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Bridging the Gap Between Nursing's Professional Identity and the Profession's Brand Image

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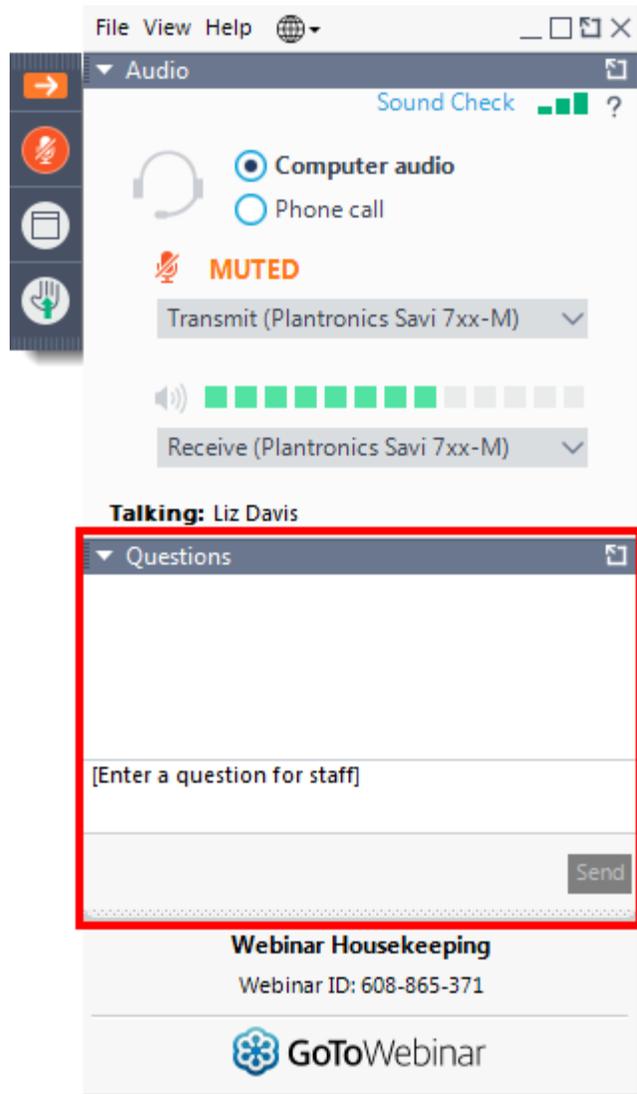


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Presenters

- **Professional Identity in Nursing**



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- **Brand Image of Nursing**



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Learning Outcomes:

1. Explain the dichotomy of nursing's professional identity and its inconsistent brand image
2. Discuss threats to nursing as an influential discipline of health experts and leaders
3. Outline a comprehensive strategy to solidify the nursing profession's external brand image while actively cultivating the internal professional identity of nurses.

Overview of Professional Identity



Professional Identity

Professional Identity in Nursing

- “a sense of oneself, and in relationship with others, that is influenced by characteristics, norms, and values of the nursing discipline, resulting in an individual thinking, acting, and feeling like a nurse.”

Professional Identity in Nursing



Professional Identity in Nursing

Values and Ethics

- *A set of core values and principles that guide conduct.*

Knowledge

- *Analysis and application of information derived from nursing and other disciplines, experiences, critical reflection and scientific discovery.*

Leadership

- *Inspiring self and others to transform a shared vision into reality.*

Professional Compartment

- *A nurse's professional behavior demonstrated through words, actions and presence.*

The Brand Image of Nursing- *Who Are We?*

- Nurses make up the largest group of healthcare professionals in the United States and in the world (AACN, 2019; WHO, 2018).
- IOM's Future of Nursing Report (2010):
 - RNs as "*leaders* in transforming the U.S. health care system"
 - RNs as "*full partners* with physicians"
 - RNs who practice at the *full scope of their education and training*
- However, >20 years of literature reporting the lack of autonomy, influence, and empowerment of the nursing profession
- The nursing profession lacks a unified strategy to identify a brand image that could thread across all domains of nursing (academia, practice, leadership, administration...).

