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# What Nurse Managers Need to Know About Hiring and Working With a Professional Coach

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# Objectives & Acknowledgement

## Objectives

- ▶ Describe the challenges of the NM role
- ▶ Discuss why professional coaching may be helpful for NMs
- ▶ Discuss selected findings from a qualitative study that can guide NMs in hiring a professional coach

## Acknowledgement

- ▶ Omicron Omicron Chapter of STTI for financial support

# Nurse Managers (NMs)

- ▶ Middle managers
- ▶ Have 24 hour fiscal, quality, and human resource responsibilities for at least one nursing unit in a healthcare organization

# Background for Our Research...

- ▶ Over the past decades the nurse manager role has expanded to include both management and leadership responsibilities
- ▶ NMs impact staff nurse satisfaction and retention and ultimately patient care delivery and outcomes (Roberts–Turner et al., 2014; Saleh et al., 2018)

# Background for Our Research...

- ▶ NMs are often inadequately prepared for the role (Moore, Sublett, & Leahy, 2016)
- ▶ To sustain the role, strategies must be created and implemented to promote the growth and development of NMs

# Coaching...A Possible Strategy

- ▶ **Professional coaching is defined as:**

“partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires clients to maximize their personal and professional potential” (*International Coach Federation, 2017*)

# Coaching...A Strategy

- ▶ Professional coaches have been used for several decades in the development of health care leaders at the executive level, including nurse executives
- ▶ Only recently have coaches begun to offer their services to nurses in middle management but, their services continue to be very limited for this group

# Coaching...A Strategy

- ▶ For example, Cable & Graham (2017), found that for those in middle management, coaching improved self-confidence, a capacity for reflection, and a willingness to bring the whole self into the work environment, attributes essential for NMs



# Purpose of Presentation

- ▶ NMs should know what to look for when hiring a coach and have an understanding of what to expect from a coaching engagement
- ▶ This can help ensure a good manager-coach “fit” and can also increase the likelihood of establishing a successful relationship
- ▶ The purpose of this presentation is to share selected findings from a study that can guide NMs in hiring a professional coach

# Our Study

- ▶ **Focus:** To explore professional coaches' experiences coaching NMs
- ▶ **Sample:**
  - **Number:** 11 professional coaches from across the US who have coached NMs
  - **Ages:** 39–75 years of age
  - **Gender:** 10 female, 1 male
  - **Education:** 10 held Master's; 1 held Doctorate
  - **Years of experience:** 1 year to 26 years

# Our Study...

## ▶ Methodology:

- Descriptive, qualitative study
- Used in-depth, semi-structured, audio-taped researcher-participant interviews
- Content analysis conducted on transcriptions (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005)
  - Both researchers independently read each transcript
  - Key words/phrases highlighted
  - Main ideas identified & similar ideas clustered
  - Categories emerged
  - Researchers tracked the # of participants represented for each category/theme and determined frequency counts (with a content analysis data can be analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively; higher frequencies may indicate a greater level of significance) (*Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013*)
  - Rigor enhanced via audit trail

# Findings...What NMs Should Look For When Hiring a Coach

## 3 Themes:

- ▶ Competence & skill (10 participants, 91%)
- ▶ Good “fit”/relationship focused (10 participants, 91%)
- ▶ Offers a trial session (6 participants, 55%)

# Findings...Ground Rules that Should Be Established

## 2 Themes

- ▶ Nuts and bolts (11 participants, 100%)
- ▶ Confidentiality (9 participants, 82%)

# Findings...NMs Attributes Most Helpful for Successful Experience

## 2 Themes:

- ▶ Open to transformation (8 participants, 73%)
- ▶ Attentive to self (5 participants, 45%)

# Findings...Factors Crucial for Establishment of Effective NM–Coach Relationship

NOTE: Based on 10 participants' comments  
(1 participant did not answer)

## 2 Themes:

- ▶ Honesty and trust (9 participants, 90%)
- ▶ Coach understands NM work (6 participants, 60%)

# Summary

- ▶ Healthcare systems are rapidly transforming; with these transformations, leadership roles are also evolving
- ▶ NMs, leaders in the middle, increasingly face multiple challenges and are often not well prepared
- ▶ It is crucial that we find ways to develop, support, and retain NMs for the future
- ▶ Professional coaching is one strategy that may be helpful to meet the needs of NMs



# Summary (Cont'd)

- ▶ NMs must be savvy regarding hiring a coach and preparing for the relationship
- ▶ Successful coaching engagements can help NMs achieve their full leadership potential
- ▶ Only when NMs achieve their full potential will they be able to significantly impact patients, staff, healthcare organizations, and potentially international health outcomes

**QUESTIONS?**