



Health Workforce Initiative

Hi-Touch Healthcare: The Critical Six Soft Skills

Grab-N-Go Independent Training Module:

Lifelong Learning

HEALTH WORKFORCE INITIATIVE STATEWIDE ADVISORY COMMITTEE, CALIFORNIA
COMMUNITY COLLEGES CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



Lifelong Learning

Grab-N-Go Independent Training Module

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Lifelong Learning

Background Information

Continuing education and professional development are not new ideas for healthcare providers. However, the complexities of today’s healthcare environment have called for education reform. This reform moves the platform from discipline-specific lectures to broad-based, multifaceted learning and collaborative-learning opportunities.ⁱ One of the significant outcomes from this reform effort is the recognition of the inherent value of knowledge acquisition through lifelong learning rather than specific knowledge acquisition as a directed professional obligation. The prior limited focus on professional development overlooked the equally important role of personal development. To be successful, a balance between professional and personal learning must be achieved. As one person tweeted about lifelong learning, “The half-life of knowledge is rapidly diminishing. Staying in the same place is the same as going backward.”ⁱⁱ

What *is* lifelong learning? The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) & the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) provided a detailed construct as well as this abbreviated clarification: “Lifelong learning was viewed by the Panel as the ‘lifelong, life-wide, voluntary, and self-motivated’ pursuit of knowledge for either personal or professional reasons. As such, lifelong learning enhances social inclusion, active citizenship, and personal development.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Addressing the recent reform efforts, *Provision 5 of the American Nursing Association Code of Ethics* makes clear that professional competency is of critical importance to patient care. The *Code of Ethics* further stipulates that professional development should not be limited to issues only impacting patient care. “Nursing care addresses the whole person as an integrated being; nurses should apply this principle to themselves. Professional and personal growth reciprocate and interact.”^{iv} Broad-based knowledge is highlighted: “Nurses are encouraged to read



broadly, continue lifelong learning, engage in personal study, seek financial security, participate in a wide range of social advocacy and civic activities, and pursue leisure and recreational activities.”^v However, because all healthcare employees have an impact on patient care, the construct of broad based knowledge should not be limited to nurses; instead, this paradigm should be expanded to include all health care employees and professions.

Despite recent responses and long-term dedication to the notion of lifelong learning as a healthcare professional value, barriers to seamless implementation include healthcare worker shortages, underfunding, differing perspectives on priorities, rapid technology changes and information overload. Additionally, specific actions needed for adoption of this multi-faceted, overlapping system stems from a multitude of entities including governmental, educational, professional, and regulatory bodies. As such, from the perspective of this training, how resources and needs are balanced must be determined at the local level.

Therefore, for the purposes of this training, we encourage the trainer to identify and perpetuate the holistic notion that lifelong learning is simply a good idea. Each individual should prioritize the opportunity to find balance between professional and personal needs and responsibilities. The information and activities included herein support that effort.



Training



Overall Goal: Participants will gain greater understanding of personal and professional motivations for lifelong learning.

WIIFM: What’s in it for me? “Lifelong learning is an all purposeful learning activity, undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills, and competence.”^{vi} Psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi describes a state of consciousness he calls “Flow” and insists that “happiness does not simply happen. It must be prepared for and cultivated by each person, by setting challenges that are neither too demanding nor too simple for one’s abilities.”^{vii} Much like getting in the flow, joyful learning doesn’t spontaneously happen. Lifelong learning that aligns personal and professional dreams, goals, and plans must be intentionally cultivated. The result of this purposeful work is a more holistic and integrated life experience. This module will provide a strong foundation for developing professional and personal success and happiness through lifelong learning.



Materials Provided:

1. Lifelong Learning Module PowerPoint (60 - 90 minutes)
2. Activity #1 (part one): You Have New Messages
3. Activity #1 (part two): You Have New Messages
4. “You Have New Messages” worksheet
5. Activity #2: Shattering Stereotypes
6. “Shattering Stereotypes of Lifelong Learning” worksheet
7. Activity #3: Planning
8. “Planning Activity” worksheet
9. “Planning Interpretation: Scores & Next Steps” handout
10. Activity #4: Dreams, Goals, and Planning
11. Activity #5: Dr. Seuss, Self-Reflection, and Creativity



Directions for the Trainer: Activity preparation information is included in this document and/or within the PowerPoint presentation notes. Each PowerPoint slide, as appropriate, includes detailed explanations and instructions for the trainer. As with all Grab-N-Go Modules, you can use it all for a more detailed training or simply use one or two of the many activities—a la carte style.



ACTIVITY #1 - PART 1

You Have New Messages



Goal: Participants will experience information overload in real-time during the workshop by using electronic devices for message retrieval and categorization.



