

Using Branching Scenario Simulations with Graduate Nursing Learners to Support Front-line Nurse Leader Competency Development

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Learning Objectives

1. Apply branching scenario simulation concepts to leadership competency development.
2. Identify leadership skills and competencies which could be enhanced with branching scenarios.
3. Formulate a strategy for use of branching scenario simulations in the learner's own practice.



Disclaimers & Conflicts of Interest

- No employment relationship with a commercial interest.
- No leadership position with a commercial interest.
- No research funding from a commercial interest.
- No consultant or advisory position.
- No commercial interest speaker's bureau.
- No stock or investment holdings.
- No other compensation.



Background

- AONL competencies for nurse leaders
- Nursing Leadership program uses AONL Nurse Manager competencies
- Actively incorporating simulation activities into curriculum
- COVID-19
 - Quickly implement new & innovative strategies to deliver course content
 - Maintain student engagement





Simulation

(Aebbersold, 2016)

Simulation

- Incorporated to provide learners safe environment to practice high-risk &/or high acuity skills (Welch et al., 2019)
- Focused on development of cognitive, behavioral, & technical skills (Brown & Rode, 2018)
- Published application to leadership skill development remains limited (Cole et al., 2021)

Branching Scenario Simulation

- 1 Guide learner through multiple steps of decision making
- 2 Correct & incorrect options
- 3 Allow student to examine consequences
- 4 Build & hone leadership skills

Hughes, 2018; Masha'al & Rabada, 2020

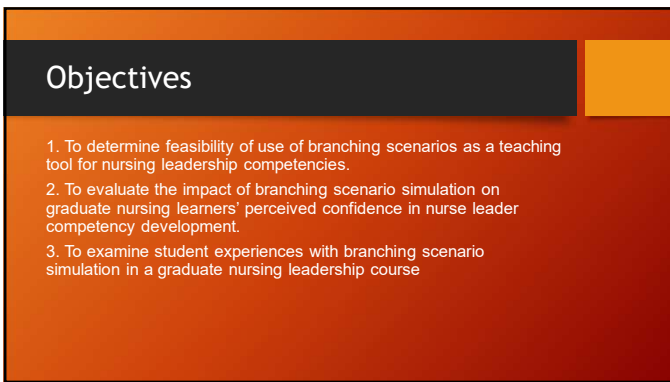
Aim & Objectives



Aim

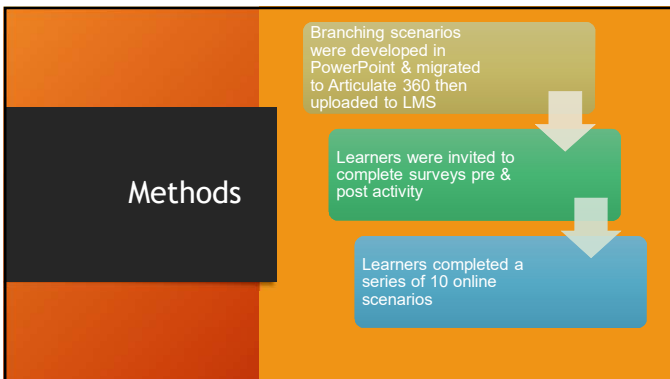
Evaluate effectiveness of use of branching scenario simulations to increase learner confidence related to AONL NM competencies

- Human resources leadership skills
- Relationship management & influencing behaviors



Objectives

1. To determine feasibility of use of branching scenarios as a teaching tool for nursing leadership competencies.
2. To evaluate the impact of branching scenario simulation on graduate nursing learners' perceived confidence in nurse leader competency development.
3. To examine student experiences with branching scenario simulation in a graduate nursing leadership course



Methods

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graph TD; A[Branching scenarios were developed in PowerPoint & migrated to Articulate 360 then uploaded to LMS] --> B[Learners were invited to complete surveys pre & post activity]; B --> C[Learners completed a series of 10 online scenarios];
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Branching Scenarios

- Developed based on scenarios in textbook & from academic partners
- Introduction presented to set stage
- Had 3 choice options for each scenario
- Had at least 2 levels of decision-making

McConnell, D. (2018).

