PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY IN NURSING:
SCIENCE, STRATEGY AND CALL TO ACTION

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 17 & TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2018

Proceedings of the Professional Identity in Nursing: Science, Strategy and Call to Action Think Tank

September 17 and 18, 2018

Sponsored by
University of Kansas School of Nursing

Overview

50 leaders from the US and Canada representing education, regulation and practice gathered to understand and operationalize professional identity and professional identity formation for nursing, to aid education, regulation and practice in communicating through norms, values and characteristics of the profession—*what it means to think, act and feel like a nurse.*

Participants Representing

- Schools of nursing
- Large, medium and critical access hospitals and health care systems
- Statewide nursing leadership organizations
- National nursing leadership organizations
- Regulators
- Students

Planning Committee

- Mary Beth Warren, MSN, RN, Director, Kansas Area Health Education Centers
- Elizabeth Young, MSN, RN, Clinical Assistant Professor, University of Kansas School of Nursing
- Terry Siek, MSN, RN, Chief Nurse, University of Kansas Health System, Hayes Campus
- Nelda Godfrey, PhD, ACNS-BC. FAAN. Professor and Associate Dean, University of Kansas School of Nursing

Facilitators

- **Dr. Susan Luparell** is an Associate Professor at Montana State University where she has been involved in both the baccalaureate and graduate nursing programs since 1997. A Fellow in the NLN Academy of Nursing Education, Susan is a nationally recognized speaker and author on incivility in nursing education and has authored chapters on this topic in several leading nursing education textbooks. Her scholarship focuses on the ethical implications of incivility, including how it affects others and how it can be averted in academic as well as in clinical settings. Additionally, Susan is a seasoned instructor who has received multiple commendations for excellence in teaching. Prior to moving into academia, she practiced as Clinical Nurse Specialist in the acute care setting.

- **Dr. Cynthia Clark** is Strategic Nursing Advisor for ATI Nursing Education, Professor Emeritus at Boise State University, and the Founder of Civility Matters®. She serves as a fellow in the American Academy of Nursing and the National League for Nursing Academy of Nursing Education. and co-chaired the American Nurses Association Professional Panel on Incivility, Bullying, and Workplace Violence. Her theory-driven interventions, empirical measurements, theoretical models, and reflective assessments provide "best practices" to foster civility and healthy work environments around the globe. Her award-winning book, Creating and Sustaining Civility in Nursing Education," received 1st place honors as the 2013 AJN Book of the Year—the 2nd edition is now available and is a must-read for all educators and health care professionals. She and her husband are the proud parents of 3 successful young adults and the blissful owners of a motley crew of rescue pets.

Think Tank Specific Aim

To develop an action plan for naming and shaping professional identity formation in nursing practice, education and policy that includes competencies, essential elements, and exemplars to foster professional identity formation in nursing based on the best available evidence. The overall goal is to use research and knowledge re: professional identity formation to transform nursing practice and health care.

Think Tank Learning Outcomes

1) Apply knowledge from research associated with professional identity in the health professions
2) Use real-life experiences in practice, educational, and regulatory settings to identify and prioritize competencies, essential elements, and exemplars to foster professional identity formation in nursing

The Think Tank Agenda

Create an action plan for naming and shaping professional identity formation in nursing practice, education and policy that includes competencies, essential elements, and exemplars to foster professional identity formation in nursing based on the best available evidence.

In September 2018 the University of Kansas School of Nursing invited a diverse group of stakeholders to meet, think and plan together about forming and fostering professional identity. The fourth of four recommendations from the 2010 Carnegie Foundation report on Preparing the Professions called for nursing to *shift from an emphasis on socialization and role-taking to an emphasis of formation* (Benner, et al., 2010). Of the four recommendations, this is the most underdeveloped nearly 10 years later. It is time for nursing to hear the conversation in other disciplines about this topic and adopt language and structures to form and foster professional identity in regulatory, educational and practice environments for the good of the discipline.

Gathering in Kansas City for a day and a half think tank, 50 invited guests

- Participated in pre-think tank reading selections
- With much discussion and consensus-building, identified four domains of importance in the professional identity formation conversation
- Identified key elements for each of these four domains: values and ethics, leadership, knowledge, and self-awareness
- Presented draft competencies by which to measure professional identity and professional identity formation in each of these domains
- Participated in brainstorming next steps and possible action steps in the upcoming months

The Issue

Professional knowledge, skills and attitudes are desired by all leaders from professional nurses in every setting. However, behaviors associated with professionalism, or more accurately, forming and fostering professional identity, have not been identified in a clear and compelling way, to give nursing a common language and understanding of what is desired and expected.

