



Challenges in Hiring New and Experienced Registered Nurses

CHALLENGES IN ACQUIRING NEW OR EXPERIENCED NURSE LEADERS

GOALS

1. Differentiate between the challenges and concerns of hiring new and experienced leaders.
2. Consider the monetary and legal risks of hiring a new and experienced leader.
3. Differentiate between the importance of education as a leader and the importance of experience as a leader.
4. State the legal considerations related to the hiring, education, evaluation, and in-service education of leaders.
5. Differentiate between a leader and a follower.
6. Ascertain the benefits and difficulties of promoting existing employees to a leadership position.
7. Ascertain the benefits and difficulties of hiring new employees as leaders.
8. Avoid discriminatory behavior, comments, and other issues during the hiring process.
9. Use a numerical formula that helps to determine a ranking status.
10. Differentiate between objective and subjective considerations during the hiring process.
11. Incorporate legal and ethical behaviors into the hiring process.
12. Complete a hiring interview without discrimination and bias.
13. Understand the advantage of theory in the leadership process.

KEYWORDS FOR APPLICATION

1. Shadowing
2. Intuitive Powers
3. Discrimination
4. Halo Effect
5. Horns Effect
6. Employee/Advisor
7. Recruiter/Human Resource Manager (HRM)
8. Nurse Administrator (DON)
9. Nurse Leader (RN)

GENERAL NURSING EMPLOYMENT CHALLENGES & CONSIDERATIONS

Nowadays, hiring any nursing administrator (DON) or nursing leader (RN) brings a challenge to organizations that are trying to maintain a budget and provide the quality of nursing leaders for which the organization's nursing administrator is held accountable. A newly hired nurse leader must be able to perform and have relevant leadership experience and a natural ability to work effectively with other employees. The following considerations intend to encourage the informed hiring of a nurse leader. It also is designed to help organizations to hire them with more awareness of potential legal and ability concerns.

It can be a difficult and important decision to determine who and why a particular person should be in a nurse leader position. It is better to carefully consider all the ramifications of selecting a nurse leader (the first time) than to have to take the time and energy to undo a poor nurse administrator's decision.

Written hiring processes/policies that follow pre-established hiring behavior expectations will help to prevent the facility/organization from future legal questioning about the process and disgruntled job applicants. Follow the same policy process for EVERY potential employee that *meets the written and advertised job requirements*. To curtail the number of applicants, consider a reasonable, accurate, and precise criteria for possible employment.

As a facility/organization, it is essential to include in a hiring process/policy the requirement of at least three objective administrative employees/advisors. Perhaps, the employees/advisors are future hiring committee members. The purpose is to commit to writing the pros and cons of hiring each potential nurse leader. The process might include (as a matter of process/policy) a private conference with each potential nurse leader and asking self-generated and specific questions of the potential nurse leader. Initial private and individual interviews by selected administrative employees/advisors (rather than an initial hiring committee effort) will help curb the negative Halo or Horns Effect.

Halo Effect means that one or a small number of group members identify positive experiences or actual knowledge about a potential employee and, consequently, the whole group becomes influenced and immediately responds positively about that same potential employee. The result is also known as "Gang Approval."

Horns Effect is the opposite. It means that one or a small number of group members identify negative experiences or negative knowledge about a potential employee and, consequently, the whole group becomes influenced and immediately responds negatively about that same potential employee. It is also known as "Gang Rejection."

Upon Completion of the Above and According to Process/Policy---

1. A committee or a selected group of at least three (not original employees/advisors) should meet to discuss written findings from (above stated) private interviews to determine the appropriateness of potential nurse leader employment.
2. A written, signed, and private report submitted to the hiring committee members before the final hiring committee interview

The appearance of or actual discrimination when hiring any potential nurse leader is always a concern! The secret is to always be on the side of legal accountability by having written and administratively approved policies and procedures. These policies should support all philosophical beliefs and written statements of the mission, definition, purpose, goals, and objectives of the facility/organization. Superb record-keeping concerning each accepted job applicant is necessary. Record-keeping is essential in case the facility/organization or any person(s) appearing to be involved in the decision-making process is questioned (or legally challenged) as to the hiring process or final arrangement. And---you can trust that somebody will always ask about employment processes and decisions!

