

Course number: Title

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Organizational, Interpersonal, & Group Communication

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Communication is critical to the nurse leader. It impacts all leadership activities and management functions. It is a core component of the nurse, particularly Nurse to Patient, Nurse to Nurse, And Nurse to MD relationships. Nurse Leader directs the care environment/operations which are group and team-oriented. Critical to groups accomplishing their work is communication.

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First Organizational Communication

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Organizational communication is more complex. Today is more communication channels and methods, more individuals and groups to communicate with, there is also more data and information to transmit, more influences to communication patterns/needs – multicultural, multiethnic, multigenerational, etc.

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Effective organizational communication is a high level management function. It is clear, systematic, and has continuity. It's appropriately integrated in organizational culture. It's encourages an exchange of views and ideas. It is complex requiring evaluation, refinement, and changes in approach and direction.

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Let's look at the definition of communication. Communication is the exchange of meanings between and among individuals through a shared system symbols (verbal and nonverbal) that have the same meaning for both the sender and the receiver of the message.

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What Are Key Words in the Definition?

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There is :

- Exchange
- Meanings or varying perspectives exists.
- Shared
- System
- Symbols that must have the same meaning for both sender and receiver.

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In the Communication Process

Basic Elements: Of one party being the Sender, and the other party being Receiver. And between them there is some exchange or Message.

And this occurs at two Levels: verbal (in words and language) and Non verbally through gestures, eye contact, expressions, and even special distance.

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There is an Internal Climate, which consists of feelings, values, temperament, stress levels.

And External Climate: the timing of communication, the Organizational Climate, the Status, Power, the Authority level and relationship.

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Variables that Affect Communication:

- Spatial Distance or boundaries
- The norms or patterns Subgroups & Subcultures

- Systems of Relationships
- Power and influence, Hierarchies
- Constant Change
- Gender differences
- Level of Distraction

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Important communication strategies include the following:

- Keep communication clear, concise, and simple.
- Communication is not one way – the sender should seek feedback regarding receipt and accuracy of the information or message.
- Use multiple communication methods if the message is important.
- Carefully consider the timing of the communication.

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SBAR AS A COMMUNICATION TOOL

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Channels of Communication
Downward

- Traditional
- Primarily directive
- Satisfaction less for subordinate
- Employee handbook, reports, job descriptions, global memos/broadcasts

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Upward

- Allow employee input
- Staff satisfaction high
- Supervisor conveys upward
- Bias and filtering increase as information passes upward
- Staff meetings, suggestion box, town hall meetings

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Horizontal

- Among those on same hierarchical level
- Need increases as interdependence increases

Diagonal

- Less formal
- Different levels, different departments

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The Grapevine

- Flows haphazardly among people at all levels of the hierarchy and usually involves 3 to 4 people at a time
- Subject to error and distortion because of the speed at which it passes
- Sender has little formal accountability for the accuracy of the message

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Tips for Written Communication

- Know what you want to say
- Focus on people receiving message
- Use action words
- Write plainly
- Be clear, concise & brief
- Use simple direct sentences
- Pause and reflect on what you've written
- Write logically, connect your thoughts, use smooth transitions

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Memos/Emails

- Should make the main point in the beginning.
- Only essential information should be included.
- Should be written simply, without inflated or authoritarian language.
- If longer than headings should be used to direct the reader to specific issues.
- Always pause and reread before transmission!

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Interpersonal Communication/Group

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Nonverbal Communication

- Space/distance/boundaries
- Environment
- Appearance
- Eye contact
- Posture
- Gestures
- Facial expressions
- Timing
- Vocal Cues

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Verbal/Assertive Communication

A way of communicating that allows people to express themselves in direct, honest, and appropriate ways that do not infringe on another person's rights – respects civility

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Importance of Listening

- The average person spends 70% of his/her time listening, but only 1/3 of messages are retained.
- Good listening skills are as important as good verbal skills to the manager.
- Good listening skills can be learned and developed.

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Confidentiality Critical in Communication

- Duty to maintain confidential information regarding patients
- Ethical and moral responsibility to safeguard information
- Must adhere to HIPAA Law

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HIPAA: Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (1996)

- Protects the privacy and confidentiality of patient information
- Includes medical records, e-transmissions or e-records, any form of oral or written communication (individually identifiable health information)

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Summary

- Communication is a core management competency
- Communication cuts across all management and leadership functions
- One of the most critical communication skills is listening – a skill that can be developed
- Effective communication promotes and ensures positive outcomes