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Contemporary Practical/Vocational Nursing

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Contemporary Practical/Vocational Nursing

By Corrine R. Kurzen

Lippincott publication

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This book is an extraordinary tool for any nurse entering the medical field. It encompasses not only the needs of the patient but also the needs of the nurse. As I read the first chapter, my first thoughts were; where was this book when I was in school? I not only liked the contents of the book, but the format was superb.

The first chapter, " Adjusting to Student Life," provides the student with a basis for understanding the life of a student nurse. Actually taking care of another human being can be very stressful, and when you factor in the learning, studying, and practicing of being a student the stress mounts. Many times in the students life there seems no time for yourself, and this chapter stresses the need to take care of your needs in order to make yourself a better nurse. This chapter gives the student all the elements they need to be a successful student.

The chapter on communication skills covered all the areas in which the nurse will have to practice and obtain expertise in. Communication in a medical

setting can mean the success or failure of the nurse. If the nurse is unable or unwilling to communicate effectively with the patient and/or members of the health team, the patient's care suffers. It is definitely a skill to learn how to communicate effectively and this chapter provides the basis for developing those skills.

The unit on "Understanding Your Profession" brings the student from the history of nursing to present day practices. As a student nurse, I was taught to focus on your patient and learning those skills necessary to properly care for your patient. There was little to no instruction on the health care system as a whole. I was pleasantly surprised to see the entire system from types of facilities, to the financial aspect, insurance providers, government agencies, and accreditations. It was many years into my nursing career before I learned the importance of JCAHO and how it affected my hospital.

Unit three "Preparing for Successful Practice" pulls it all together. Ethics is a major concern in the health care industry. At our facility we have an ethics committee that reviews those cases where an ethical decision must be made. Because incidents can happen quickly and you must be prepared to make the right decision, this chapter covered many areas where one might have to make the right ethical decision. Leadership, management, and communication

go hand in hand and they have blended very well in this chapter.

You now have your degree and license and as unit four states, you are now ready to move forward. This unit provides the new nurse with all the information they need to successfully start and succeed in the nursing field.

No matter how successful or satisfied we are in our profession, there will be periods of dissatisfaction. I was pleased to see the section on burnout and stress relief.

As far as the format of the book, one of my favorite areas was the "Think About It" sections. Learning how to be a critical thinker takes skill and practice. These sections help the student to practice those skills. The soft green highlights were pleasing to the eye and the main ideas in the margins reinforced the paragraphs. I particularly enjoyed the stories and personal experiences because they brought things down to a personal level and broke up the text.

Recently on our unit we had some communication issues with our nursing assistants, and I was telling my nurse manager how great your book was and how we could use your book to help in solving some of our issues. I plan on bringing the book in to share with her because of the "assess yourself" section.