RECOGNIZING A NURSE LEADER

A nurse leader is a registered nurse (RN) who assesses, directs, participates, evaluates outcomes, and is held accountable for meeting leadership goals. He/she has the power to stand alone and the courage to make difficult/tough decisions. It is a true "leader" who always strives to be the best of all who strive. This type of person gives his/her "all" for the success of the nursing team. It is a person who faces challenging human relationships and acts upon process decisions that improve the quality of nursing. It is often a person with significant and proven successful life experiences related to problem-solving. Does this sound familiar—like the successful implementation of the nursing process?

Conversely, it is *not* the person (nurse) who spends time decorating his/her office and filling candy jars. It is *not* the person who spends time preparing and carrying out fun activities in the office or on the job.

Some seasoned leaders like to teach. Consequently, an inexperienced leader "shadowing," an experienced leader to learn successful leadership behaviors, might keep an organization from experiencing, again, past leadership errors. If the inexperienced nurse leader is going to work with or in conjunction with the experienced leader to learn leadership behaviors, it is always helpful to first mutually synchronize thought and behavior patterns that knowingly support the philosophy, mission, purpose, and goals of the facility/organization. For the seasoned nurse leader, providing and teaching possible choices and consequences to a new nurse leader as a consideration before a nurse leader makes a decision could prevent a negative outcome.

Intuitive powers are an added positive dimension of leadership. It requires listening to the voice from within when attempting to lead others. Intuition is helpful and improves with leadership experience and chronological age.

As a Nurse Leader---

1. Direct and teach the appropriate use of a decision-making process.
2. Respond to employee needs that need immediate resolution.
3. Determine and set forth group plans/directions to accomplish goals.
4. Grant the appropriate power to solve problems.
5. Listen with compassion to the immediate needs of others.
6. Recognize and respond to a need to improve practice/work standards.
7. Exhibit calmness during the chaos.
1. Perform activities with purpose and a goal in mind.
2. Support and reward positive behavior.
3. Set an example of positive behavior.
4. Direct and make decisions with possible consequences in mind.
5. Accept responsibility for outcomes.
6. Know and hold all staff to written job descriptions, policies, and procedures.
7. Teach nursing staff to perform in keeping with the mission, definition, purpose, goals, and objectives of the facility/organization.
8. Know and conform to legal expectations (i.e., no harassment, correct and concurrent documentation, timely evaluations, reliable confidentiality, and no discrimination).
9. Know and follow the process of problem-solving techniques and the nursing process (i.e., assessment, planning, goals, implementation, and evaluation).

10. Resist coercion, manipulation, and threats.
11. Maintain appropriate personal relationships while making difficult decisions.
12. Listen carefully to personal intuitive feelings and responds correctly and accordingly.

Impressive—sometimes the above-stated traits are consistent with nurse leaders who do not set out to be a leader. Still, it is a quality of their integrity and decisive actions that *naturally* identify them as a leader. Hence, the nature versus nurture question arises: Is a nurse leader "born to be a leader" (nature concept) or "learns to be a leader" (nurture concept)?

NURSE LEADERSHIP EDUCATION

Leadership Theories---

Practical and useful leadership courses educate leaders related to leadership theory. In contrast, just having leadership experience might educate regarding the humanistic behaviors and needs of employees, but does not provide the intellectual, theoretical components related to the basics of successful leadership. That is, theory helps to know "why" a leader should do or not do a specific leadership behavior. This ability forms the "professional" component of successful leadership. It, also, provides the academic prowess for a nursing leader as he/she is required or desirous to explain leadership choices.

A theory is a system of ideas independent of the "thing" to be explained. It is a way of thinking based on known general principles or a formal set of rules related to the subject. It is a framework for explaining assumptions.

In a recent meeting, this observer (author) heard a statement about the positive aspects of putting a *potential* leader with another person (shadowing) who is in a leadership role. The question was posed by this observer (author)—"What successful experience and education in leadership should be a requirement of the person doing the leading? It was interesting to note that when this question was asked of a group of potential nurse leaders to help identify learned leadership qualities, no one recognized the "theory of leadership" as being a requirement. The correct answer is quite simple—an effective nurse leader is a person who has the ability, educational background, successful outcomes, and can apply and explain leadership behaviors according to the theory of leadership! The truth is, no one refuted the actual necessity of having academic leadership theory education if an existing leader is going to teach a *new* leader "how to make successful leadership happen"! No one in the room had ever thought about it—they said!