Materials Needed (Quantities vary by how many in the group):

- PowerPoint slides (**first time slide 7**; second time slides #17-18):
- Copy for each participant of the “You Have New Messages” worksheet
- Optional “prizes” (such as certificate, candy bar, or slinky)
- Pen/pencil for each participant



Procedures:

**Part one of this activity will be introduced at the beginning of the workshop and will be revisited in the conclusion of the presentation as part two.*

- As a group, review the directions and column information listed on the worksheet. Point out that the blank spaces on the worksheet under Message types are “write-in spaces” for “other.” Explain that this is a two-part activity. First, participants will complete the worksheet as an independent activity and second as part of a partner discussion.
- Ask for participants to work quickly, quietly, and independently. Note: It may be prudent to remind them that this is a workshop activity and NOT an opportunity to respond to their messages!
- **START COLUMN:** Ask each participant to access their cell phones/tablets to help complete the worksheet, reminding them to use the START column.
- After about 5 minutes, check-in with participants—they should be categorizing and counting not responding to messages. When it appears that everyone is done completing the worksheet, ask them to turn off or silence their electronic devices and find a partner.
- As dyads or triads, using the worksheet as a guide, have participants discuss the types of messages and responses. Encourage them to share with each other how they determined which messages fit into which response type. For instance, one person might have a message seen as an obligation and deem it “critical” whereas another person might see that same message as merely “important.”



ACTIVITY #1 - PART 1

You Have New Messages

- Report out: Conclude the activity discussion and ask for volunteers to share anything significant or interesting they observed or learned from their discussions with the entire group. Prompt group discussion with questions such as:
 - What factors determined whether a message was considered “critical”?
 - How does knowing you have these messages waiting for a response impact your ability to focus on this workshop?
- After discussion, ask for show of hands to determine which participants had counted the most new messages. Note: a small prize would add a fun element to this activity but this should be determined based on organizational culture and protocol.
 - An optional adaptation for conducting the activity the first time is to ask participants to “guess” how many new messages they will have accumulated by the end of the workshop and to write the number on the back of the sheet. After completing the activity the second time, at the end of the workshop, compare the actual numbers, counted vs. guessed, and reward the participants who “best guessed” their number.
- Conclude by explaining that the activity was designed to illustrate how we are daily bombarded by social medial messages and the sheer quantity to which we must rapidly respond. Furthermore, due to the accelerated pace of new knowledge emerging in healthcare, professionals are exposed to a plethora of published literature and electronic information.^{viii} Additionally, all healthcare employees are consistently exposed to changing regulations, changes which impact job duties and expectations about job performance. **As a result of this information overload, many healthcare employees are overwhelmed and may lose sight of lifelong learning as a vehicle for more balanced and satisfying professional and personal life.**



ACTIVITY #1 - PART 2

You Have New Messages



Goal: Participants will experience information overload in real-time during the workshop by using electronic devices for message retrieval and categorization.



Materials Needed:

- PowerPoint slides (first time slide #7; **second time slides #17-18**)
- Copy for each participant of the “You Have New Messages” worksheet
- Optional “prizes” (such as certificate, candy bar, or slinky)
- Pen/pencil for each participant



Procedures: (**Revisit this activity at the end of the presentation as part two*):

- Ask participants to retrieve the “You Have New Messages” *worksheet* used earlier in the workshop. Remind them to work independently and to review the worksheet directions as needed.
- END column: Ask each participant to access their cell phones/tablets to complete the worksheet, marking their calculations in the END column.
- When it appears that everyone is done completing the worksheet, ask them to turn off or silence their electronic devices.
- By show of hands determine which participants had counted the most new messages. Note: a small prize would add a fun element to this activity for the most and least messages accumulated but this should be determined based on organizational culture and protocol. If the optional “best guess” adaptation to the activity was conducted, ask participants to self-identify as winners and again, provide rewards as appropriate.
- Report out: Invite volunteers from the group to share “the point” of this activity. Prompt with questions such as:
 - What did you learn about your own system of receiving and responding to messages?
 - Were the same determining factors as earlier used in deciding which messages you noted as “critical”? Why or why not?
 - Considering this is a lifelong learning workshop, how might you respond to messages in the future?



ACTIVITY #1 - PART 2

You Have New Messages

- Conclude by reinforcing this message: “Knowledge is the primary source of value in our world today. Your ability to expand your mind and devote yourself to lifelong learning is the key to breaking any success barriers that may be in front of you.”^{ix} One way to see lifelong learning as a value is to prioritize your time and to mindfully address information overload by not operating in “auto-pilot.”

Worksheet

Directions: You will use this worksheet two times during the workshop. 1) When asked to do so by the workshop presenter, access your cell phone or tablet and retrieve the new messages received since the start of this workshop. Include personal and work messages. 2) Categorize, count, and list on the grid below each new message by message type and response type. Use the START column the first time and the END column the second time. Total the columns at the bottom.

