

Taking a stand: conflict resolution in nursing research paper sample

[Business](#), [Strategy](#)



Conflict in healthcare often causes poor workload management, patient allocation, and potentially leads to workplace harassment, which causes the nurses to deal with stress and face potential burnouts (Eagar, Cowin, Gregory, & Firtko, 2010). To avoid those issues, several strategies and organizational models can be used. For example, the shared governance model was designed to empower nurses in their decision-making and promote better workplace collaboration along with successful treatment outcomes (Scherb, Specht, Loes, & Reed, 2011). However, constant conflict management is required because conflicts can arise because at both organizational and individual levels (Marquis & Huston, 2012).

My personal role as a moral agent is to set an example for my co-workers by demonstrating workplace-appropriate behavior and skills required to maintain a professional level of service to patients. I believe personal priorities at work should be substituted and aligned with the organizational mission statement, which should be to address the well-being of patients and provide a high standard of quality care to improve treatment outcomes. However, I cannot personally take a stand for every co-worker because it is physically and psychologically impossible. With that in mind, in the acute care environment, such as the surgical unit or the intensive care unit, I can contribute to some organizational issues that may impair the performance of nursing teams.

For example, Eagar et al. (2010) suggest that a clear definition of roles and scopes of practice can contribute to better performance and outcomes, so I can assist in the definition of those roles and set an example for others by following my own role and knowing my boundaries. Defining clear roles

among interdisciplinary teams is necessary because confusion in the acute care unit can increase mortality rates (Scherb et al., 2011).

On the individual level, coaching is the most important role a leader should fulfill because it develops the skills nurses can use to handle conflicts themselves before they escalate (Johansen, 2012). Coaching nurses at the individual level is important in acute care units because medical interventions often require immediate actions. Likewise, the staff's ability to resolve conflicts as soon as possible can often impact treatment outcomes. Communication skills are the first skill required to effectively fulfill any role within an institution that demands collaboration for efficiency and producing successful outcomes. For example, asking inappropriate or irrelevant questions and using excessive compliments is sometimes used by managers to avoid conflict resolution (Marquis & Huston, 2012). Understanding those situations and knowing how to respond to them allows nurses to take control of the situation when necessary. Other communication skills include active listening and knowing how to propose solutions (Johansen, 2012), and those skills can be used to resolve conflicts before they escalate.

Some dispositions can facilitate learning communication skills and implementing strategies, so they can be considered as effective factors in conflict management. For example, a disposition for thinking productively will automatically enable a person to look for a solution rather than dwell on the issue. When thinking about dispositions in terms of beliefs, an individual should believe in the mission statement that promotes patient safety and treatment quality. More importantly, the ability to set aside any personal pride and collaborate on resolving issues to enable better patient outcomes

needs to become a habit in the workplace. Of course, nurses should always take a personal stand when it comes to promoting organizational policies that also concern their own well-being and dignity.

Various strategies and policies can also assist in creating a workplace environment that helps nurses create effective teams with minimal conflicts. For example, a hiring policy that allows unit head nurses to participate in hiring new employees for their team is an excellent strategy for both empowering nurses and giving them the ability to choose people they want to work with and minimize potential conflicts by screening applicants for the positions they are offering (Scherb et al., 2011).

Finally, seeking consensus should be a strategy for reaching long-term goals. Although consensus is not a short-term strategy because it is time-consuming and requires a unanimous support from the entire team, it is an excellent long-term strategy for implementing changes that need a team-wide support (Marquis & Huston, 2012). For example, a policy that requires reviewing all interventions to improve patient before they are applied in acute care and restricting individual interventions can improve the coherency of treatments and their outcomes (Reader, Flin, Mearns, & Cuthbertson, 2009).

Taking a stand is sometimes difficult, but there are two motivations that would make me take a stand in spite of the potential obstacles. First, it promotes workplace satisfaction, which is essential in nursing because the shortage of quality employees in the field has been documented since 1998 (Scherb et al., 2011), so high workplace satisfaction can have a positive impact on employee turnover rates. Second, nurses can often contribute to

patient treatments if they are given the ability to express their opinions (Scherb et al., 2011).

Effective conflict resolution takes place only when nurses take a stand for their workplace rights and participate in organizational decision-making. The role of leaders is to propose policies that will enable workers to participate in decision making, act as mediators when necessary, identify conflicts, prevent conflict escalation, educate employees about workplace conflict resolution, and train employees in communication skills and behaviors required for avoiding conflict escalation.

References

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