To put a new nurse leader with just any person who has the interpersonal skills of leadership without the ability to identify theory to substantiate their leadership behaviors does *not* teach leadership! It falls into the category of just doing what feels right "by the seat of their pants."

There is a personal commitment when learning how to be a nurse leader to understanding how to accomplish a goal, intellectual application of the means to success, and the theoretical basis as to why a particular leadership behavior is best! For example, would a person be allowed to drive a car without knowing the rules of the road?

One organization required nurse leaders for the first two years to document in writing their leadership decisions, state the theory related to their choices, and present this written document to the nurse administrator (DON) of the organization at specific times. Talk about encouraging theoretical accountability—Wow!

Importance of Personal Skills---

Educationally, effective nurse leaders learn the Theory of Leadership and Critical Thinking. However, we all recognize that education is not the only facet of consideration. The ability to work with people with integrity is also a MUST.

Educate nurse leaders on how to truly understand employees and know that every person is human with a background of success, problems, worries, and "baggage." Therefore, the needs of employees (work and personal) must always be in the educational equation of leadership success. It is a reciprocal learning process of meeting each other's needs. Include a concern for employees that results in the employee subconsciously saying, "I will do what you expect if you will consider me and my legitimate personal needs (within reason) as I perform the behaviors of my job description." The outcome is mutual respect.

Sometimes, nurse leaders need to learn that the balance of leadership firmness and leadership kindness is a balancing act that demands constant weighing of work outcomes with a consideration of the personal employee's needs as they strive to meet job expectations. Therefore, the existence of LEADERSHIP POWER is related to how a nurse leader can effectively relate and empathize with employees in stressful situations and how a nurse leader accommodates the employee's personal needs while getting the job assignment/description accomplished. IT IS AMAZING HOW LONG IT TAKES SOME LEADERS TO LEARN THIS LEADERSHIP SKILL!

(Afterall, if we relate this acquired education to the health care profession, we have to admit that empathetic kindness in the midst of serving others as a nurse leader is one hallmark associated with the nursing profession!)

WHAT x&%!x? A NEED FOR EDUCATION IN LEADERSHIP!!

No matter where a person watches the behavior of nurse leaders, there is a difference in leadership behaviors. The question is sometimes *how in the &#*!%* did this person get placed in this leadership position!

Unfortunately, it is so apparent, at times, that people are put into positions by their superiors because there is no choice! Maybe a nurse leader is needed in that position. So, that person was just *there or had been there the longest!* If the organization is in that position, it is imperative to provide professional education (one way or the other) for that inexperienced nurse leader! Retention and promotions should include as a part of the criteria for advancement the employee's willingness and successful use of learned and competent leadership behaviors.

Encourage leadership certification for performance in a specific area! There are opportunities in various places. Online education is a possibility. Sending the unsuccessful or inexperienced nurse leader to a successful leader in another facility, organization, or a similar situation might help. The idea is—Hey,

you!—we expect the best from you—we expect YOU to make the facility/organization the best and better in every way. Also, we expect *your* leadership knowledge and success to keep the organization out of legal problems!

Insist on having the nurse leader feel the power of leadership success by bringing their attention to apparent successes and failures! If a starting pay differential does not exist in the organization between experienced, educated, and successful leaders as compared to inexperienced leaders, the organization might consider the option of education to rewarding leadership excellence with increased wages when/if it occurs. Increase the monetary reward according to successful leadership experience and training that moves the organization toward its mission and goals. Make sure their job description says so!

Recognition from the administration for learned and witnessed positive learned leadership behaviors resulting in successful outcomes is a reward that elevates a leader's self-esteem. Nurse leaders have job descriptions (like any other employees) receive an evaluation, accordingly. Elevation of wages is often considered a reward system. As an outcome of increased/elevated positive *learned* behaviors (not just accomplishment of the job description)—but the *quality* of the job performance of expected job description behaviors indicates the useful application of academically newly *learned* leadership skills.