(Baldwin K.A., Lyons, R.L. & Issel, M.; Cabiniss, 2011; Dominiak, 2004; Rees, 2005; Rezaaie-Adaryani et al., 2012; Somers et al., 2010; Ward, 2006).

What is *Branding*?

- A marketing technique - allows organizations to create an image in the minds of consumers that *conveys core values* and *differentiates them from others*
- Most think a brand is a slogan or a logo, but it is the sum total of associations: The good, the bad, and, possibly, the ugly
- Branding is the process of influencing those associations
- Brand positioning is about achieving the *researched* and *desired* brand
 - Your brand is where you are now. Your position is *where you want to be*.
 - Branding takes you from point A to B. You are successful when your *brand equals* your *desired position*.
 - Positioning is central to living the brand's strategic vision and is core to creating strong brand associations
 - A brand position provides *direction, purpose and meaning* for the brand.

So.....what is the brand of the nursing profession?

What is the *Brand of Nursing*?

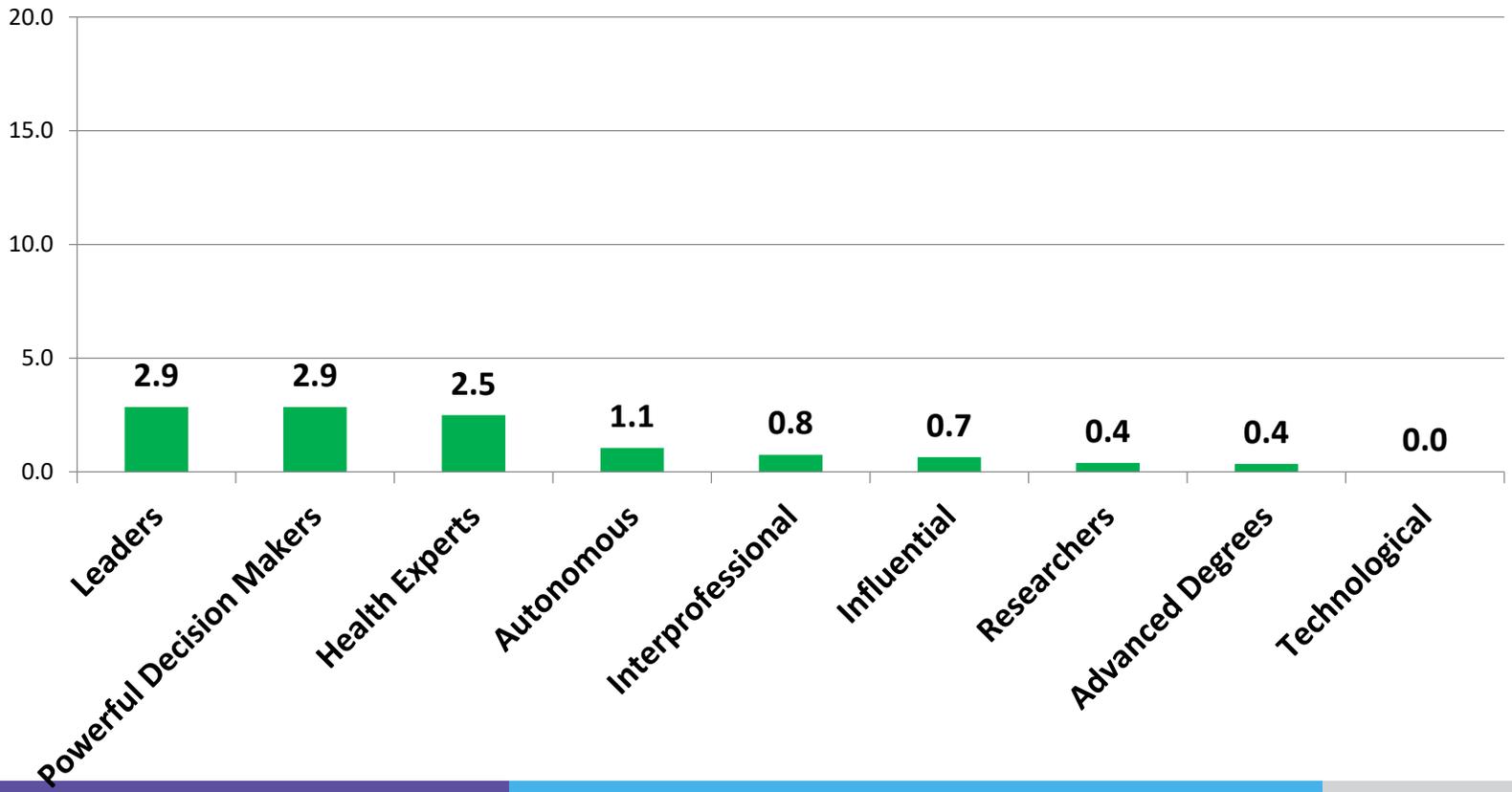
- No empirical instruments that measured the current or desired brand image of nursing
- So...we created one!
- Started with focus groups consisting of a national sample of nurse faculty
 - 42 words or phrases describing the nursing profession
 - Developed the “Nurses Brand Image” (NBI) Scale
 - Good to Excellent internal consistency reliability
 - Current Brand Image –vs- Desired Brand Image
 - Surveyed nurses (n=286) to identify their current brand image of the profession versus their desired brand image
 - Incongruences were found between how nurses perceive their profession currently versus how they *would like it to be perceived*

