

CHAPTER 3: DECISION-MAKING PROCESS AND TOOLS

Mosby items and derived items © 2009 by Mosby, Inc., an affiliate of Elsevier Inc.

Some material was previously published.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. A staff nurse was asked by the nurse manager to be the charge nurse because of the staff nurse's long history of effective decision making. The staff nurse attributed her effective decision making to:
 - a. Minimal knowledge
 - b. The nurse manager's modeling of effective decision making
 - c. Good decision making by the physician
 - d. Supportive hospital personnel

ANS: B

Problem solving is a skill that can be learned, and because staff nurses can learn by observing their leaders, good decision making by the leader may do more than solve immediate problems. More important for the long term, it can foster good decision making by staff nurses.

REF: 63

2. In the decision-making process, the nurse identifies a problem by:
 - a. Referring to the standards of practice
 - b. Using the nurse's own experience
 - c. Drawing on his or her education
 - d. Analyzing available information

ANS: D

Managers identify the cause or causes of a problem by analyzing available information. Then they begin exploring possible solutions.

REF: 64

3. Which of the following is an example of effective decision making?
 - a. Counseling an employee for taking off one sick day
 - b. Implementing changes before explaining them to the staff
 - c. Including staff from one shift to help make a decision
 - d. Implementing the decision that has been made

ANS: D

After a decision has been made, it must be implemented. A decision that is not put into action is useless.

REF: 65

4. Traditionally, a hospital cuts back on registered nurse staffing for budgetary reasons. The hospital chief executive officer (CEO) wanted to decrease the operating budget by reducing the number of travel nurses being used on the units. The nurse managers protested this decision loudly because they feared a resulting shortage of staff. The hospital CEO used what type of decision-making model?
- Rational model
 - Bureaucratic model
 - Political model
 - Collegial model

ANS: B

The bureaucratic model is based on the promises of historical norms and operating routines. This model values operational efficiency based on history and tradition. It does not recognize informal channels of communication and ignores political struggles for power.

REF: 66

5. The nurse manager expected her staff to be able to log into evidence-based practice websites to update policies and procedures. This is an example of what element of reasoning?
- Purpose or goal
 - Question at issue
 - Frame of reference
 - Empirical dimension

ANS: D

Reasoning is only as sound as the evidence on which it is based. The evidence should be clear, relevant, accurate, adequate, fairly gathered and reported, and consistently applied.

REF: 67

6. The staff nurse is assessing the need for further teaching for a preoperative surgical client. Based on the steps of critical thinking, what is the nurse's first priority?
- Identifying the problem
 - Developing a frame of reference
 - Identifying implications and consequences
 - Implementing inferences and conclusions

ANS: A

All reasoning is an attempt to prevent or solve a problem, figure something out, or answer a question.

REF: 67

7. The nurse manager of the labor and delivery room sees the need to develop a new policy that allows members of the extended family into the delivery room. This policy change would have to be presented to the medical staff. What type of structure would the nurses use to develop the new policy?
- Task force
 - Ad hoc committee
 - Formal committee

d. Line committee

ANS: C

Formal committees are part of the organizational structure and have specific duties and authority. Formal committees tend to be permanent.

REF: 69

8. Three charge nurses were assigned by the nurse manager to develop a method for keeping the crash cart stocked after each shift. What type of structure would best accomplish this assignment?
- a. Task force
 - b. Ad hoc committee
 - c. Informal committee
 - d. Line committee

ANS: B

Ad hoc committees are generally most useful when appointed for a specific purpose. A committee appointed to collect data, analyze it, and make recommendations is an ad hoc committee.

REF: 69

9. The hospital holds weekly meetings of a nurse manager council that discuss identified problem areas and makes recommendations to a central council or administration. This is a form of:
- a. Ad hoc committee
 - b. Informal committee
 - c. Shared governance council
 - d. Task force

ANS: C

Although the ultimate responsibility for a decision is the top administrator's, that burden can be shared through the use of committees and shared governance councils.