An inequity and inappropriateness in wages (according to experience, education, and ability) could result in a discriminatory lawsuit or a legal dispute. Consider a written wage scale that takes into consideration all of the variables that a facility/organization considers to be important before allowing an increase in a nurse leader's wage. Consider the variable of willingness and actual accomplishment of leadership education that promotes nurse leadership effectiveness. Such a scale could also include a required numerical score or accomplishment scale as a part of the job description. Pre-determined and consistently reviewed employee-known reward/promotion requirements (or demotion criteria when it is necessary) will decrease employees' opportunities or incentive to challenge administrative decisions. Stay out of the way of such time consuming and expensive legal outcomes that could show an administrator's ineptness. What is it they say—*Prevention is worth a pound of cure!!?*

Nurse leaders must follow current organizational protocols/policies and procedures of the hiring facility to keep the organization out of court. Understand that these expectations exist for a reason and are an outcome of education, experience, and prevention of inappropriate litigious consequences. Teaching and providing documented *proof* of on-going teaching and learning of such protocols/policies are reasonable expectations of a facility/organization.

Some of the significant legal concerns and concepts that need to be initially and periodically taught and reviewed with all potential and performing nurse leaders are: (not necessarily in order of importance)

1. Confidentiality
2. Harassment
3. Incident reporting
4. Documentation and retention of documentation
5. Administrative policies and procedures
6. Importance of asking questions for improved understanding
7. Clarifying questions and information
8. Asking for help when help is needed

9. Preventing actual or appearance of discrimination
10. Determining the legality of job descriptions
11. Writing incident reports
12. Emulating the definition, mission, purpose, goals, objectives of the facility/organization

A facility/organization has decision-making policies and procedures carefully thought through, well-written, available for review, updated, and taught on an on-going basis. Consistency of nurse leader behaviors that uphold facility/organizational expectations according to nursing protocols is essential. Help to assure that every inexperienced nurse leader is not making unacceptable decisions without professional knowledge, input, or consideration by educated and experienced nurse administrators. These policies and procedures are to be reflected in a nurse leader's job description and followed by every nurse leader—experienced or inexperienced.

By following these rules of behavior and best practice standards (as presented, taught, and reviewed), there should never be a reason to be placed in any legal situation. With pre-determined guidelines of behavior, there is to be no manipulation of these established guidelines without administrative approval. The purpose of leadership education regarding job expectations and frequent educational review of the expectations is to maintain acceptable job performance.

The Natural Movement Toward Disarray (Maybe Even Chaos)---

There is a tendency for entropy to occur, that is, movement away from the job descriptions or expected standards of performance by employees. Entropy is a naturally occurring phenomenon in all aspects of human nature. Because of this happening, it is necessary to have a constant review/teaching of policies and procedures to continually support the philosophy, purpose, mission, and goals of the organization. One way to maintain the known accuracy of policies and procedures, thereby curtailing entropy, is to review a certain amount of "at-risk" systems and strategic policies at selected on-going meetings. A reiteration of the organization's philosophy, mission, purpose, and goals on an on-going basis also helps to maintain on-going facility/organizational knowledge of expectations.

One more important "thing!" People (even nurses) do what works for them—and it is human nature for people to revert to old ways. Unless there are relentless teaching and support of positive outcomes and expectations to follow established policies and procedures, a return to old habits that are not condoned by the administration will occur. This return to old habits is a proven human behavior that supports the need for the consistent administrative admonition of *positive* expected nurse leader behaviors and redirecting of *negative* nurse leader behaviors.

Magnifying Nurse Administrative and Nurse Leader Power---

Nursing employees value leadership power in the form of a competent nurse leader. That necessary power comes from a nurse administrator firmly educating/teaching employees about their job descriptions/expectations.

Formal evaluation of job description compliance should occur on a regular and known timetable. The job descriptions and employee review and signed documentation are kept on file by both the employee and the employer. Job descriptions and evaluations are used for legitimizing job retention, job advancement, or termination of employment. In this regard, the job description is a written legal document of the agreement as to job expectations for monetary reimbursement.

Discrimination Prevention---

Discrimination involves the *inappropriate preferential treatment* of any employee by one nurse leader over another nurse leader in any manner or form during any facility/organization happening.