Sample Scenario

Scenario 1

Get Started!

Scenario Introduction



You, Nurse Manager

Welcome!

Congratulations! You just got hired as the nurse manager on a medical unit. Two weeks into your new role, you notice an aide named Sam Clark is emerging as a problem employee. Multiple staff members have approached you about Sam not doing her share of the work. When you take the time to observe Sam for yourself, you find she is frequently idle and will only do exactly what she is supposed to do at the minimally acceptable level, and then do nothing until specifically assigned to another task. You pull Sam's file inherited from the previous manager, Karen, and find that Sam was hired about four months ago, this being a month before the end of the 90-day probationary period—but the file is lacking both a probationary review and an orientation checklist.

Sam Clark, Patient Care Tech



Question One



You have a meeting to talk with Sam about his performance, in which he validates that he never had a 90-day probationary review. When you ask if he has a copy of his orientation checklist, Sam reports he never really had an orientation—he just followed another aide around for a day and that person left a week after he arrived. Sam asks, "Am I in some kind of trouble? I work hard and pull my weight, and Karen always told me I was doing fine." What do you say to Sam?

"I am concerned that you weren't given a proper orientation or documented review of your performance. This is hospital policy and frankly doing you a disservice if we didn't try to work something out to get it done. I have noticed some issues with your performance mainly that I don't see proactivity with tasks, and I see you sitting down at your chair quite a bit. We work as a team here, it's the only way we can get the job done and ensure quality care."

"I have been watching you and have some concerns with your teamwork, staff have told me that you sit down a lot and don't ask them if they need help—don't worry you aren't in trouble, I just think it's because you weren't given the resources or help you need initially—Let's start fresh and get your trained up so that you can be your best!"

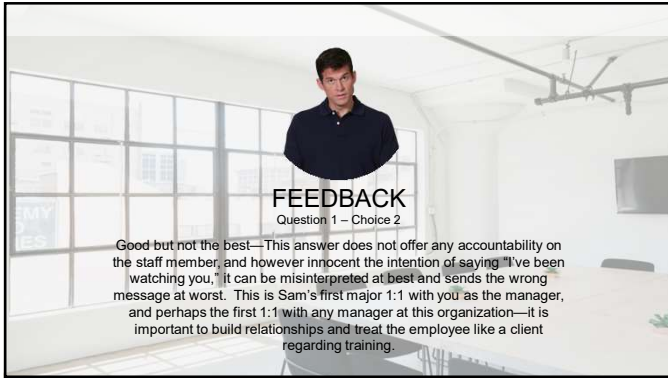
"Your performance is why we're talking—I've been noticing you waiting to be told what to do, and we need proactive team members. I am putting you together with Marcy and completely restarting your orientation so that we do it right this time. We will meet again after 1 month to finish your probationary review"





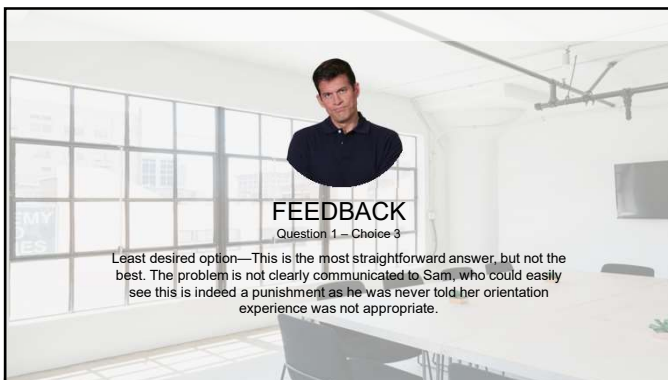
FEEDBACK
Question 1 - Choice 1

Great Job! This is the best answer. This helps the employee understand the importance of a proper orientation and models behaviors such as transparency, collaboration, and relationship building.



