Inspiring a Shared Vision: A Case Study of a Nursing Department Chair

Phillip M. Timcheck, PhD(c), MSN, MBA, RN
School of Health Sciences, Division of Nursing, Winston-Salem State University, Winston-Salem, NC, USA

Benjamin Martin, PhD(c), MSN, BS, RN
Indiana University of PA, Indiana, PA, USA
Disclosures

• No conflicts of interest exist with this presentation and associated research
• No sponsorship, financial incentives, or commercial support are associated with this presentation and associated research
• The authors (Phillip Timcheck and Benjamin Martin) have no financial ties to this presentation and associated research

Authors: Phillip Timcheck and Benjamin Martin
Objectives

• Distinguish real-life examples that showcase Kouzes and Posner’s Leadership Principle of Inspiring a Shared Vision in Department Chair Leadership

• Identify ways to utilize Kouzes and Posner’s Leadership Principle of Inspiring a Shared Vision in your own nursing leadership
Kouzes and Posner’s Leadership Principles

• Model the way
• **Inspire a shared vision**
• Challenge the process
• Enable others to act
• Encourage the heart
Purpose

• Review of literature
  – Considerable volume of studies looking at nursing leadership and K & P’s principles in the hospital setting
  – Little attention to developing strong academic leaders (Broome, 2013)
  – Research typically occurs with deans, not department chairs

• Department chair considerations
  – Transformational change in higher education (Hecht, 2013)
  – Increased finical concerns (Brown, 2015)
  – Leaders have difficulty conveying a shared vision (Kouzes and Posner, 2009)
Purpose

• The purpose of this case study research is to describe how a Department Chair of Nursing at a state university uses Kouzes and Posner’s (2010) practice of inspiring a shared vision.

• A case study approach was utilized to gain insight on how a Department Chair of Nursing inspires a shared vision through his or her actions, linking to Kouzes and Posner’s theory of exemplary leadership.
Methodology

• Research Design
  – Single case study design

• Setting
  – State University in North East United States
Propositions

• 1: The establishment of a sense of purpose by the Department Chair of Nursing enhances and directs the shared vision of the department.
• 2: The use of encouraging language and passion by the Department Chair of Nursing assists with fostering a shared vision in the department to help move the department forward to a favorable future.
• 3: The Department Chair of Nursing exemplifies Kouzes and Posner’s practice of inspiring a shared vision by consistently supporting and inspiring individuals within the department to garner followers and lead effectively.
Data Collection Methods and Analysis

- Case Study Design
- Transcription
- Pattern matching
- Triangulation
- Establish quality

Convergence of Evidence
- Interview
- Meeting Minutes
- Strategic Plans

Findings
- Bulletin Boards
- Posted Notices
- Other Displayed Material
Results – Proposition 1

The establishment of a sense of purpose by the Department Chair of Nursing enhances and directs the shared vision of the department.

- **Empowerment**
  - encouraging others
  - “need to be neutral”
  - “really need to hear all sides”
  - helping to find “resolve in all parties” as a means to “feel happy” and support a “good thing”

- **Mission Vision and Focus**
  - reminding faculty of mission
  - “encouraging people to be student focused”
  - functionality of viewing in the “university perspective”
Results – Proposition 2

The use of encouraging language and passion by the Department Chair of Nursing assists with fostering a shared vision in the department to help move the department forward to a favorable future.

- **Respect**
  - “have to respect each other and hope the process works out”
  - “respectful to our colleagues”
  - “move along” towards goals
  - “sometimes [the answer is] just walk away” when having a bad day

- **Positive Reinforcement**
  - “we’re gonna have to deal with it”
  - focusing on being “optimistic”
  - sometimes merely being “happy” and “put[ting] a smile on your face” is all that you need to do

- **Trait Enhancement**
  - appoint emerging leaders into roles that showcase their strengths
  - the Chair was observed using selective and positive language when encouraging staff to grow
Results – Proposition 3

The Department Chair of Nursing exemplifies Kouzes and Posner’s practice of inspiring a shared vision by consistently supporting and inspiring individuals within the department to garner followers and lead effectively.

• Inspiring Others
  – “you always have to be thinking about what’s the next thing going forward”
  – “not always my vision, it’s the people you put around you”
  – Constant concern of “succession planning”

  – in dire situations has “begged” people “to take on [a particular] role”
  – “trying to inspire other people to at least step up”
  – never “underestimate the power of the staff” and the “potential for development”
Rival Explanations

• Results align nursing theory with propositions
• Evidence supports that the Department Chair of Nursing demonstrates a shared vision and collaborates with others in the department to move forward to a favorable future
Limitations

• The timeframe for data collection does not allow for impact interpretation of these leadership efforts
• The study design limited the number of opportunities for observing interactions of the individual in the leadership role
• Input was limited to that from the chair; other faculty and staff input could influence results
Recommendations for Future Research

- Explore this leadership principle in other nursing leaders
- Replicate study at additional state and/or private universities
- Include institutions of varying sizes
- Include faculty as data source
- Follow this research in a longitudinal fashion to better determine the impact of studied leadership traits
Conclusion

• Using principles of inspiring a shared vision can be effective in departmental leadership
• Continual research in this area can help support findings and provide more evidence that leadership theory translates into practice
Contact Information

- pmtimcheck@gmail.com
- martinb@iup.edu
References


