

Coaches From CCL Volunteer 1,400 Hours of Virtual Coaching for Nurses During Pandemic, Increasing Resilience and Leadership Skills

CASE STUDY



CHALLENGE

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a tremendous toll on many. No group has encountered more stress and challenge, however, than health and healthcare professionals charged with keeping the rest of us healthy and alive.

As public health mobilized to respond and hospitals struggled to handle an influx of patients, nurses sustained physical and mental exhaustion that many experts believe may have long-term effects on their overall well-being.

Nurses were desperately in need of support in order to navigate complex leadership challenges, maintain resilience, and lead themselves and their teams through the crisis. To fend off burnout and continue pushing through the challenges, nurses needed strategies for coping, staying centered, building resilience, and leading with integrity.

RECIPIENT: 300+ US nurses working through the stress of COVID-19

SERVICE: Virtual coaching for nurses of American Nurses Association, NorthStar Network, NurseTRUST, and many other nursing networks

IMPACT: 1,400 hours of pro bono coaching delivered

My weekly coaching sessions provided personal reflection and examination of where I was in a moment in time and allowed me to regain my balance and momentum. Each session provided me with a reminder that I always had the power within, I just need an outsider to shed light on my reality. I was using all my assets once again, gaining the self-discipline to structure and organize my physical and emotional well-being. These coaching sessions were just what this Dean needed, and I've come to appreciate why some people are best at leading, and others at coaching those who lead."

- Donna M. Nickitas, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, CNE, FNAP, FAAN
Dean and Professor, Rutgers University School of Nursing-Camden



SOLUTION

In April of 2020, one of the Center for Creative Leadership's adjunct coaches, Lanny Moldauer, spearheaded an initiative to provide pro bono coaching to nurses facing the COVID-19 crisis head on. Over 100 CCL coaches volunteered their time to provide confidential coaching services to nurses of all levels and sectors, with sessions guided by the nurses' unique needs and goals.

The initiative involved several large nursing networks, including the American Nursing Association (ANA), the American Organization for Nursing Leadership (AONL), NorthStar Network, NurseTRUST, and many more.

Many of the nursing organizations promoted the complimentary coaching services on their member websites, encouraging nurses of all levels to participate and receive the support that would help them lead themselves and their teams through the crisis.

As nurses submitted their requests, they were matched with a CCL coach and given the opportunity to schedule ongoing coaching sessions that fit their needs, with no specified end date.

300+

nurses requested
coaching sessions

100+

CCL coaches volunteered
their services

1,400

hours of coaching
have been delivered

RESULTS

Research shows that nurses who are well provide better care for patients. In an industry that was challenged with burnout before the pandemic, any intervention to support resilience and well-being has the power to create positive ripple effects across health and healthcare.

A study by the American Nurses Foundation found that among nurses who indicated they intend to leave their current position, top reasons included work negatively affecting their health and well-being (47%) and insufficient staffing (45%).

The coaching sessions were highly regarded by the nurses who participated, with many reporting the insights they garnered from the sessions having a profound impact on their ability to push through the extremely difficult days of the pandemic. Most of the participating nurses were in leadership positions, and the coaching not only helped them to navigate their own way, but also to guide their teams through the physical and emotional stressors they were experiencing.

One of the challenges of this type of service is publicizing the offer among nurses in order to encourage uptake. CCL's strong brand reputation, [experience serving nurses in leadership programs](#), and research-backed methodologies contributed to the success of this initiative with the nursing organizations who participated. Over a year into the pandemic – and as the first stage of this coaching initiative begins to taper off – CCL is exploring new ways to support nursing organizations into the future.

CCL research has shown that coaching during challenging times helps leaders in 3 main areas:

- Sounding board for their situation with receiving objective feedback
- Opportunity to process their challenge and create an immediate next step
- Refocus on what's most important for them and leverage what makes them effective



I had my first coaching session yesterday afternoon and found it a perfect fit and the most wonderful support ever. I've been struggling with oppressive work demands, and this was exactly what I needed. It will be life changing for me to continue to receive this coaching for the next month as I navigate many leadership challenges with elected officials, the media, and a multitude of stakeholders – not to mention the important work of supporting our own public health response team."

- Debbie Swanson, MS, RN
Director of Public Health
Grand Forks, ND

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