**Communication Tips for Leaders**

***“We must be as competent in communication as we are in our clinical skills” AACN***

# Daily Reflections

* Have I been avoiding a difficult conversation with a coworker or supervisor? Could this be an opportunity to learn a new skill?
* What one action can I take immediately to better support my co-workers?

# Tips

* Never be a silent witness to negative interactions between health professionals – *no reaction = permission for the current norm to continue. Walk away or speak up. Always defend absent team members. Make the invisible visible with “I noticed that…”*
* Compliment a co-worker every day! Remember small gestures are valued.
* Begin difficult conversations by saying**, *“Will you stay in conversation with me until we both feel alright?”***

**D-E-S-C Model**

**Describe – Explain – State Needs – Consequence - ?**

**Describe** the behavior (facts first, be descriptive, use “I”) **D**: When…

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Explain** the impact of the behavior (story second)    *Pause, Pause, Pause 5 seconds* | **E**: I feel…I was… |
| **State** the desired outcome (check for understanding) | **S**: Therefore, I want |
| **Consequences** will help get your peer’s attention | **C**: So that… |
| OR – end with a question that asks for what you need. “Would you be willing to...Can you do that?” |  |

Use the model to practice. Write out a script and role play with a co-worker or friend. Ask for their reaction to your words, your tone of voice and to the message sent by your body language. Ask them if you are “congruent?” Does your verbal message match with your words? People will always pick up on your emotion. Assertive communication is a skill that takes practice.

*EXAMPLE*

How do I approach experienced staff when she makes it obvious in many ways that she has no time patience or empathy for my concerns?

**Describe**

*I noticed today you felt bothered by my questions and I felt in the way*

**Explain the impact**

*I understand your workload is heavy, but when you ignore me, I feel unimportant and get the message that you wish I wasn’t here*

**State what you need**

*I need to find some way or some time to connect with you. I really want to learn and be the best nurse I can be.*

**Consequence if nothing changes**

*If you continue to ignore me, I can’t learn and I won’t stay.*

***Practice! Practice!***

***Describe***

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***Explain the Impact***

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***State what you need***

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***Consequence if nothing changes***

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