Discrimination can quickly occur during (but not limited to) the hiring process concerning their race, religion, age, gender, physical appearance, etc. Each employee is educated about the meaning of discrimination by informing them that it is the *mistreatment of or making an exception for any person, class, or category, without considering a person's merit.*

Discrimination related to the selection of a specific gender should not occur or, at least, be a very covert and unadvertised as a consideration. The advertisement of a leader's preferred gender considered for employment denotes discrimination. However, if there is sometimes a quiet unstated preference that one gender or the other might be the better choice, it is always best not to state or advertise preferences that would give anyone the idea of possible discrimination. Teach leaders not to identify a gender preference and to use their expected leadership behavior to be willing to consider either gender for a job!

Just for your information--research resulted in some interesting findings regarding gender. They proclaim that tall men project an essence of control and power, but can be intimidating to meek employees with poor self-esteem. Females are often seen as gentle persuaders to get a specific job done. There are exceptions to every rule, of course! Consideration of a person's merit (whether male, female, or regarding any researched findings) would be the most acceptable approach to hiring reviews.

Teach and warn each selected administrator/job reviewer doing private interviews for a nurse leader position to be careful about making employment decisions regarding "what feels good" or react to just the "charisma" felt from a potential employee. Ask consistent pre-established questions to be asked of each potential leader they interview. Use the appropriate job description to determine the extent a nurse is qualified to perform as a competent nurse leader. Determine a nurse who will be able to give direction to others and answer questions correctly when asked by others.

HIRING FROM WITHIN OR OUTSIDE OF THE FACILITY/ORGANIZATION

Hiring and Promotion from Within the Facility/Organization---

Any nurse leader must be able to perform and have relevant experience in leadership as a part of his/her life history. Whether to always promote a nurse leader beyond an RN position within the facility/organization is a good question.

The promotion of a nurse leader who knows the personal strengths and limitations of others often gives a new nurse leader an edge on success. The secret is to find a nurse leader who is recognized by other nurse leaders as knowledgeable about the processes/policies, as well as can be considered a nurse leader by other employees.

The Nurse Leader Should Have At Least Three Recognized Qualities---

1. Positive relationship abilities
2. Effective task abilities
3. Trusted to do what is "right"

Remember, however, that such an internal facility/organization's elevation of responsibilities to a new and more demanding leadership position does not always result in success! Furthermore, taking on a new role with new expected leadership relationships with employees is often very difficult as it causes a necessary change in the degree and kind of employee fraternization (usually a need for curtailment of employee fraternization). Effects of job promotion within a facility/organization recognize the need for any newly assigned and promoted nurse leader to withstand any internal turmoil from disheartened employees gracefully. Some employees often think someone else within the facility/organization should be the one promoted to an elevated position.

There is a situation where the other employees abused a newly reported nurse leader selected for an advanced position from within the facility/organization. They would whisper negatively about her behind her back. They would pass her in the hall and make derogatory and inflammatory remarks. She was shunned and often found to be crying alone about the situation. Finally, she left the position and moved out of town. Well—what went wrong, and what is wrong with this picture? This situation is not uncommon and is related to the human need to belong, to be wanted, to be a recognized positive part of the "group." The possible isolation of a newly reassigned nurse leader can be painful, and the change to another dimension of behavior and expectations can often be traumatic.

One significant detriment is related to the possibility that the promoted nurse leader has formed past employee relationships and exhibited behaviors as an employee that has exposed possible personal areas prone to staff manipulation or coercion. Going from an employee cohort with overtly friendly employee behaviors to a more responsible nurse leader with new job expectations very different from past employee behaviors can be somewhat threatening and daunting (and even confusing).

It is always tempting to "reward" longevity or compliant behavior with a promotion. Too many times, current nurse leaders are "rewarded" to the detriment of the organization. Often, this person has learned well to be a *follower* and not a *leader*. The transition can be confusing and complicated!

Some facilities/organizations do not go beyond the financial considerations and will hire a person who is just a likable person but not a qualified person for the job. Many of these advanced leadership requirements should cause careful, extensive, and time-consuming scrutiny. Perhaps, there is a feeling by the administration that a selected nurse leader has proven to encompass the aspects of an effective leader. There is a feeling that nurse leaders will strive toward job excellence for promotion. The term is often stated as a policy, "We always hire from within!"