REF: 69

10. The nurse manager wants to ensure that consensus has been reached at the monthly staff meeting. Consensus occurs when the committee members agree that they can live with the decision even if it is not the decision they would prefer. One way for the nurse manager to help build consensus among the committee members is to:
- a. Help them understand their responsibilities
 - b. Evaluate their work
 - c. Implement their decisions
 - d. Involve them in critical and creative thinking

ANS: D

To build consensus, the nurse manager (or chairperson) listens to all committee members, uses the ideas, and gets people onto the team by involving them in critical thinking, creative thinking, and realistic critiquing of ideas.

REF: 69

11. An ad hoc committee was formed to collect data about the increase in absenteeism throughout the hospital. To ensure that this ad hoc committee functioned efficiently, the hospital limited the number of committee members to:
- 8
 - 3
 - 20
 - 18

ANS: A

The size of a committee is important. Effective committee size may range from 5 to 15 persons.

REF: 70

12. During a staff conference, the issue of mandatory in-service sessions was raised. The staff from the day shift wanted the in-service sessions to be held from 12:00 to 1:00 PM, so they could eat lunch together. Some of the newer staff members who worked nights remained silent. When it came time for the vote, the majority who worked days and evenings accepted the time for the in-service sessions. The night shift members did not promote this new schedule. This form of peer pressure is:
- Consensus building
 - Groupthink
 - Ad hoc committee
 - Task force

ANS: B

Groupthink seeks fast solutions with little critical thinking or input from group members. People may feel invulnerable, ignore negative feedback, stereotype differing views as misinformed, and use peer pressure to suppress doubters. People conform rather than challenge ideas, and poor decisions can result.

REF: 71

13. The nursing home staff members were brainstorming about ways to keep one of the residents from walking into other residents' rooms uninvited. After they failed to agree on a solution, the nurse manager instructed the staff members to take a break for lunch. The nursing manager was practicing what phase of creative decision making?
- Preparation
 - Incubation
 - Illumination
 - Verification

ANS: B

Repetition of the same thoughts with no new ideas or interpretations is a sign of fatigue and indicates that it is a good time to start the incubation period. Switching one's attention provides a necessary respite.

REF: 72

14. A nurse manager asks the staff members, “What causes low morale?” This is an example of which of the following?
- Meditation
 - Keeping an ideas diary
 - Reverse brainstorming
 - Brainstorming

ANS: C

Reverse brainstorming or negative brainstorming can reverse the problem or challenge it by asking what causes the problem instead of how to prevent it.

REF: 74

15. The nurse manager at a nursing home wanted to use creative thinking to solve the problem of residents’ borrowing each other’s cigarettes without permission. First, the nurse manager called two licensed staff members into her office to discuss the problem. Next, she called in the nursing assistant to join the group. Finally, she called in the social worker to join the group. The nurse manager employed which technique to solve the problem?
- Ladder of abstraction
 - Think tanks
 - Stepladder technique
 - Delphi technique

ANS: C

The stepladder technique structures the entry of group members into the group to ensure that each member contributes to the decision-making process.

REF: 74-75

16. After a brainstorming session on how to implement a new staffing policy, the nurse manager decided to have the staff rank the suggestions in order of most preferred solution after considering whether each suggestion is practical, cost effective, efficient, and effective. Next, the staff prioritized the list, eliminated items, and added others. This is a form of:
- Visual identification of relationships
 - Checklist method
 - Modeling
 - Self-interrogation checklist

ANS: B

The checklist method is used to assemble items on a checklist, sort them, prioritize them, eliminate items, and add others.

REF: 76

17. A staff nurse ridiculed another staff nurse’s draft of the designs for new signs that were to be placed on the unit. The staff nurse who was ridiculing was demonstrating:
- Objectivity
 - Ability to find problems
 - Negative attitude

d. Tolerance for complexity

ANS: C

Negative attitudes, self-censorship, inflexibility, lack of confidence, misconceptions, lack of effort, habits, conformity, and reliance on authority all block creativity.

