic by a partnership with other doctors, nationally and internationally, in the same field to establish a center offering IVF services with a unique approach that emphasizes the importance of increasing the number of successful pregnancies among infertility cases and the use of the most advanced technologies. I aspire that I can open branches for my clinic in other underdeveloped countries to offer such crucial treatment at affordable prices.

My short- and long-term plans come in line with the UK government's priorities and activities in my country. Over the years, the UK government supported projects that targeted the health and education of Palestinian women. I am confident that I can play a vital role in future collaboration between the UK and Palestine by using my professional networks in both countries.

The opportunity to be a Chevening scholar would allow me to take my abilities and skills to the next level since it will allow me to join brilliant leaders from all over the world and from different disciplines. This, of course, will enable me to make significant progress toward achieving my career plans.