Hiring from Outside the Facility/Organization---

Now—how about the hiring of a more experienced, academically educated, or a proven successful leader who is *not* currently employed by the facility/organization? The successful pursuance of higher education by any employee shows tenacity. Yes, the recruitment of outside expertise does cost more and should cost more. They can have increased experience in both life and working relationships. The

creative and critical thinking abilities might be a positive surprise. Some work history considerations might be:

1. Effective decision-making
2. Appropriate co-worker relationships
3. Appropriate nursing skills
4. Ability to establish trust
5. Consistent reliability
6. Maintenance of group adhesiveness
7. Ability to communicate
8. Ability to write and evaluate employee job description effectiveness
9. Support of the facility/organization's mission, goals, purpose, and objectives
10. Theoretical leadership knowledge to support their leadership behaviors

Any new nurse leader is prepared verbally and supported by a seasoned nurse administrator and nurse leader. Jealousy and an attempt to "dethrone" a new nurse leader can be genuine and painful. The experienced, successful, and seasoned nurse administrator and nurse leader within the facility/organization has a responsibility to guide a new nurse leader. One of the most positive aspects of hiring a new nurse leader outside of the facility/organization might be their exuberance, energy, and creativity. These positive aspects add vibrancy to any organization.

Absolutely—Hire an excellent nurse administrator or nurse leader from other sources than the existing facility/organization. Sometimes, there is not a person in the facility/organization that will meet the rigorous requirements of the job.

When hiring from outside the facility/organization, there is less chance of a social entanglement with current staff. Be aware of friendships and family membership ties to existing employees of any person considered for employment. Excessive friendship and apparent nepotism are not usually productive traits for most job positions. Hire a new person without current employee ties! Manipulative patterns of employee behaviors are less when employee familial and close friendship ties are absent.

Determining Leadership versus Follower Abilities---

Gather all possible information available! Use your intuition. Is this person secure in leadership character, fair and trustworthy, philosophically congruent with the facility/organization? Does this person have a healthy ego that will allow/permit criticism? Is the essence of the appropriate use of power evident? Determine, if you can, if the potential employee is a follower or a leader! Determine a way of scoring your impression(s) or knowledge of the following for each prospective employee.

Leader	Follower
Exhibits calm amid the chaos	Exhibits nervousness amid the chaos
Directs activities with goals in mind	Performs activities only as directed
Supports and rewards positive behaviors	Accept rewards often with skepticism

Directs and makes decisions with concern for consequences	Performs as requested with no obvious concern for ultimate consequences
Is responsible for outcomes	Limited responsibility for outcomes
Practices & knows & determines policy direction	Depends on leaders to give direction
Understands and utilizes legal knowledge	Depends on the leader to make a legal judgment
Problem-solving skills follow a pattern for calculated outcomes	Problem-solving occurs on a limited scale without great concern for overall outcomes
Calm and ability to direct during a crisis	Dependent on the direction during a crisis
Listens to and hears communication implications	Listens to words and performs accordingly
Seeks respect and recognized integrity	Only tries to be liked by others

THE PYGMALION EFFECT, ROSENTHAL EFFECT, GOLEM EFFECT, AND GALATEA EFFECT

The Pygmalion Effect and Rosenthal Effect are from Greek mythology. It involves nurse administrators' *high job expectations* that lead to positive employee job performance. It concludes that expectations by an employee's supervisor (nurse administrator) regarding their job performance as a nurse leader result in a self-fulfilling prophecy of positive job performance. High and positive expectations of employees will result in employees performing in ways consistent with expectations. An unexpected "Thank You" regarding specific positive job performance can be an employee's highlight of a stressful day.

In contrast, the Golem Effect involves nurse administrators' *low job expectations* that lead to negative employee job performance. It concludes that expectations by an employee's supervisor (nurse administrator) regarding their job performance as a nurse leader result in a self-fulfilling prophecy of negative job performance. Low and negative expectations will result in employees performing in ways consistent with expectations, bringing about possible facility/organization trouble and destruction.

The name of the "effect" is not as important as a nurse administrator recognizing the importance and probable outcome of high or low expectations of performance. There is a resultant outcome of employees knowing that, when they perform according to expectations, they make a positive or negative difference in their job.