Other disciplines within and outside of health care are recognizing the importance of framing professional identity. Clear language can help new and incumbent professionals better understand their chosen professions.

This think tank is the first step in clarifying and communicating language for leaders in education, regulation and practice to use and build on to further define and enhance how nursing is demonstrated and communicated to others.
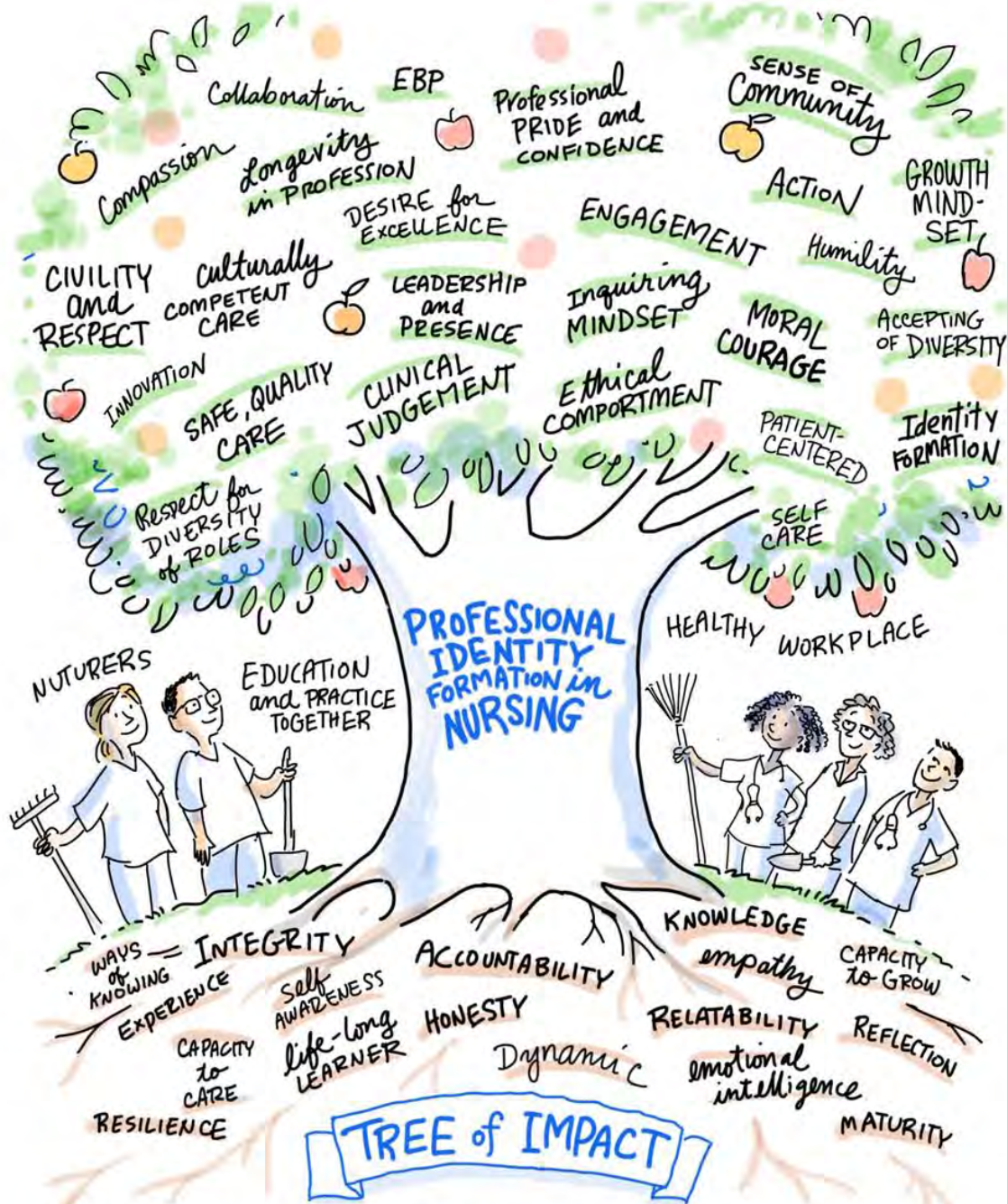
The Norms

