Title:
Effective Leadership for BSN Recruitment in Rural Communities

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Session Title:
Effective Leadership for BSN Recruitment in Rural Communities

Slot:
LB 02: Friday, September 26, 2014: 2:15 PM-3:00 PM

Scheduled Time:
2:15 PM

Keywords:
leadership styles, recruitment and rural BSN education

References:


Learning Activity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE</th>
<th>TIME ALLOTTED</th>
<th>FACULTY/SPEAKER</th>
<th>TEACHING/LEARNING METHOD</th>
<th>EVALUATION/FEEDBACK</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critique selected definition of the term, &quot;curriculum&quot;</td>
<td>Definitions of &quot;curriculum&quot;</td>
<td>Course of study Arrangements of instructio</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td>Name, Credentials</td>
<td>Lecture PowerPoint presentation Participant feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name one effective leadership style for recruitment</td>
<td>Leadership styles defined</td>
<td>10min</td>
<td>Karen Worthy, MSN RN</td>
<td>PowerPoint presentation Discussion</td>
<td>Discussion of what leadership styles have you found to be effective for recruitment</td>
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<tr>
<td>List at least two strategies used for recruitment</td>
<td>List recruitment strategies in plan</td>
<td>10min</td>
<td>Amber Williams, DNP APRN FNP</td>
<td>PowerPoint presentation Discussion</td>
<td>Discussion of what strategies have you found that have been effective?</td>
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**Abstract Text:**

**Purpose:**

With 44% of the United States hospitals located in rural communities, the need for highly educated nurses is critical in these areas where supply has historically been low. Additionally, rural communities typically do not have access to traditional BSN education and those who reside in rural areas tend to have barriers to attaining further education such as competing work-life demands, familial obligations, tuition costs, insufficient preparation for college level work, few successful role models, and a lack of incentive to pursue higher education. This distance-based program offers a traditional baccalaureate education through an innovative partnership between a flagship university and a regional, rural campus. However, simply providing access without effectively marketing or recruiting may not ensure sustainable enrollment. Leadership is a dynamic process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. For the strategic plan for recruitment of BSN students in rural communities, the faculty intertwined transformational and situational leadership theories. Effective leadership, an outreach vision, and a strategic plan was implemented by the nursing faculty to effectively market the program thereby increasing enrollment.

**Methods:**

Transformational leaders see with a new vision and empower others to participate as peers in striving to meet challenges. This approach was used to provide an outreach vision and goals which led to a
strategic plan for recruitment efforts with time and resources allocated. According to the contingency theory, no one leadership style is best in all situations. Since this was a complex plan with many players, situational leadership style was utilized in much of the communicating and coordinating. Finally, the path-goal theory leader motivates students by setting realistic goals and creating a clear path for students to achieve these goals. Transformational and situational, including contingency and path-goal, leadership styles were imperative to be effective recruiters for our target population.

Specific strategies for recruitment included: contacting local high schools, career centers and hospitals in three neighboring counties; guidance counselors, science/health teachers, school and health care administrators were contacted by phone and email about speaking opportunities; program materials were sent for their distribution; one regional event was strategically planned inviting prospective students, parents and community members to the campus for an information session about the BSN program; extensive coordination with public relations, marketing, student affairs, and admissions officers were vital; presentations were interactive utilizing situation leadership style to suit the target audience; sign-in sheets were used to collect attendance data at each event; and evaluation surveys were done to systematically evaluate the event’s effectiveness.

Results:

In less than one academic semester, almost 1000 students, teachers, administrators, and community members were reached through direct outreach efforts such as presentations, meetings, or events. Countless others were directed to the program’s website and faculty through distributed materials and online exposure. The first information session was so well attended that a larger venue was needed for the second.

Enrollment numbers are collected each fall and compared to the previous fall’s enrollment to evaluate successful efforts. The BSN faculty plans to add a survey item to advising forms asking students how they heard about the program which will track BSN enrollees from recruitment. Finally, another annual outreach planning meeting will incorporate additional university departments such as dual enrollment and TRiO due to their ties and partnerships with schools and communities.

Conclusion:

Recruiting efforts have allowed the program to have sustainable numbers and even increase enrollment due to demand. This program represents an innovative option for baccalaureate prepared nurses in a time when nursing is in high demand, particularly in rural areas. Leadership style and vision has made outreach a shared faculty goal with positive individual and community outcomes.