

# Topic selection



Topic Selection: Human Resources Project In health care, like in any other enterprise, human resources issues that affect the relevant structures of the health institution are ultimately governed by the leaders of the organization. A health care organization is currently faced with a human resources problem that required the skills and professional expertise of top management to steer the health organization's direction towards the attainment of its goals.

The mission of one of the top ten hospitals in Asia is to improve the delivery of quality health care conforming to the strict standards of the Joint Accreditation Commission of Health Organizations (JACHO). It came to the attention of the Vice President for Nursing that their Nurse Managers are torn between prioritizing functions which are administrative in nature vis-à-vis functions that cater to the delivery of patient care. Due to the Nurse Managers' theoretical orientation for health care, the administrative tasks such as completion of reportorial requirements, monitoring and upkeep of equipment and supplies, staff requirements and budgeting are frequently neglected or seconded with priorities being focused to patient care. In this regard, the VP for Nursing sought the assistance of the VP for Human Resources and the CEO to resolve this issue.

Every nursing unit in the hospital is headed by a nurse manager who is assigned as the chief head nurse on duty. Her job responsibilities entail patient care as the primary task and managerial functions such as planning, directing, staffing and control. These multi-task functions coupled with low pay contributed to low morale and low productivity. These nurses opted to gain the minimum experience required to enable them to leave the country and work abroad.

The leadership function assigned to nurse managers conflict with their functions as providers of patient care. They are expected to deliver timely reports on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. They monitor staffing requirements. They prepare the time sheets for payroll purposes. And most importantly, they are expected to know all the nursing intervention requirements for all the patients in their nursing units. There is this question on prioritization of function. As nurses, of course, they should prioritize patient care. But as managers, the function of attending to the human resource needs of the unit suffers.

Reports are not completed on their specified time schedules. Upkeep of facilities in patients' rooms and hospital areas are not regularly attended to. Equipments that need repair and reorder are forgotten. Staff vacation leaves are not properly plotted and thereby not taken as scheduled. Performance evaluation and appraisals are not conducted regularly for monitoring purposes. All of these functions are important managerial functions which would create an improvement in productivity and morale of a hospital unit. All of these should be attended to ensure customer satisfaction and efficient delivery of health service.

What were the alternative courses of action open to management to solve this problem? The officers and top management of this hospital were aware that there were several options open to them, among which are:

1. Separate the patient care and managerial function from the nurse managers.
2. Hire administrative managers to take care of the managerial functions.

The study would thereby determine which among the alternatives would best

improve the efficiency of the department of nursing to best serve the needs of its clientele.