What is the *Brand Image of Nursing*?

CURRENT DESCRIPTIONS for Nursing:

Ranked **Highest**: *Caring/Compassionate, Advocates, Essential Members of the HC Team, Patient Centered*

Descriptors Rated **Lowest by Nurses**



Not Technological.....???



Source: Intensive Care Hotline, 2020



Source: American Nurses Assn, 2020

What is the Brand Position of the Nursing Profession?

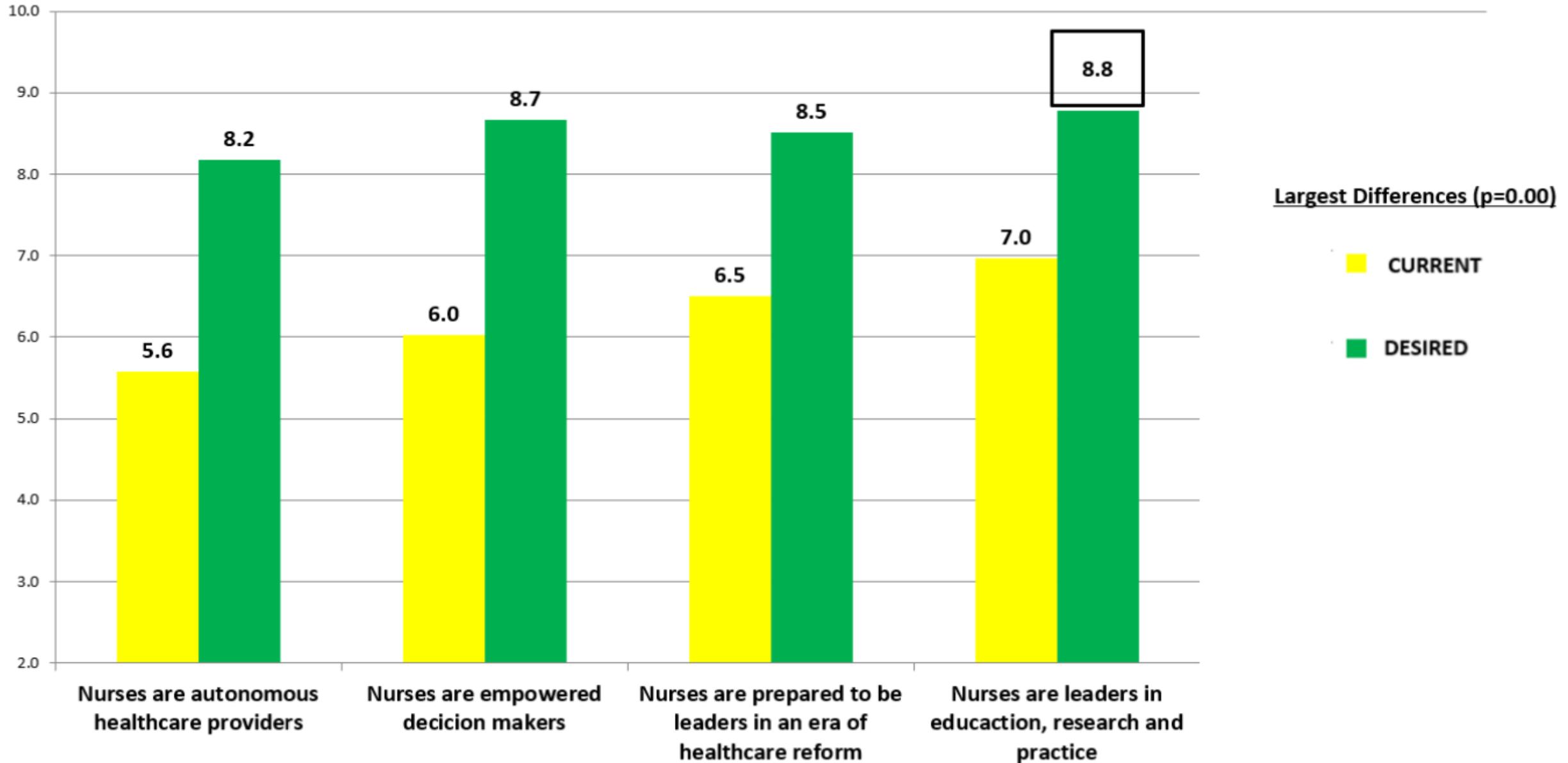
CURRENT Brand Position:

