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Scott Daniels

Scott Daniels is the director of the Hawaii State Office of Rural Health. He is also currently the Secretary of the NOSORH Board.

You've said that management is different than leadership. How?

The simple answer is that, as Peter Drucker said, "Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things." Leaders can bring about culture change. Culture change is doing the right thing but also creating an environment where it's always the right thing to do. Just following the rules keeps you out of trouble, but it doesn't necessarily serve the people that you're supposed to be serving. You need to have someone who can recognize that something is wrong, make waves and get things done. So leadership in a sense always invokes some amount of risk. A leader needs to break molds, go against processes. I think Flex coordinators are consistently put in situations that require creativity and a willingness to go against the grain. We sit right at the nexus of the federal Office of Rural Health Policy and the critical access hospitals of our state and need to represent both to the best of our ability. This often creates a conflict between policies ORHP wishes to push forward and the situation of the CAHs in your state. I frequently find myself arguing for the policies to the hospitals and the realities to ORHP. I do want improvement as quickly as possible, but that only happens as long as I can keep everyone listening.

What qualities do you think are important in a leader?

Making sure that you train and raise others around you. Be willing to let people grow and do better than you—and eventually replace you! A good leader lets the people they lead become leaders themselves. As this Office grew, I had to realize that I couldn't be the expert on everything anymore. A good leader learns to let go and let people support them. They have to recognize there's more involved than everything being under them—they need to learn to delegate.