



ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

Message from the President

Igniting Professionalism Through Listening

July/August 2014

Jacque Crosson, MSN, RN, CPAN
ASPAN President 2014-2015

What a fabulous week in Las Vegas! Over 2000 attendees were present to network, rekindle friendships, participate in learning opportunities and have a bit of fun on the side. I did not hear if anyone ever saw the ghost of Elvis, but he was certainly present at Component Night along with Frank Sinatra. My hope is that everyone went home only slightly exhausted but with a big smile and ready for San Antonio in 2015!

As we move forward as a specialty in perianesthesia nursing with all of the changes we are facing in healthcare, it is a great time to think about listening. Being present at any discussion means truly listening to what others have to say and responding respectfully and professionally. Dianne Schilling, contributor to Forbes Woman, listed "Ten Steps to Effective Listening:"¹

1. Face the speaker and maintain eye contact
2. Be attentive, but relaxed
3. Keep an open mind
4. Listen to the words and try to picture what the speaker is saying
5. Don't interrupt and don't impose your "solutions"
6. Wait for the speaker to pause to ask clarifying questions
7. Ask questions only to ensure understanding
8. Try to feel what the speaker is feeling
9. Give the speaker regular feedback
10. Pay attention to what isn't said—to nonverbal cues

This is not new information, as we have all heard this before in our professional lives. Whether presenting a lecture in school, addressing a committee of colleagues, or interacting with a peer, these rules for effective listening allow for a respectful exchange of information. When we are not engaged in listening, a true understanding of the message being delivered cannot be received. Can you imagine preparing a patient for surgery who is distracted (on his cellphone), disinterested and interrupting constantly? With increasing time constraints, perianesthesia nurses must still deliver their "message" while performing an assessment, getting consents signed, verifying advanced directives along with all of the other responsibilities necessary to get patients optimized for surgery. How much easier this can be when the steps of effective listening are followed?

Perianesthesia nurses all over the country are involved in leadership roles: component boards of directors, hospital committees, governmental affairs groups, managers, directors, teachers, mentors and staff nurses. Developing superior listening skills allows for full, collegial participation in these endeavors while enhancing abilities as an effective leader. Recognition for being a thoughtful, integrated and fully involved member of any team enhances your reputation as a professional. Understanding the value of effective listening is a positive trait that will bring recognition and advancement to a career.

What we do each day as perianesthesia nurses is critical to patient safety. Every encounter requires full engagement so that day-to-day distractions within the department do not deter our concentration or focus. Our patients deserve an attentive, clinically competent nurse with superior listening skills. This allows the patient to feel engaged and important and that their concerns really are being addressed. Our patients

continue to express genuine gratitude for the care and respect they receive from their perianesthesia nurses ***Igniting Professionalism Through Listening!***

REFERENCE

1. Schilling D. 10 Steps to Effective Listening. Available at:
<http://www.forbes.com/sites/womensmedia/2012/11/09/10-steps-to-effective-listening/2/>.
Accessed April 30, 2014