

## Creating Healthy Work Environments VIRTUAL 2021

### Medical Surgical Nurses' Perceptions of Receiving Coaching From First Line Managers

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**Purpose:** Coaching is a career development relationship that should occur between and employees and their managers. Coaching is well known in the business literature but is rarely researched or discussed among healthcare professionals. In nursing, mentoring is most often confused with coaching thereby creating confusion about the dyadic behaviors within the relationship. Medical-surgical nurses are one of the largest groups of nurses providing patient care but their perceptions about receiving coaching have only been examined in studies with nurses from other specialties. The purpose of this study was to examine the perception of coaching behaviors received by medical surgical nurses.

**Methods:** The study consisted of a descriptive survey design. Participants completed the survey by choosing online survey access, or a paper and pencil instrument available at the Academy of Medical Surgical Nurses (AMSN) Annual Convention. Participants were asked about their demographic characteristics and given the Yoder Coaching Survey to determine perceptions of coaching behaviors received from their first line managers. Descriptive statistics and correlations were used to analyze the data.

**Results:** A total of 286 nurses responded to the survey with complete data. Most of the participants were Caucasian (52%), females (94%), who were employed in nursing full-time (92%) and provided care to patients at least 75% of the time (82%). The mean age of the participants was 41.8 (SD=12.3) and they worked as registered nurses from 2-44 years (M=13.2); most of them possessed a Bachelor of Science degree or higher (52%) and over half (56%) were certified in the specialty of medical-surgical nursing. Almost half of the nurses reported receiving little or no coaching in key areas regarding their performance or career goals. Specifically, 44% said they never or seldom received help from their manager to identify and achieve career goals. 40% said they never or seldom received feedback about their ongoing performance and 50% said they did not receive feedback about unsatisfactory performance; 43% indicated that their managers avoid responding to performance problems. However, 63% of the participants perceived their managers asking them for feedback (often or always) and 79% perceived their managers empowering them to work out solutions to practice problems (often or always). Most of the nurses perceived they were trusted by their managers (86%) and in return 72% believed their managers inspired trust from staff. When examining correlations between perceived coaching behaviors and demographic characteristics, the only variable of note was the frequency of interaction between the clinical nurse and the nurse manager ( $r = .41$ ;  $p < .01$ ).

**Conclusion:** Coaching behaviors comprise a leadership skill set that is important for nurse leaders at all levels of management. Previous research has demonstrated the importance of first line manager support in the work environment. The results from this study indicated that managers may need more skill building to provide coaching around performance and career goals with their clinical nursing staff. These coaching conversations typically require relationship and sometimes involve confrontation. Addressing performance issues and supporting career growth are key to provision of quality nursing care.

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**Title:**

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**Keywords:**

coaching, manager and nurse

**Abstract Summary:**

This study explores coaching, essential to building a healthy work environment. A recent study notes nurses receive coaching as feedback and problem resolution. Nurses also report gaps in coaching around goal-setting, and addressing performance. To further quality care and healthy workforce, this study examines the nurses' perception of coaching received.

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