Title:
Resolving Conflict with Staff, Patients, Families, and Friends and Improve Patient Safety

Terri L. Bogue, MSN
Robert L. Bogue, BS
Thor Projects LLC, Carmel, IN, USA

Session Title:
Developing Professional Communication Skills
Slot:
A 04: Friday, 17 March 2017: 2:45 PM-3:30 PM
Scheduled Time:
2:45 PM

Keywords:
Conflict in healthcare, Conflict resolution and Patient safety

References:


Abstract Summary:
Conflict occurs naturally in all environments. In healthcare, unresolved conflict affects not only staff but also patient safety. Most healthcare leaders can improve their ability to resolve conflict effectively. Learn to identify the conditions that create conflict, the specific causes that trigger it, and the techniques for resolving conflict.

Learning Activity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The learner will be able to understand the causes and factors that create conflict.</td>
<td>This course teaches the conditions that create conflict, the specific causes that trigger it, and the techniques for resolving conflict. It will: 1. Explain the concept of emotional intelligence, including self-monitoring and control, as well as social awareness and relationship management. 2. Explain natural and unnatural conflict and how conflict is not inherently bad. 3. Dissect and analyze differing value systems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The learner will be able to apply techniques to facilitate the resolution of healthy conflict.

4. Describe communication styles and specific language tools. 5. Expose tools for creating solutions for conflict. 6. Explore other areas of psychology useful for conflict resolution.

Abstract Text:

The complex, high stress, and emotionally laden environment of health-care frequently leads to conflict. This conflict may contribute to a culture of disrespect, which is a barrier to patient safety and quality of care (Leape, et al., 2012). Patient safety and quality care is dependent on collaborative relationships among healthcare team members, effective communication, and a collaborative work environment (The Joint Commission, 2008). Overall, the Joint Commission has found that communication failures are a “root cause in nearly 70% of reported sentinel events, surpassing other commonly identified issues such as staff orientation and training, patient assessment, and staffing.” Many of these communication lapses are the result, or the cause of conflict (Morreim, 2015).

Every healthcare professional encounters disagreement and conflict on a routine basis; this is expected, as conflict is natural and necessary to every organization. Recognizing the frequency of conflict, it is surprising that few nurses have been trained to truly understand the components of conflict or effective methods to resolve it. We are all familiar with conflict, yet reacting to and resolving conflict continues to consume significant time and energy for both the bedside nurse and healthcare leaders. A significant portion of a nurse manager’s time is devoted to resolving employee conflicts. Unresolved conflict impacts employee morale and retention, and may ultimately affect the overall well-being of the organization.

Recognizing that conflict is natural and necessary emphasizes the necessity to learn how to improve efficiency in communication and collaboration. This increased efficiency can be supported through an understanding of emotional intelligence, conflict styles, the psychology of decision making, and communication styles. This background knowledge related to conflict enables the nurse to improve their personal conflict resolution skills and develop mentoring skills to better assist employees and co-workers in conflict resolution.

By learning to identify the conditions that create conflict, the specific causes that trigger it, and the techniques for resolving conflict, nurses will be better prepared to negotiate the complex world of healthcare. Success under conditions of high stress, risk, ambiguity, and complexity require effective conflict resolution skills. While it is impossible for nurses to resolve all conflict without the collaboration of the interdisciplinary team, it is their centrality to healthcare that places nurses in the position where they are able to take the lead in these efforts.

Healthcare organizations that support the development of effective conflict resolution and communication skills can transform organizational culture and leadership while improving efficiency, reduce preventable errors and adverse events, and improve staff and patient satisfaction (Rosenstien, Dinklin, & Munro, 2014). Learning to identify conditions that create conflict and techniques to effectively resolve it will impact multiple areas of healthcare, including staff satisfaction and engagement, improved patient outcomes, and patient satisfaction.