PROSPECTUS:

8 NURSES

By DOUGLAS C. LONG, RN

Dclong923@aol.com, 415-601-5544
www.douglaslong.com

WHY IS *8 NURSES* NEEDED?

What are the attributes of a great nurse? This question came to my mind in the early part of my career as an RN because our job demands high performance. Yet an RN's job requires several highly disparate qualities. Not only must the RN handle extreme stress, she must also have the smarts to make complex decisions, a caring attitude, physical fitness, and much more. It is no surprise the career is well paid (usually), yet there is a shortage of nurses. Few people can master all of the things needed to fulfill the role. But what exactly are these things an RN needs to master? That is why this book is needed.

In my early days working in the emergency department (ED), I noticed there are a number of key attributes that distinguish my fellow nurses. This list refers to those nurses working in acute care, such as the ED, intensive care, urgent care, and so on. This characterization of a nurse is not applicable to everyone simply because she is an RN. Instead of simply looking at these RNs and throwing adjectives at them, I asked myself, what makes them unique, and what prevented others that wanted to be nurses from getting to this point?

This book aims to answer the question, what exactly is an RN? This question is posed by RNs themselves, society, the health care industry, and our patients. What makes this person different from any other care providers? Many people are currently thinking of becoming an RN. They are looking for a career and wondering if this is right for them. RNs in the field are looking for ways to move ahead in their careers. Employers and organizations in the health care industry need to understand the ideal fit between a person and the nursing roles. Finally, and not the least important, are the nursing schools challenged to enculturate the next generation of nurses.

The books working title is *8 Nurses*, reflecting the fact that an RN must be eight different nurses at the same time. It will be approximately 100,000 works, making it a little more than a small pocket book but far short of a full sized textbook. It is expected to be soft cover, with a small amount of graphics and no photos. The text combines roughly equal amounts of background information, current debates, theory, and useful recommendations on how to apply these lessons to nursing practice.

OUTLINE

1. Caring

What is the current understand in nursing about the role of caring? Can we truly know when some cares, or if she is simply doing the job well and acting as if she cares? Does this matter? I challenge the idea that this is a requirement of a good nurse, noting that this is often a well-paid profession, and many are attracted to this field as a good job.

2. Fitness

Nursing is a highly physical job, and the primary reason nurses leave the profession early is disability and injuries. In addition to the pain and suffering, lost time at work is a multi-billion dollar concern. There is also a large industry devoted to lifting and moving

assistance. What can nurses do to protect themselves? What can hospitals do to protect their nurses? Why does lifting equipment often collect dust in the corner and not get used?

3. Smarts

How smart does a person need to be to get past the chemistry and other nursing prerequisites, survive nursing school and pass the NCLEX? Beyond that, what are they types of knowledge that a nurse needs? Note the later chapters in communication that call upon special types of knowing when dealing with other people.

4. Drugs

Another major reason nurses need to leave this career is the mishandling of controlled substances. Nursing is one of the jobs in which large amounts of controlled substances are at her disposal. Substance abuse is widespread throughout our society. Can an RN with substance abuse issues work in this field? What kind of support does that nurse get from the employer? How can hospitals create systems to protect everyone involved?

5. Discretion

This topic includes patient privacy, confidentiality, and HIPAA. Nurses are required to collect, assess, communicate and record vast amounts of sensitive data. The organizations are also required to create information systems to allow nurses to manage this issue. Yet how can nurse as individuals sort out these issues? Human nature drives us to share our experiences, which runs counter to this requirement. How can an organization train or manage thousands of people to understand and respect patient privacy?

6. Bodies

Many people have said they would love to be a nurse, but cannot tolerate the blood, other body fluids, or even handling other people's bodies. A nurse's constant need to be in tune with and hands on the bodies of strangers is one of the most compelling aspects of the profession. Why are we able to do it? And how do we maintain boundaries, as professionals and as individuals?

7. Stress

Nurses often work at the edge of life and death. Even if the patient's issue is far from life threatening, the stress level for that person can still be high. The clinical environment is one of the most intense in our society. Are nurses naturally fit for this, or can they be trained for it? How does the stress affect job performance and decision making?

8. Communications

Nurses communicate with a vast array of people, at high frequency and under great stress. She talks to a desperate patient, the grieving family, a child that cannot grasp what is happening. Yet she also needs to document certain things in an extremely precise and

specific format. The nurse must constantly change her mode of communication yet still convey large amounts of information quickly and effectively. How does one train a nursing student for this?

9. Career Survival

This chapter is not one of the attributes, but it wraps up all the loose ends. If a nurse cannot get the job in the first place, or be allowed to function well, her qualities are not going to matter. How can the nurse establish her place in the organization to allow her to do the nursing job well.

CURRENT PUBLICATIONS

No published book has specifically addressed a short list of nursing aptitudes such as the book does. There are many books that discuss one or more of the attributes. Most commonly is *caring*. There is a mini industry within the nursing profession focused on caring, beginning with Jean Watson's seminal works. Much of these books are used as nursing texts, but have not made much of an impact on the broader market. My hunch is that the subject of caring is too vague to capture the interest of the casual reader or those outside of nursing.

There have been several attempts at listing the attributes of nurses, but all of these are published in the form of blogs or articles. They are not backed by research nor have they been developed with the intention of practical application. Any time one sees a list of ten, it seems the goal was to come up with anything to make the nice round number. I developed my attributes based on what is relevant, regardless of the ultimate tally.

THE MARKET

The largest and most important market for 8 Nurses is the nursing schools. There are about 360,000 students enrolled in nursing programs in 2012. I would not expect this to become one of the foundational texts, at least in the short term. However, even as a suggested reading, the number of students indicates a small percentage of this market would make this book viable. Secondarily, there are medical disciplines that may also use this book. Medical schools train their students to work as a team, and arguable the most important team member is the RN. This book should help MDs understand what an RN can do and what are her strengths. Licensed vocational nurses (LVN) certified nursing assistants (CNA) are two large groups consisting of students that have an eye to moving on to becoming an RN. Even if that is not their goal, they still need to understand how to work with RNs since this is one of their primary team members.

Several additional markets may also use *8 Nurses*. There is a large industry dealing with privacy and confidentiality, such as HIPAA. Managers and informational technology professionals need to understand how their work affects the nurses that ultimately affect the protection of a patient's privacy. Drugs, controlled substances, and substance abuse communities also need to understand how these issues affect nurses. The safety industry can also learn from this book, in such matters as personal protective gear, body substance isolation, and sharp safety.

THE AUTHOR

Douglas Long has been working as an RN in emergency departments in the San Francisco area for the past several years. He also worked on a 9-1-1 ambulance, an ER Technician, and a phlebotomist. Prior to switching careers, he was a lecturer at San Francisco State University's College of Business, and supervised elections for the United Nations in conflict zones worldwide. As a lecturer, he authored a textbook, *International Logistics*, which was the number one seller according to Amazon.com sales, and translated into five languages. He is currently working on his Phd at the University of California, San Francisco.