COMMITTEE HIRING PROCESS FOR ANY JOB INTERVIEW

Take into consideration the specific questions or expectations a hiring committee interviewer considers to be essential to be answered by each potential nurse leader. Open-ended questions are best—that is, questions that cannot be explained by a simple "yes" or "no." Be concerned about not asking questions that could represent a gender bias! Have each interviewer agree upon the specific questions to be asked before the interviewing process. The same questions should be asked of each potential employee

during the interview to prevent discrimination. Screen each item/question carefully to not infringe on any aspect of perceived discrimination. *Interviewing questions for any potential employee---*

Self-presentation and verbal skills when a potential employee answers open-ended questions by an interviewer would provide additional and more accurate information to make a hiring decision. Also, asking the potential employee interviewed to give a *specific example* as they respond to each category stated below would provide a more accurate picture as to employment qualifications.

The Interview Could Include Interesting Open-Ended Questions, But are Not Limited to the Following---

1. What are your unique professional qualifications for this job?
2. What personal skills did you use that benefited a facility/organization in the past?
3. How would you plan to use your skills to benefit this facility/organization?
4. In what areas do you consider yourself to be an expert?
5. What are your past achievements that would indicate your readiness for this position?

(Notice that all questions are "open-ended" questions—that is, they cannot be answered by a "Yes" or "No." Another approach might be to ask the potential employee to complete a sentence. For example, "Your unique qualifications for this job are....."

Regardless, whether potential employees are from within or outside of the facility/organization, the hiring process and the questions must be the same for each separate position. Otherwise, discrimination (a legal concern) can be an issue. Go through the same questioning and numerical scoring (if that is what you use) for comparison of each potential employee. The numerical scoring provides a sense of *objectivity* for comparing of the applicants. It is usually best to interview both in-house and out-of-house potential leaders that meet the hiring criteria for the job. Keep and file all records representing interviews and responses to questions for comparison of answers to questions. An audible recording of answers to questions (only when approved by the potential employee) will help to review and compare, if necessary, the responses from each potential employee.

Sometimes, having a responsible unemployed community person on the interviewing committee that is assigned only to listen (not evaluate a potential employee) could be considered as a witness of a legal, equitable, and appropriate hiring process. The community member often becomes a loud voice within the community as to the fairness and equality of the interviewing process.

The Pursuit of Employment History---

With the potential employee's permission, current and past employers would provide a review regarding the applicant's history of employment success or lack of success. There is a concern by many previous employers regarding the sharing of untoward happenings regarding a potential employee. There have been many lawsuits regarding the sharing of information that a prospective employee considered to be inappropriate or inaccurate. That information could result in keeping a qualified potential employee from being hired. Previous or current employers of the potential employee will usually give information related to the date of hire, date of leaving employment, and the employment title and general employment status of the person. Personal references can be questionable due to the possibility of friendship or an emotional overlay.

A Mutual Sharing of Job Expectations---

To perform expected employee job behaviors, the outcome of the hiring process must determine successful past employment history.

This observer (author) experienced an interview whereby a young lady (a potential employee) asked a question about the job description. A hiring committee member's loud remark was, "You are here to answer our questions, not to ask us questions." That arrogant remark gave a message loud and clear about the atmosphere of the actual job and potential employee environment. As a professional applying for a job, the job opportunity suddenly became unworthy of consideration for the prospective employee. It was surprising that this potential employee remained for the entire interview! Treat each potential employee with courtesy. After all, they took their time to be available to the hiring committee for employment consideration.

The potential employee will be determining if he/she *wants* the job. Plan to allow time for each potential employee to ask questions of the interviewers. The interviewing process is a "two-way street." Also, try to determine a means of assessing the degree of ability the potential employee is able/willing to relate to people effectively—even to aggressive committee members. The ability to perform required tasks stated in the job description is a *must*. Always present the job description to a potential employee long before an interview. It would be interesting to know if a potential employee has new ideas for improving the activities and requirements, as shown in the job description, or if they have questions about the job requirements.

"Goodness of Fit" Relative to a Job Description---

In research and statistical analysis, the term "Goodness of Fit" is used as it relates to how well something fits a set of observations or expectations. The first indication of a potential employee's expected "Goodness of Fit" comes from the job application, which should be completed and reviewed by selected persons before the actual interview. It compares the degree of expected behavior/values found in the job description with the degree of actual behavior/values observed and presented by the potential employee. It is considered a comparative review. The degree to which a potential employee is willing to admit upon interview his/her levels of competency or incompetency might show the ability of the potential employee to be objective and truthful regarding the future evaluation of the self and others.