These norms were determined and embraced before the think tank discussion began:

- Everyone has critical voice that is valued and heard
- We all have a common vision
- Mutual vulnerability
- Listening for understanding first
- OK to express divergent thought
- Avoid disrupting
- Energized when we leave
- Respectfully challenge and engage
- Help make others feel validated
- Work toward common goal
- Shedding arrogance at the door
- Embrace roving leadership
- Lift each other up and inspire others to do well
- Embrace team attitude versus self
- Value relationship—MRI Most respectful interpretation
- Open honest communication
- Be positive

The Action Plan

Discovery

To begin developing language used in forming and fostering professional identity in nursing, participants raised questions and curiosities about professional identity formation (Appendix A). Each small group of six participants then examined one of the questions to ponder, applying what was known about professional identity to the described situation (Appendix B). Then, as a large group, the participants co-created the Tree of Impact (below), a visual representation of professional identity formation in nursing.

TREE of IMPACT

Collaboration • EBP • Professional PRIDE and CONFIDENCE • SENSE OF Community • Compassion • Longevity in PROFESSION • ACTION • GROWTH MINDSET • DESIRE for EXCELLENCE • ENGAGEMENT • Humility • CIVILITY and RESPECT • Culturally COMPETENT CARE • LEADERSHIP and PRESENCE • Inquiring MINDSET • MORAL COURAGE • ACCEPTING OF DIVERSITY • Innovation • SAFE, QUALITY CARE • CLINICAL JUDGEMENT • Ethical COMPORTMENT • PATIENT-CENTERED • Identity FORMATION • Respect for DIVERSITY of ROLES • SELF CARE

PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY FORMATION in NURSING

NUTURERS • EDUCATION and PRACTICE TOGETHER • HEALTHY WORKPLACE

WAYS of KNOWING = INTEGRITY • KNOWLEDGE • CAPACITY to GROW • EXPERIENCE • Self AWARENESS • ACCOUNTABILITY • empathy • CAPACITY to CARE • life-long LEARNER • HONESTY • RELATABILITY • REFLECTION • Dynamic • emotional intelligence • RESILIENCE • MATURITY

SOCIAL SUPPORT • PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY • INCLUSIVE, OPEN, PATIENT ENVIRONMENT • INNOVATIVENESS/"A CULTURE OF CLIMATE"

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Creation

Participants then used the Tree of Impact as a touchstone for the next phase of work: Identifying domains of forming and fostering professional identity in nursing.

The results that emerged from thoughtful small group and large group discussions, and that were validated through the end-of-first-day written evaluations, yielded the following four domains:

Values and Ethics
Knowledge
Leadership
Self-Awareness

Competency Development

The groups then used these guidelines to develop accompanying competencies:

Competence is:

- An expected level of performance that integrates knowledge, skills, abilities, and judgment (ANA, 2013)

- The capability to use and apply a set of related knowledge, skills, and abilities required to successfully perform "critical functions" or tasks in a defined work setting. (UT Health School of Public Health)

A Competency Statement:

- Describes what the performance of a competent person looks like
- Captures the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for competent performance

Guidelines for Competency Statements:

- Present tense action verb
- Measurable or observable
- Simple and clear
- Each statement should address a single, readily identifiable characteristic

Think Tank Results and Next Steps

As a group the participants identified four domains—values and ethics, self-awareness, leadership and knowledge—along with accompanying key elements and competencies.

While this process was arduous, participants reported they saw the entire effort as a valuable first step to operationalizing professional identity formation in education, regulation and practice. Complete results appear below.

Values and Ethics

Definitions:

Values: a sense of what is important in a person's life, organization, and profession.

Ethics: moral principles or set of rules that govern behavior or conduct of a person, group or culture. Ethics and values together lay the foundation for sustainability

Key Elements:

Moral courage

Ethical awareness and Decision Making

Honesty

Integrity

Empathy

Diversity and inclusion

Person Centered

Civility and Respect

Humility

Caring and compassion

Loyalty

Adaptability

Flexibility

Competencies:

1.   Practices with integrity, respecting the dignity of all people.

2.   Applies ethical reasoning and moral courage to act toward resolving ethical issues, problems.

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Knowledge

Definition: Awareness, analysis, and application of information derived from multiple disciplines, experiences, critical reflection and scientific discovery.