REF: 80

18. A hospital planned to begin using a new computerized medication administration record. The hospital used an external consultant to act as a change agent and educate the staff. An advantage to using external consultants is that they:
- Will devote more time to the problem
 - Are less costly
 - Have limited backgrounds
 - Bring new ideas and different perspectives to the situation

ANS: D

External consultants have more diverse backgrounds, bring new ideas and a different perspective to the situation, and are independent of the power structure; consequently, they have more power.

REF: 81

19. The nurse manager put up a rotation schedule to ensure that the holidays would be covered. The manager scheduled a newly hired staff nurse for the same time slot as a nurse who had seniority. The nurse manager was demonstrating what ethical principle?
- Autonomy
 - Fidelity
 - Justice
 - Utility

ANS: C

Justice means treating people equally and fairly. Equals should be treated equally, and unequals should be treated according to their differences. Allocation of holidays, vacation time, and days off to attend conferences should reflect performance as well as who is next on the list.

REF: 82

20. A staff nurse witnessed a hospital staff member who was finishing up the night shift stuff her pockets with extra rolls of tape. The hospital has a policy about unauthorized removal of supplies from the unit. The staff nurse reported the incident to the nurse manager. Instead of reporting the hospital staff member to the house supervisor, the nurse manager counseled the staff member in the nurse manager's office. This is an example of what type of ethical position?
- Utilitarianism
 - Formalism
 - Egoism
 - Rule ethics

ANS: D

Rule ethics expects obedience to laws, rules, professional codes, and authority.

REF: 83

21. The client's bed linens were damp from excessive perspiration. The staff member helped the client take a bed bath, even though the client had requested that she not be bathed. The nurse's action exemplified what model of ethical relationship?
- Priestly model
 - Engineering model
 - Contractual model
 - Collegial model

ANS: A

In the priestly model, the nurse is paternalistic and makes decisions without considering others' values or seeking others' input. Autocratic leadership may follow the priestly model.

REF: 83

22. Staff nurses use individual justice to care for individual clients, but nursing leaders use what type of justice?
- Formal justice
 - Distributive justice
 - Resourceful justice
 - Merit justice

ANS: B

Nursing leaders need to use distributive justice to address the professional responsibility for the collective practice of nursing on the unit, in the facility, and throughout the profession and all of health care.

REF: 82-83

23. For nurses to function in a multicultural environment, they must be aware of global ethics. Which of the following is an example of global ethics?
- An African-American woman wants a midwife to deliver her baby.
 - The nurse treats the clients on the unit impartially.
 - Nurses and clients work interdependently to plan care.
 - Clients depend on the nurses for all of their needs.

ANS: C

The principles of global ethics are controversial but may include global justice through international laws, social responsibility, environmental stewardship, interdependence, responsibility for the whole, and reverence for place.

REF: 85

24. The nurse manager formed a task force of orthopedic staff nurses to develop cost-saving standard practices for the care of clients undergoing total hip replacement. The staff nurses used which type of decision-making model to reduce costs for clients undergoing total hip replacement?

- a. Program Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT)
- b. Gantt chart
- c. Decision trees
- d. Critical path method (CPM)

ANS: D

In CPM a single time estimate, the longest possible time, is calculated for each activity. Critical paths have been used to indicate standard practices for care.

REF: 91

25. Computers facilitate complex decision making. When nurses use computers to track clients who were discharged based on diagnosis-related groups (DRGs), they are using which type of computer system?
- a. Clinical system
 - b. Dietary system
 - c. Management information system
 - d. Educational system

ANS: C

Management information systems can be used for client acuity tracking, calculation of client care requirements, client classification, inventory control, supplies and material management, staff scheduling, documentation of policy and procedure changes and announcements, determination of client charges, generation of budget information and budget management, record location and tracking, maintenance of personnel records, and generation and storage of statistical reports, administrative reports, and memos.

REF: 93