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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Learning Needs** | **Goals** | **Learning Activities and Due Dates** | **Activity and Due Date** | **Contact Hours** | **Evaluation** | **Supporting Material in eportfolio** |
| Conflict resolution | Improve conflict resolution skills | Read two professional journal articles related to conflict resolution  (due 10/31/12)  **DONE – see reference list of paper below** | Read journal articles  (due 10/31/12)  **DONE** | Complete learning activity per course requirements  **See paper below that was a learning activity on collaboration and conflict management from Fall 2012 semester. (Paper has been slightly altered to include a second professional journal reference.)** | Improved conflict resolution skills; increased recognition of personal conflicts | Completed learning activity  **SEE PAPER**  **BELOW** |
|  |  | Develop a standard personal plan with steps leading to conflict resolution  (due 10/31/12)  **DONE – see below** | Personal plan developed and used to help resolve a personal conflict  (due 10/31/12)  **DONE – see example below** |  | Improved ability to confront conflict | Personal conflict resolution plan  **See personal conflict resolution plan below including an example of how I have used it.** |

COLLABORATION

Auburn University Montgomery

Bethany Perry

Collaboration

Gardner (2005) summarized ten lessons for collaboration that she encourages nurses to implement in their work settings. Out of these ten lessons, I have selected two to analyze and put into practice in my own work environment to help improve collaboration.

Lesson number three encourages nursing staff to “develop constructive conflict resolution skills” (Gardner, 2005, p. 5). Conflict is often seen in a bad light. Gardner (2005) states that in collaboration, conflict is expected and it should be seen as a chance for all involved to explore their understanding of the situation and come to a mutual agreement. It does not matter how hard I try to evade it, I experience conflict in my work setting. I have an ongoing conflict with a nursing supervisor that originated with a disagreement about how to complete a task one night. His tone and words directed towards me resulted in a personal conflict. At the time, I avoided talking with him about how his attitude upset me. I need to address my personal issue with this charge nurse. I cannot let it affect the teamwork on my unit. This can be accomplished by not talking about the situation with other nurses on the unit. I am preparing myself to speak to this supervisor, even though it may be a hard conversation. I will make sure that I do not let the conversation go in a different direction by staying focused. One-on-one conflict is very common in my workplace, whether it is between me and another of the nursing staff or between two other employees that I supervise. Tan (2010) states, “Conflict by itself is neither good nor bad. It just is. Competition is conflict, after all and without it, there would be fewer opportunities for creative thinking, breakthroughs, innovation and professional growth.” This is another important realization for me. It is important to explore whether conflicts are destructive or constructive. If they are constructive, a lot of good can come from the conflict. I can use these conflict resolution skills in my own situations and share them with others to help foster collaboration in my workplace.

The other lesson I have chosen to scrutinize is lesson number nine: “Balance autonomy and unity in collaborative relationships” (Gardner, 2005, p. 8). As a leader, this lesson is especially important for me to continuously work on improving. One specific area where this lesson can be used is in making nurse-patient assignments. On my unit, night shift makes assignments together as a team. There are nurses who try to take the least amount of patients or the easiest patients. Then there are those who avoid conflict and end up with more than their fair share of the workload. As charge nurse, I lead the way in making sure that everyone has an equal part of the workload. I can use this lesson in collaboration to create synergy by encouraging staff to give feedback during assignments so that the duties of the shift are broken up evenly, thus creating a collaborative environment for the night shift staff.

These lessons can be used to improve many other situations at my job. I will be able to use what I have learned every night that I work to help improve collaboration.

References

Gardner, D.B. (2005). Ten Lessons in Collaboration. *The Online Journal of Issues in Nursing,*

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Tan, W. (2010). Win at work – the everybody wins approach to conflict resolution. *Singapore Nursing Journal. 37*(4). 34,36-37. Retrieved from EBSCO Host.

PERSONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION PLAN

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Personal Conflict Resolution Plan

1. ASSESS

* Identify the conflict
* Identify other people involved in the conflict
* Identify whether the conflict is personal or professional
* Identify my feelings toward the conflict
* Identify whether the conflict is destructive or constructive

1. DIAGNOSE

* Identify secondary effects of the conflict
* Identify who the secondary effects affect
* Identify whether these secondary effects are destructive or constructive

1. PLAN

* Speak with those involved about the conflict
* Listen to how others feel about the conflict
* Involve a third party or counseling if needed to help resolve the conflict

1. IMPLEMENT

* Be active in helping to resolve the conflict
* Use conflict to create the opportunity for personal or professional growth

1. EVALUATE

* Assess whether the conflict has been resolved
* Explore the opportunity for change and innovation that may result from the conflict

Personal Example:

I had a conflict with a co-worker at my last job right before I resigned my position to move out of state. It was unlike any conflict I had ever experienced. I was orienting a newly graduated associate degree nurse to my unit. I have oriented several first time and experienced nurses to the unit I was working on, so this was not new to me. This specific nurse had a problem with taking responsibility for her actions. For example, we had a patient that required his peg tube to be flushed and residuals checked every four hours. My new orientee had never had the opportunity to perform this particular task in her short nursing career, so I demonstrated how to do it the first time and had her do it the second time while I was present so that I could help and make suggestions or answer questions as needed. The residuals were below the doctor’s written limit until the 4 am residual check when the patient’s residuals were over the limit and the doctor needed to be called. Understanding that it can be intimidating to call a physician at four in the morning, I offered to call. The new nurse stated that she did not have a problem with calling the physician. I sat with her and while she was talking to the physician, she told him that she had done nothing out of the ordinary and that if something had been done wrong, it was her preceptor’s fault because she was new and did not know. I was blown away by not only how she was talking to the doctor, but also by the way she blatantly attempted to shove responsibility off of herself. Nothing had been done wrong, the feeding just needed to be held for a few hours to give the patient time to digest and empty his stomach.

In resolving this conflict I first identified the conflict. This new nurse did not want to take responsibility for her actions and had no problem with blaming others if needed. At this time in the conflict, I had spoken to the doctor, who I had a very positive rapport with, so the conflict only involved her and me. To me, this conflict was both personal and professional. I took personal offense to it and it defamed my professional status. I felt insulted that this new nurse would think that I had done something wrong and tried to pin it on her. I felt this conflict was destructive in that she could damage the credibility of her co-workers but it could be turned into a constructive learning experience for her. The choice to turn it into a constructive conflict was hers though.

The secondary effects of this conflict were that I was weary to give her any advice, because I was afraid she may use it against me, I was distressed when I had to work with her and I found her very untrustworthy. These secondary effects affected me and the rest of my co-workers who were aware of the conflict because they witnessed it in the nursing station. These effects were destructive to the new nurse’s career.

I spoke with this new nurse regarding why she felt that she did not want to take any responsibility for the patient. I also spoke with my nursing supervisor as the new nurse was still on orientation and it was part of my job to report to the nursing supervisor of any negative or positive feedback. I let the new nurse verbalize her feelings about why she handled the situation in the way that she did and I ended up involving the nursing supervisor in counseling after I attempted to unsuccessfully talk through the conflict.

I was active in trying to help resolve this conflict by involving my manager as a counselor and by stepping down as the nurse’s preceptor as she felt that she couldn’t trust me after I “told on her.” I tried to give her new preceptor the emotional support she needed after the new nurse again attempted to blame her second preceptor for a mistake she made. I used this conflict to help me grow professionally by continuously checking my attitude about working with someone who I did not get along with. I generally am easy to work with and have not had the challenge in my nursing career to work alongside someone with whom I did not feel I had a good rapport with.

This particular conflict was never resolved because of the new nurse’s negative attitude. She was counseled and warned several times and she ended up being let go before she got off of orientation because she refused to acknowledge and sign her final warning. Even though I had walked through my conflict resolution plan, I felt like I had failed. I looked back and tried to evaluate what I may have said or did wrong. It took a few weeks after she left for me to be able to let the whole thing go and accept the fact that I had done everything in my power to resolve the conflict. This was the first time in my professional career that I had the opportunity to be involved in a conflict when the other person did not work to resolve it. I am thankful that I left my job only weeks after this happened because I felt it helped me move on from this conflict. I do feel I got away easy in this aspect. I think it would be very hard to continue to work alongside a person with whom I could not get along with.