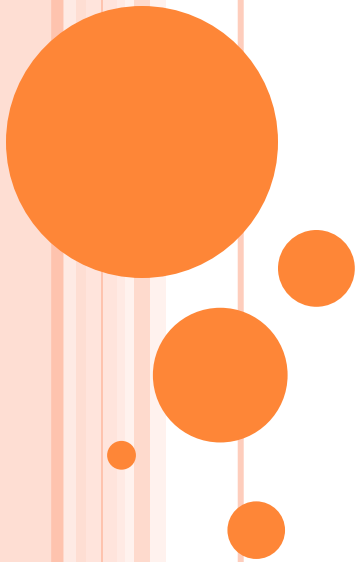


# CHAPTER 18:

## UNDERSTANDING USE OF POWER



# WHAT IS POWER?

- Power in health care exists in several forms
  - Power to buy and sell smaller agencies
  - Power to alter work schedules, control raises
  - Power to give or not to give safe and effective nursing care
- Power is the ability to influence others through the use of energy and strength
- Power must be developed as a skill
- A chain of command can be referred to as a “chain of power”



# TYPES OF POWER

## ○ Expert

- Based on expert knowledge
- Strongest power base for nursing
- Positive, non-aggressive way to have power

## ○ Reward

- Person with this type of power has the ability to give reward to others
- Can be used to manipulate others
- Should use the rewards fairly to motivate

## ○ Coercion

- Manager has reward power and uses it to intentionally hurt and punish others



# TYPES OF POWER (CONT'D)

## ○ Informational

- Person with the knowledge has power

## ○ Legitimate

- Person has earned the power that actually accompanies a job and its responsibilities
- Based on knowledge, hard work, high level, and title
- Based on the authority someone higher in the chain of command has given to a nurse

## ○ Referent

- Develops from feelings of admiration and respect for another person



# POWER AND THE ROLE OF LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES

- You should think about what type of power you want as a future LPN
- Early planning can assist in your role



# POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE USES OF POWER

- Positive and negative uses of power
  - Negative
    - Promote one's own agenda with no regard for the larger group
    - Power struggles: when two people want opposite outcomes and refuse to cooperate
  - Positive
    - Using knowledge of healing to affect another's life positively
    - Caring and professional application of management theory
    - Power is positive when used to promote and influence the greater good



# EMPOWERMENT

- Self-empowerment
  - Manager must understand the importance of self-empowerment and the ability to support self-empowerment in others
  - Self-empowerment ladder
    - Self-confidence: comes from within self and contributions from external world
    - Ability to control life situations: avoid being a victim of situations or people
    - Attitude change: negative self-talk stops
    - Focus on others' strengths and not their weaknesses



# EMPOWERMENT (CONT'D)

- Self-empowerment ladder
  - Be a risk taker
  - Be creative
  - Resolve conflict
  - Show initiative
  - Ultimately become empowered





# EMPOWERMENT (CONT'D)

- Supporting self-empowerment in others
  - Important to assist others in developing self-empowerment as well
  - Important part of a nurse manager's job
  - Strong caring behavior



# POWERLESSNESS

- Page 281, box 18.5
- Powerlessness: sense of helplessness
- Personal powerlessness: brings about feelings of frustration, decreases energy, and defeats spirit
  - Being threatened by the competence of others
  - Accepting a job without sufficient training or experience
  - Depending on others to meet own needs
  - Transferring feelings of inferiority to others while demanding perfection from subordinates
  - “Nitpicking” over small things



# POWERLESSNESS (CONT'D)

- Personal powerlessness
  - Wanting to keep things predictable
  - Being trapped by roles and stereotypes
  - Devaluing the group process
  - Protecting one's own turf
  - Blaming others to protect self
  - Taking all the responsibility
  - Resisting change