- Highest Rating: *Nurses are caring advocates for patients/public*
- Lowest Rating: *Nurses are influential leaders*

MOST DESIRED Brand Position:

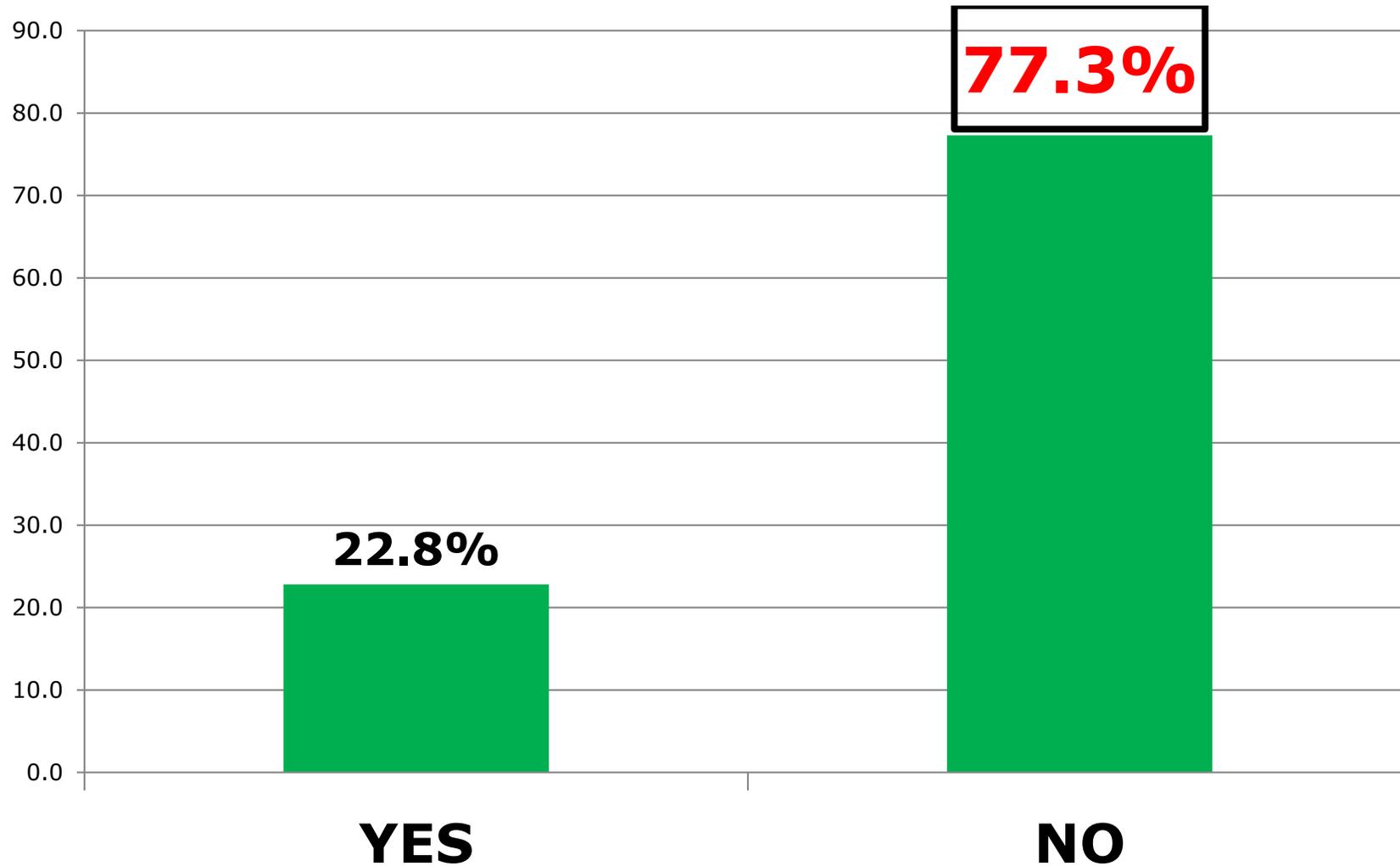
Nurses are leaders in practice, education, and research