Key Elements:

Inquiring mindset

Innovation

Clinical judgment

Reflection

Commitment to develop expertise and mastery

Competencies:

1. Develop one's professional practice utilizing knowledge gained through inquiry and reflection.

2. Utilize knowledge and patient preferences to promote human flourishing and mitigate distress.

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Leadership
Definition
The ability of nurses at all levels to motivate self and others to transform vision into reality.

Key elements:
Caring/compassion
Advocacy
Moral and ethical courage
Emotional intelligence
Communication
Respect and civility
Commitment to excellence
Collaboration
Vision
Innovation
Presence

Competencies:
1. Recognizes contextual factors in situations and develops clear vision for action.
2. Acts to advocate for the right decision in the face of controversy or interpersonal and personal risk.
3. Exhibits behaviors that demonstrate a commitment to enhance quality professional nursing practice.

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Self-Awareness
Definition: The recognition of alignment of self and profession that forms the functional balance as a nurse.

Key Elements:
Self attributes: self-care, self-management, self-reflection, resilience
Honesty
Compassion
Develops over time
Promotes reflection
Integrity
Boundary recognition
Seeks professional affiliations
Builds on awareness of self as a person and as a member of the profession
Sees self as an instrument of healing

Competency:

1. Appraise one's alignment of self-awareness and professional awareness.

Values and Ethics

Definition: a set of core values and principles that govern conduct.

Key Elements:

Moral courage
Ethical awareness
Honesty and integrity
Empathy
Engaged
Embrace diversity and inclusion
Person Centered
Civility and Respect
Humility
Caring and compassion
Loyalty

Competencies:

1) Practices with integrity, respecting the dignity of all persons
2) Applies ethical reasoning and moral courage to act toward resolving ethical issues, problems and dilemmas.

Self-Awareness

Definition: The recognition of alignment of self and profession that form the function balance as a nurse.

Key Elements:

Self attributes
Humility
Self-care
Honesty
Compassion
Develops over time
Integrity
Boundary recognition
Foundational across all humans
Build on awareness of self as what it means to be part of the profession;
All humans; this environment.

Competencies:

1) Demonstrates alignment between one's self-awareness and professional awareness.

Behaviors to demonstrate:

Selects professional affiliations
Self-management
Self-reflection
Inquiry
Curious learner
Sees self as instrument of healing
Boundaries and when to retreat/engage
Awareness of self as part of the profession

Leadership

Definition: The ability of nurses at all levels to motivate self and others to transform vision into reality.

Key Elements:

Caring/compassion
Advocacy
Moral and ethical courage
Emotional intelligence

Communication
Respect and civility
Critical thinking
Mentor/mentee

Commitment to excellence	Positivity
Professional pride	Passion
Humility	Vision
Collaboration	Innovation
Engagement	

Competencies:

1) Recognizes contextual factors in situations and develops clear vision for action.
2) Acts to advocate for the right decision in the face of controversy or interpersonal and personal risk.
3) Demonstrates a commitment to behaviors which enhance quality professional nursing practice.

Knowledge

Definition: Awareness, analysis and application of information derived from empirical sciences, experiences, critical reflection and scientific discovery.

Key Elements:

Lifelong learning
Inquiry mindset
(Ongoing search for new information driven by curiosity and motivation resulting in action)
Scientific discovery
(Utilize multiple methods of inquiry to discover nursing knowledge)

Clinical judgment (NCSBN definition)
Reflection
(Thinking back and about one's actions)
Desire for expertise and mastery

Competencies:

1) Develop one's professional practice utilizing knowledge gained through inquiry and reflection.
2) Utilize multiple methods of inquiry to discover and apply nursing knowledge to promote human flourishing.

Next Steps

Next steps are grouped into four areas:

1) Establish a steering committee to move the work forward
2) Take a second look at each of the domains, key elements and competencies
3) Explore opportunities for dissemination and continued conversation in the larger community
4) Explore research opportunities at local, state and national levels

Establish a steering committee

- a call for volunteers to serve on a steering committee and to chair identified interest groups will be sent 9-20-18. Deadline to respond: Oct 5, 2018. Additional volunteer interest groups will be vetted by the steering committee.