FEEDBACK
Question 1 – Choice 2

Good but not the best—This answer does not offer any accountability on the staff member, and however innocent the intention of saying “I’ve been watching you,” it can be misinterpreted at best and sends the wrong message at worst. This is Sam’s first major 1:1 with you as the manager, and perhaps the first 1:1 with any manager at this organization—it is important to build relationships and treat the employee like a client regarding training.



FEEDBACK
Question 1 – Choice 3

Least desired option—This is the most straightforward answer, but not the best. The problem is not clearly communicated to Sam, who could easily see this is indeed a punishment as he was never told her orientation experience was not appropriate.


Question Two

You decide to loop in the unit education coordinator Marsha to assist you with Sam’s re-orientation, to ensure oversight of the process (e.g. have the unit education coordinator assign a back-up coach, monitor progress weekly, etc.). Sam reluctantly finishes the orientation and you notice he is doing much better at being proactive with asking staff if they need assistance, however, he has not improved at being idle and is often seen sitting at the same computer station frequently. You even had a patient complaint about Sam from a patient experience letter with the patient stating they felt like Sam didn’t really want to help them. Before you know it, you meet again to complete the 30-day “probationary” review. Sam says, “I’m not sure how much I really needed this meeting but I’m happy I got a little more time to orient with Marsha and my coach Grace. They showed me some things I didn’t even know I was supposed to be doing. I hope we can put this all to rest, I’m ready to just come to work to do my job.”
What do you say to Sam?

“I’m really glad you were able to stick with it while we worked this out. I can see you are working hard on your teamwork, and you have shown enough improvement that I can document that you have “passed” your probationary review. I have some lingering concerns about idle time and have noticed tasks on your list have not been completed on your shift. I want all staff to be able to be flexible and adaptable to new situations. What are your thoughts on this?”

“I think you did a wonderful job re-orienting and I thank you for your patience while we worked this out. I have seen improvement in you and I am glad to hear you got something out of it. I want to continue to check in with you, informally, of course, because I want to hear how I’m doing as a manager meeting your needs and to let you know how you’re doing as well.”

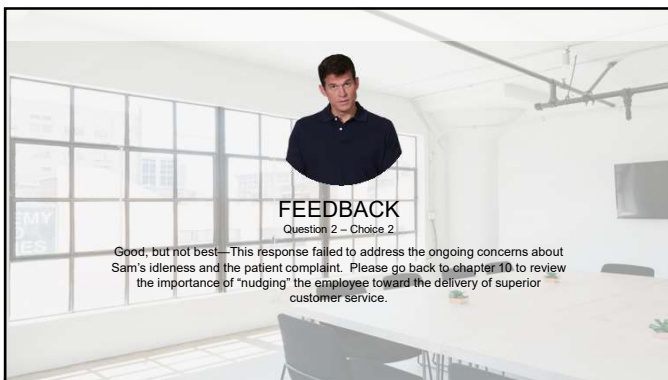
“Your performance has improved enough that I will sign you off as passing your probationary period but frankly I haven’t seen the level of improvement I was hoping for. I got a patient complaint the other day and I’m really disappointed—they said they felt like you didn’t want to help them. Can you explain?”