The on-going covert thought for the interviewer is: How will this potential employee respond to future job expectations? There will be a distinct ability to compare each potential employee regarding their ability to solve and react to presented job-related scenarios by using a personally selected theoretical concept. (Theories for personal selection are available by this author. Or, determine according to the area of discipline.) Theory and knowledge are essential. Performing "by the seat of one's pants" is not acceptable. You are looking for job-related expertise, experience, and theoretical job-related knowledge. These are prerequisites for being job-qualified. It will separate the "good-feelers" from the "expert-doers." Confidence in the giving of appropriate answers to the questions related to theory helps to show knowledge in disciplinary behaviors.

LEGAL AWARENESS OF CURRENT AND GENERAL LEGAL CONCERNS

A potential employee needs to have an understanding and appreciation of several highly vulnerable current legal issues. Questions (in no order of selected importance) of the potential employee knowledge regarding the following sensitive topics would tell interviewers to what extent the potential employee understands legal concerns:

1. Discrimination and discriminatory behaviors
2. Need for and use of job descriptions
3. Timely and comprehensive staff evaluations
4. Verbal and written communication
5. Personal, nonprofessional, and professional involvement with staff
6. Availability of leaders to guide and help staff
7. Rules, regulations, policies, and written procedures—the intended use and application
8. Federal laws related to job expectations and licensure
9. Sexual harassment
10. Chain-of-command application and expectations
11. Problem-solving patterns
12. Congruence between personal philosophy and organizational philosophy
13. Gender biases
14. Nursing process (assessment, planning, goals, implementation, evaluation)

LAST THOUGHT

***IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR A NURSING LEADER, KNOW THAT THEY ARE FOUND ONE AT A TIME. THEY DO NOT FLOCK!**

CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

1. What the qualities of a nursing leader?
2. What should be considered when a decision is made to promote a leadership position as an existing nursing employee or hire someone who is not currently an employee?
3. Name one nurse leader you know that has the qualities of a leader. What are the qualities he/she has as a leader? How does their age appear to determine their leadership decisions?
4. How does the nursing process apply to nurse leadership abilities?
5. What are at least five legal issues a nursing leader should be able to identify and explain?
6. What are at least two behaviors that represent discrimination when determining a new nursing leadership employee?
7. Identify at least three open-ended questions, and what is the answer to such a question?
8. Why would you choose a current employee to fill a nursing leadership position?
9. Why would you choose a new employee to fill a nursing leadership position?
10. What is the meaning of "goodness of fit," and how does it apply to the determination of a new nursing employee or a current nursing employee applying for a nursing leadership position?
11. What are at least five differences between a follower and a leader?

12. What are the rules to follow as a committee is developing questions for a new/different nursing employee (leader?)
13. What are the reasons you would use to hire a current nursing employee over a new nursing employee to be a new nursing leader?
14. What qualities could a new (not a current employee) nursing leader provide a facility/organization?
15. What kind of interview session(s)/process would you use to do a nursing leadership interview?
16. What are some of the differences between a leader and a follower?
17. What should occur during any hiring process to not have future legal concerns?
18. What are some considerations during the hiring process that reduces discriminatory concerns?
19. What are the job descriptions? What expectations related to job descriptions should be a part of a nursing leadership role?
20. What process would you use to determine a nursing leader?

RECOMMENDED READING

Job Descriptions: Development and Application by this author

Intuition by this author

Critical Thinking by this author

Use of Leadership: Theories that Make a Difference by this author

Entropy by this author

Horn Effect (Meaning, Definition, Explanation (YouTube)

Dealing with Halo and Horns Effect Bias (YouTube)

The Halo Effect by Kendra Cherry (2018)

Ways to Strengthen Your Intuition (www.mindgreen.com)

Difference Between Thinking and Critical Thinking (www.difference-between.net/science/nature)

Types of Leadership Theories that Define leadership (www.personalized-leadership.com)

Pygmalion: <https://howtosaythatword.com/pygmalion>

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