# Enhancing accountable communication through unfolding simulations

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## Keywords

Leadership, Communication, teamwork, accountability

## Abstract

**Research Question:** Communication is a vital competency for nurses (American Association of Critical Care Nurses [AACN], 2024). Effective communication is associated with patient safety, enhanced teamwork, and improved health outcomes (AACN, 2024). Methods to develop confidence and skills in having accountable conversations have focused on knowledge building and role play. These approaches are limited in creating attitude and behavior changes.

**Innovation/Goal:** Using the AACN Healthy Work Environment Standards as a framework, two unfolding simulations were designed for students to engage in accountable conversations encountered in clinical practice. Scenarios focused on self-advocacy and addressing bias, particularly within hierarchical team dynamics.

**Methods:** Theory, clinical, and simulation faculty collaborated to create high-fidelity scenarios using standardized patients, that aligned with Healthcare Simulation Standards of Best Practice Simulation Design and reflected challenges faced by nursing students (Watts et al., 2021). Pre-briefing and debriefing guides focused on leadership and communication skills rather than traditional psychomotor skills.

**Impact/Effectiveness:** Piloted with accelerated baccalaureate students in their final term, simulations were integrated into senior nursing courses for both traditional and accelerated students (n=66). Initial feedback was collected using the Simulation Design Scale-Student Version and open-ended questions (National League for Nursing, 2005).

**Findings/Results:** Students found the simulations effective and addressed a key gap in their education. The high-fidelity simulations allowed for dynamic interactions, preparing for real-world situations in which one can feel uncomfortable speaking up, that enhance teamwork, enculturate respect and promote patient safety.

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:** The inclusion of leadership-based simulations diversifies the scope that simulation can offer for undergraduate nurses. This setting gives the learner opportunities where they can practice equitable and inclusive care to diverse populations. Pursuing opportunities to integrate situations that aim to improve communication and expose students to realistic situations that occur as a student nurse and post licensure nurse (Alrimawi et al., 2024). These simulations include differing communication styles and in-depth analysis of communication dynamics to create equitable care across nursing as a whole.

**Possible Applications:** Simulation-based learning offers a transformative approach to nursing education, empowering students to communicate effectively and foster a culture of safety and accountability as they transition to practice. This simulation design can be applied to a variety of disciplines and professionals in the healthcare environment with simple modifications to the scenario script.

## Learning Objectives

1. Discuss and practice own leadership style within a given workplace culture dynamic (Driver, Analytical, Amiable, Expressive). CO 3, 5, 6
2. Discuss and practice the responsibility of the learner in being an advocate for personal and professional learning needs, impact on teamwork and promoting inclusive patient/family-centered care. CO 6
3. Practice conflict resolution skills by applying evidenced-based communication tools to guide professional and accountable conversations and discuss variables such as setting and context.CO 5 (OCNE 4, 5, 8)
4. Reflect and identify ways in which you will apply principles from the simulation into your own practice using the clinical judgement model CO 6 (OCNE 3, 4, 5)

## References

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