“Current” –vs- “Desired” Brand Image of Nursing



Nurses:

Do you believe there is a consistent image for the profession?



- Why do you think there is not a consistent image of the nursing profession?

“Because one has not yet been defined”

(Anonymous Nursing Brand Study Participant, 2014)

So Now What....?

- Our research is consistent with decades of reports in the literature:
 - Nursing lacks a consistent brand image that is actively managed and communicated within the profession, and externally to the general public.
 - Everyone has a brand. The question becomes *who is managing it?*
 - First step: Identify the current brand. How does the brand work with the public?
 - Decide what brand image you want—then design strategies to achieve it.
 - While nurses felt they themselves are responsible for creating this consistent brand image—the truth is that it must happen at a macro level—not the micro level to be successful
 - Given that a strong brand image is based on ‘*consistency of message and action over time*’, the major professional nursing associations are in a strategic position to effectively and efficiently lead such an initiative.

Panel Discussion

Learning Objective #3:

Outline a comprehensive strategy to solidify the nursing **profession's external brand image** while actively cultivating the **internal professional identity** of nurses.

Panel Discussion

*A lack of cohesiveness exists among nurses (lack of **Professional Identity**), along with a failure to communicate a consistent positive brand image for the nursing profession (lack of a **Consistent Brand Image**)*

- The nursing profession must identify and initiate consistent strategies which:
 - 1) *increase the influence of the nursing profession (through **Brand Image**) and*
 - 2) *elevate nurses' professional and public standing (through **Professional Identity**)*

Possible Strategies for the Profession

- Intentionally communicate the professional contributions of nursing in the media and correct inaccurate stereotypes
- Consistently communicate the professional identity of nurses and the central brand position message that nurses are leaders throughout all practice, education and professional associations

Possible Strategies for the Profession

- Manage the nursing brand via frequent reviews and updates which accurately reflect an empowered professional identity of nurses and a consistent brand image of the nurse as leader for the nursing profession.
- Emphasize nurses' essential role and professional identity as equal partners with physicians and essential members of the health care team as part of the brand "LEADERS IN PRACTICE, EDUCATION AND RESEARCH"

Thank you for attending!

- We will send you an email in approximately 1 week that will include a link to the webinar recording and the process for completing the evaluation to obtain your CPD certificate.
- Questions? Email us at: education@sigmanursing.org
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