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Telling Our Story: From Change Resistance to Readiness

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Stories, transformational leadership, and change in the workplace intersect in this leadership success project presentation! Many people resist change as it often creates an uneasy or uncomfortable feeling. Change is often difficult for employees to process in a positive way. Transformational nurse leaders can use stories or narratives to augment the change process.

The praxis of storytelling (same thing as narrative) is a powerful aspect of applying change theory. Humans are storytellers. Decision-making using narrative paradigm is based on reasons and connections that are communicated in narratives.

Stories or narratives are a way of communicating a series of happenings or events (Welch, 2014). The use of narratives is an effective intervention to promote change (Bess, 2015). Meaning making, developing a vision, and creating a climate for change are powerful purposes of narratives. Storytellers can spark attention to needs and create intrigue. Using stories to promote change readiness is a powerful intervention for transformational leaders to use!

Telling “Our Stories” is very empowering. The case of a surgical nursing department complete remodel is an example in which the use of narratives promoted change readiness. Surgical nursing staff created their remodel story that included the vision for the surgical nursing department and a drawing of their vision for the remodel. The staff drew their own pictures of their proposed remodel, met with the architects, and met with the designers to plan the design. The staff were actively involved in the entire process. The creation of their story is told during unfreezing, change, and refreezing of the change as related to Lewin’s Change Theory (Marquis & Huston, 2017).

In this session, the focus is on storytelling as a nurse leader’s intervention to evoke change. First, evidence, theories, and the art of the narrative paradigm are shared. Types of stories and various mediums are described. The art of crafting an unforgettable story that grabs the listener is reviewed. The key elements of a story are explained and demonstrated. The power of meaning making, creating need, and painting a vision by transformational leaders as the building blocks of change application is stressed. Bess (2015) studied the use of narratives in the change process and found that people use stories to make meaning of life and engage in the change process. Telling narratives is a strategy that transformational leaders can use in the decision-making and change process.

Title:

Telling Our Story: From Change Resistance to Readiness

Keywords:

Change Process, Narrative and Transformative Nursing Leadership

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Abstract Summary:

Stories, transformational leadership, and change in the workplace intersect in this presentation! Change in the workplace is a challenging process. The use of stories or narratives by transformational nurse leaders is a positive strategy to promote the change process. A surgical nursing change project narrative is included.

Content Outline:

I. Introduction: Storytelling (Narratives) and Change

A. Definition

1. Story: a series of happenings or events
2. Storytelling : communicating a series of happenings or events
3. Story and narrative mean the same thing (narrative is a more formal or academic word that means story)
4. B.Connection to Change Theory Application
 1. The problem with change! (Employee attitudes and Leader handling of change projects)
 2. Change readiness

II. Theories

1. Transformational Leadership
2. Narrative Paradigm
3. Types of stories
4. Causality of stories (Miller, 2011)
5. A leads to B, B leads to C, and so on
6. Order of stories; one thing happens first and then the next (but no causality)
7. Lewin's Theory of Change (narrative used in unfreeze, change, refreeze)

III. Art of Storytelling

1. When did the story grab you?
2. Projection
3. Identification
4. Empathy
5. Elements of Story (11 elements by Miller, 2011)

IV. Experiential World of Storytelling to Promote Change

1. Transformational Nurse Leadership Strategy
2. Presentation of stories
 1. Medium storytelling (medium such as video, book, poster; no live interaction between teller and listeners) and pros/cons
 2. Actual storytelling (live interaction between teller and listeners) and pros/cons
3. Content of stories
4. Group storytelling: "Telling Our Stories" Can be very empowering!
5. Surgical Nursing Change Project Narrative

V. Conclusion

1. Narratives to promote change
2. Key points with storytelling
3. Take away points

First Primary Presenting Author

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Professional Experience: 1981 to 2011 Staff Nurse, St. Joseph Hospital, Fort Worth, TX, TravCorps, Boston, MA, St. Elizabeth Regional Medical Center, Lincoln, NE and Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, NE 1989 to 2005, Instructor, Southeast Community College, Lincoln, NE 1992 to 1994, Instructor, Creighton University, Omaha, NE, Critical Care Nursing Instructor 1994 to present, Instructor, Nebraska Wesleyan University, Lincoln, NE, Nursing and Biology course instruction 2011 to present, Associate Professor, Southwest Minnesota State University, Nursing Leadership and Management, Evidence-based Practice, Transcultural Nursing, Courage, Caring, and Team Building for Nurses, Clinical Reasoning and Judgment for Nurses, Public Health nursing (previously at the Mankato Campus for Minnesota State) Researcher, Nursing Education: Teaching/Learning and Assessment Strategies Numerous Nurse Educator Awards and Service Awards Author or co-author of numerous publications and book chapters relating to nursing education Co-Author of numerous research publications Numerous presentations at nursing conferences Virginia Henderson Fellow

Author Summary: Dr. Nancyruth Leibold is an experienced educator with a passion for teaching, leadership, and holistic nursing! She teaches in the Department of Nursing at Southwest Minnesota State University. She has a special interest in narratives, and narrative pedagogy, reflexology, mindfulness, meditation, reiki, engaging teaching/learning strategies and instructional technology. Nancyruth is a Reiki Master/Teacher. Nancyruth has numerous professional presentations, grant awards, and publications in nursing and education. Nancyruth is a Virginia Henderson Fellow.

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Professional Experience: I have taught in graduate nursing education for over 20 years, with the majority of experience being within leadership and in nursing. In addition, I developed and implemented a nursing department and have been academic leader most of my career. I have served in the academic leadership role for over 19 years, and in community/organizational leader for over 20 years (including development of a state mentor program). In addition I have volunteer/gratis leadership experience that spans over 15 years for organizations such as the American Red Cross and International Rotary. I have taken graduate courses in storytelling, therapeutic metaphors and change initiatives. I have taught courses in nursing leadership at the graduate level for over 10 years, and I have a private therapeutic practice, and do business consultation and accreditation consultation. I have published and spoken on topics related to the abstracts submitted.

Author Summary: Dr. Mary Bemker has taught in graduate education for over 20 years. She has worked as an administrator in both the community and academia for over 20 years. Dr. Bemker has presented in various national and international venues, and she has co-edited two nursing textbooks.