Take a second look at the domains, key elements and competencies

- All participants completed a silent review of the domains, key elements and competencies. A call for 1-2 members of each domain work group to review other participants' comments and revise as needed will follow the September 2018 think tank. Their work will be reported back to the larger group via email correspondence. Deadline date: November 15, 2018.
- The work completed November 15, 2018 will be shared with any nursing organization that requests, with the promise of proper attribution and citation. Any think tank participant can initiate such sharing. Deadline: ongoing.
- A second Professional Identity in Nursing conference is planned for September 2019. At that point the four domains, key elements and competencies will be reviewed for a second time by the group and changes made as needed. Deadline: October 1, 2019.

Explore opportunities for dissemination and continued conversation in the larger community

- Any participant or interested person can write to the work begun – and accomplished-- at the think tank. Dissemination is encouraged!
- If you wish any help in writing about professional identity in nursing or need resources, please contact Nelda Godfrey.

Explore research opportunities at local, state and national levels

- Any participant or interested person can explore research opportunities in education, regulation or practice, and can use materials and resources generated by this think tank. If you need help, please contact Nelda Godfrey.

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Think Tank Pre-Reading

Godfrey, N. & Crigger, N. (2017). Professional Identity. In Giddens, J. Concepts of Nursing Practice, 2nd edition. St. Louis: Elsevier Publishing. 379-386.

Cruess RL, Cruess SR, Boudreau JD, Snell L, Steinert Y. (June 2015). A schematic representation of the professional identity formation and socialization of medical students and residents: a guide for medical educators. Academic Medicine, 90 (6):718-25. doi: 10.1097/ACM.0000000000000700.

Valiga, T.M. (2014). Attending to affective domain learning: Essential to prepare the kind of graduates the public needs. Journal of Nursing Education, 53 (5), 247.

Appendix A

Points of Curiosity at the Beginning of the Think Tank

Participants jotted down one or more 'points of curiosity' from the reading, or from their own experiences, that piqued their interest or posed a question(s) for consideration/conversation during our Professional Identity in Nursing think tank.

- How does what motivates you--impact those around you?
- Why does that motivate you?
- What motivates you to do what you do?
- How to balance content expectations while adequately including role development?
- Consistent, reliable evaluation methods for use in pre-licensure education which support professional identity inclusion effectively
- Learning in the affective domain for broader use in the undergraduate environment especially in more content leaning course
- I believe we must be sensitive to the vulnerable state of students & new graduates who are undergoing formation of professional identity. Forming an identity is risky business.
- A further discussion of: the importance of integrity in nursing—the root of where it starts with me.
- In the form of a question—The references make it sound as though professional formation starts at the entry to nursing school. Are we really blank slates?
- Reaching rural communities to forward the message of nursing identity & forward movement
- Explain—care plans? They are old school? We have problem list in real world. To this day the students still spend hours on paper work that we do not use in the real world.
- How do you engage students to be curious & delve deeper into why & how?
- How can we utilize/teach professional identity formation across the levels of undergraduate & graduate nursing education in a way that makes sense?
- If you ask 1000 nurses "What is nursing?" you get 1000 different answers. Words matter. The ANA definition is too wordy & not meaningful. We can't talk about identity until we define nursing and have a visual!
- How do we notice and respond to opportunities to promote professional identity formation w/students, newly graduated nurses and nurses in practice?
- Professional Identity: Explore tactic to continue to form in experienced nurses
- In our profession, do some of the more seasoned members need to revisit this topic? i.e. How do we ensure that we as educators, leaders and regulators are practicing what we preach?
- Who gets to decide what the appropriate values & norms are that others should take on?
- How does the specific role a nurse performs impact his/her professional identity? (What transcends all types of nursing? What is unique to practice, education, business?)
- What is the definition of formation? This is an opportunity to change our mindset from one of a skills-based profession to a professional discipline.
- How does regulation need to change to support professional identity formation?

