

RESPONSE

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It is commendable that faculty members from Dalhousie University School of Nursing planned and implemented Continuing Education Workshops for nurses in rural areas of Nova Scotia. The workshops were held in accessible settings and the need for such educational input was identified by the nurses themselves. The design of the workshops; "Human Relations Skills" included an evaluation method and thus the effectiveness of the approach could be ascertained.

It is indisputably important for nurses to attain or maintain well developed interpersonal skills. The communication process can be viewed as the vehicle through which much of nursing is accomplished¹, and studies have illustrated the fact that the interpersonal skills of many health professionals need improvement². This reader feels, however that Joan Fisher's paper would have been more illuminating and that the workshop itself may have been more effective had the following been included.

- A summary of the current state of knowledge regarding the complexity of human communication.
- A literature review substantiating the author's claim that nurses' communication skills need improvement.
- An analysis of the effectiveness and suitability of various communication models and educational approaches.
- A discussion revealing the conceptualization that led to the selection of the modified Carkhuff model and an analysis of its strengths and weaknesses.
- A more comprehensive assessment of this group of workshop participants to determine the appropriateness of the proposed teaching plan.
- A critical analysis of the low post-test scores of workshop participants. Perhaps the model selected does not lend itself to being taught in three discrete sessions. Perhaps the evaluation or teaching methods were inappropriate for this group of learners. What would the author do differently if the workshop were to be repeated? What are the implications for educators in other settings?

REFERENCES

1. Sundeen, S., et al. *Nurse-Client Interaction*. Saint Louis: C.V. Mosby, 1976, p. ix.
2. Gerrard, B., et al. *Interpersonal Skills for Health Professionals*. Reston, Va.: Reston, 1980, p. 6.