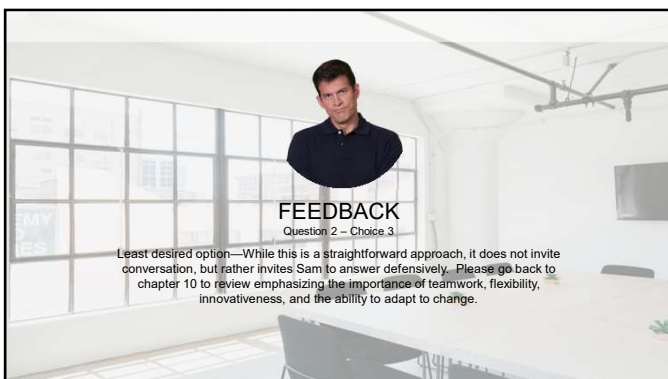
FEEDBACK
Question 2 – Choice 1

Great Job! This is the best answer. You have ensured the probationary paperwork is correct and have successfully re-oriented Sam. You were able to provide feedback in a way that respectful and begin the conversation as a discussion by inviting Sam's thoughts.



FEEDBACK
Question 2 – Choice 2

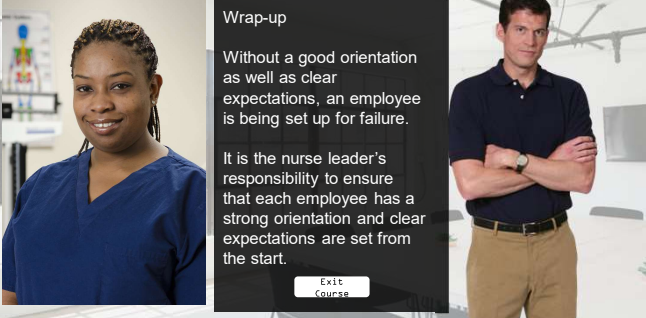
Good, but not best—This response failed to address the ongoing concerns about Sam's idleness and the patient complaint. Please go back to chapter 10 to review the importance of "nudging" the employee toward the delivery of superior customer service.



FEEDBACK
Question 2 – Choice 3

Least desired option—While this is a straightforward approach, it does not invite conversation, but rather invites Sam to answer defensively. Please go back to chapter 10 to review emphasizing the importance of teamwork, flexibility, innovativeness, and the ability to adapt to change.

Scenario Introduction



Wrap-up

Without a good orientation as well as clear expectations, an employee is being set up for failure.

It is the nurse leader's responsibility to ensure that each employee has a strong orientation and clear expectations are set from the start.

Exit Course

Surveys

- Confidence assessment survey
 - Perceived confidence using a 5-point Likert scale
 - 1 (very little confidence) to 5 (very high confidence)
 - Questions based on AONL Nurse Manager Competencies (AONL, 2015)
 - Human resources leadership skills
 - Relationship management
 - Influencing behaviors
- Student's Satisfaction & Self-Confidence in Learning Scale (NLN, 2005)
- Qualitative questions on post-survey regarding usefulness

Confidence Assessment Survey

How confident were you in:

- Managing human resources within the scope of labor law?
- Applying recruitment techniques?
- Individual interview techniques?
- Selecting and hiring qualified applicants?
- Developing, overseeing, and evaluating the effectiveness of orientation?
- Conducting staff evaluations?
- Assisting staff with goal-setting and implementing continual performance development of staff?
- Initiating corrective action and/or terminating staff?
- Assessing staff satisfaction?
- Developing and implementing strategies to address satisfaction issues?
- Promoting staff retention?
- Developing methods to reward and recognize staff?
- Capitalizing on generational diversity and differences to foster highly effective work groups?

Results

- AONL NM Competencies
 - Overall confidence increased 38%
- NLN Student Satisfaction & Self-Confidence in Learning
 - Student satisfaction: 3.48 out of 5
 - Self-confidence: 3.4 out of 5
- Qualitative measures
 - Comments favorable
 - Helped build confidence in safe, non-critical environment

Practice Application

Scenarios as part of nurse leader onboarding

Professional development

Advanced scenarios

Development of scenarios for other AONL NM competencies.


Summary

- Branching scenario simulation effective in academic setting
- Engage the learner in critical thinking & decision making
- Could be expanded to other settings
- Variety of scenarios could be used
- Opportunity for development for other competencies

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Questions Comments Discussion



Thank You

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