- How does the patient benefit from nurses with a stronger professional identity?
- How can I best inspire current nursing staff to think about nursing identity get involved in elevating our profession?
- Embedding nursing's "social contact" with Americans in our professional identity
- How to be brave enough to transform current education entry levels into practice
- How to truly make a national statement that the profession of nursing leaders must agree in tandem that change will be required
- The impact of advanced practice and specialization on nursing professional identity formation
- Roles in work environment or academic environment as content for professional identity formation & ongoing development
- We're learning more & more about the importance of recognition of great work (RN's feeling appreciated, thank for what they do).
- Can we incorporate this as part of a nurse's professional identity? RN's supporting each other, saying "thanks for being excellent, you inspire me! ---gets at the Quadruple Aim
- Helping students/graduates to identify/name role(s) in order to create identity
- How can practice & academia continue to come together to ensure professional identity strengthens?
- Clarity of the nursing professional identity as it relates to the work of the interprofessional team in guiding care of the patient
- I'd like to see what people think about how professional identify relates to nursing's ethics around social media. (I get the feeling that it's absent for many nurses on a day-to-day basis.)
- Civility across generations
- I'm sorry but I am having trouble applying, however, I would like to see public health discussed more.
- How do we get professionalism back into nursing?
- How does one's professional identity change over time & meld with one's overall identity?
- How can preceptors play a role in the development of professional identity? What does that training look like?
- Can you fast-track the development of professional identity? Get people thru the stages by using purposeful interventions?
- How to promote a collective sense of professional identity within a community that needs education about the role & scope of professional nursing?
- In order to develop a new identity, we have to give up an old identity?
- What are the professional identity competencies expected of nurses across the trajectory of their career? What are the expected behaviors for each competency or how do you assess the competency?
- How can we improve education of nurses and other healthcare professionals to help with identification and recognition of nurse's role in quality delivery of patient care? (Role identification & collaborative care so each discipline is recognized for their contributions)
- Due to the change to a generalist model of nursing education health systems are having to focus heavily on skill development & competency during the first 6 months of a new nurse's professional life. Does this slow their development or continued development of the professional identity?

- My thought about this topic is exploring how we can assist nurse/nurse educators to become self-authorized to lead as they embrace their professional identity.
- Developing a unified statement that captures the professional image of nursing.
- Professional identity taught in school is contradicted in observations in clinicals or seen in practice.

Appendix B

Questions to Ponder—Professional Identity in Nursing Think Tank

These questions were used in small group/table discussions to apply what participants know about professional identity formation:

1) It is thought that a positive professional identity leads to better patient care and patient outcomes, and to greater satisfaction for the professional nurse. Describe why you think that would be, and support with examples. Given what you know about professional identity formation, how would you communicate the importance of considering this perspective and incorporating it into hiring practices and new nurse employee orientation?

2) You are a nurse manager in a busy acute care setting. How could a rich understanding of identity formation help inform a discussion you need to have with a professional nursing employee who is underperforming?

3) We understand that professional identity is not just the characteristics that one lists to describe professionalism/professional behaviors—it is also how the person "acts, thinks, and feels like a nurse." How would you explain what 'thinking, acting and feeling like a nurse' means to someone new to your organization? How would you begin to think about assessing professional identity?

4) What aspects of an organizational culture could be teased out/identified to enhance the environment for professional identity formation. How could this become a reality for an organization?

5) Student learning experiences are critical in helping these students form a positive professional identity. What would be the hallmarks/positive indicators of such a learning environment? What could you do as a leader to enhance/guide such an approach to be 'real'?

6) How do you explain professional identity formation and the parts of your nursing program that reflect this—to a student who comes to your office and says, "I just need you to tell me what is on the test."?

7) How would you describe the values and characteristics that make up the 'sense of oneself' as a member the nursing discipline? What language would you use—in a practice setting? In a school setting?

8) You believe that forming and fostering professional identity is important in your acute care setting. Your manager has asked you to do a presentation on this for the hospital board. It's just 10", and you need to give some examples. What would you prepare?

9) You know that reflection and innovative teaching methods are key features of teaching professional identity. Write a question that you would use for pre-reading before the students begin a class session. You can use any of the three pre-reading articles that were sent to you before this think tank.

Appendix C

Words and Phrases from the Open Mic Session:

Cognitive learning
Conative learning
"Born this Way"
Innate abilities/skills
Clinical Expert and Patient Partner
That caring piece
We are nurses first.
Not all new grads are blank slates
Taking pride
Finding the story lost in the details
Wisdom and courage
What lens are we looking through as we complete this work?

Bias is built into the word novice
Science of authenticity
Doing the work of the nurse vs being the nurse
Multidimensional
Who should be a nurse?
Compassion/care
EHR contains no stories
Patient care benefits from strong professional identity
Borrow and leverage
Let's make sure that lay people can understand what we're talking about