Response-type	Critical	Critical	Important	Important	Job-Related	Job-Related	Personal Information Only	Personal Information Only
Message-type	START	END	START	END	START	END	START	END
Text								
Email								
Voicemail								
Facebook								
Totals								

***Response-type category descriptions:** *Critical*-must be responded to immediately; *Important*-needs response within 24 hours; *Job-related*-new knowledge but not included in Critical or Important categories; *Personal Information Only*-no immediate response required.



ACTIVITY #2

Shattering Stereotypes



Goal: Participants will identify the stereotypes associated with lifelong learning as a means to transcend those stereotypes in order to have a renewed understanding of the value of lifelong learning in both their personal and professional lives.



Materials Needed:

- PowerPoint slide #9.
- One copy of the “Shattering Stereotypes of Lifelong Learning” worksheet for every two participants.
- Optional (see instructions below): If you have 15+ participants you may opt to use the Gallery Walk and Flip Chart paper (one piece of Flip Chart paper will be needed per group).
 - Flip Chart paper titled “Shattering Stereotypes of Lifelong Learning” with two columns (one titled “positive” and one titled “negative”)
 - Tape



Procedures:

- Reveal the title of PowerPoint slide #9
- Instruct participants to partner up. Note: If you have a large group of 15+ participants you may use the Gallery Walk and Flip Chart paper (one piece of Flip Chart paper will be needed per group).
 - Option 1: 14 or fewer participants
 - Ask participants to partner up.
 - Provide one copy of the “Shattering Stereotypes of Lifelong Learning” worksheet to every two participants.
 - Instruct participants to complete the worksheet.
 - Ask someone to share his/her list and then ask the large group to share any additional stereotypes noted (you can compile a list or just lead a discussion).
 - Note whether or not there are more negative or positive stereotypes and lead a discussion about the significance of those stereotypes for lifelong learning.
 - Explain that in order to optimize lifelong learning, one must first identify and understand the stereotypes and



ACTIVITY #2

Shattering Stereotypes

attitudes toward lifelong learning. With this insight, we are in a better position to appreciate and participate in lifelong learning opportunities that add new knowledge and skills to our professional and personal repertoires. This “growth” type of learning helps us challenge our beliefs and values thus enabling us to do things we could not do previously.

- Option 2: 15+ participants
 - Ask participants to get into groups of 3 – 5 depending upon the number of participants (groups of three for 15 participants).
 - Direct each group to one of the Flip Chart sheets taped to the walls (allow approximately 4'+ between each sheet of paper).
 - Instruct participants to compile a list for each column.
 - Ask one participant from each group to share their list and then ask the other groups to share any additional stereotypes noted (you can compile a list or just lead a discussion).
 - Optional Gallery Walk component: After participants have worked in their groups for 3 – 4 minutes, instruct the groups to rotate to the Flip Chart paper to their right. Ask each group to spend 2 – 3 minutes reviewing the stereotypes listed in each column. Have groups add anything missing and to further brainstorm additional stereotypes that hadn't previously been recorded.
 - Ask participants to choose a representative from each group that will report their findings. Instruct all other participants to sit down and then have each representative share what had been recorded. The second representative and beyond will merely note any observations not noted by the previous representative.
 - After each representative reports his/her findings, s/he may return to her seat. At this time note whether or not there are



ACTIVITY #2

Shattering Stereotypes

more negative or positive stereotypes and lead a discussion about the significance of those stereotypes for lifelong learning.

- Explain that in order to optimize lifelong learning one must first identify and then understand the implications of the stereotypes and attitudes toward lifelong learning. With this insight, we are in a better position to appreciate and participate in lifelong learning opportunities that add new knowledge and skills to our professional and personal repertoires. This “growth” type of learning helps us to challenge our beliefs and values which enable us to do things we could not do previously.



ACTIVITY #3

Planning Activity



Goal: Participants will identify their planning style. This activity is designed to demonstrate that there is always room for growth. This activity also sets up and leads the remaining activities.



Materials needed:

- PowerPoint slides #10-12
- One copy of the “Planning Activity” worksheet (includes SIDE A and SIDE B) for each participant
- One copy of the “Planning Interpretation: Scores & Next Steps” handout
- Pen/pencil for each participant



Procedures: (*Note that this is a **three-part** activity.):

(Note to trainer: the first part of the activity use SIDE A of the worksheet and invites participants to think about and engage in discussion about effective and ineffective planning efforts. This discussion sets the stage for part-two of the activity which is SIDE B of the “Planning Activity” worksheet).

Part One: SIDE A

- Reveal PowerPoint slide 10. Explain that this activity provides an opportunity to look at a potential area for growth—effective planning.
- Inform the group that this is the first of a three-part activity and hand out one copy of the “Planning Activity” worksheet to each participant. Advise them that the first part of the activity will use SIDE A.
- Next, ask participants to find a partner (triads can also be used).
- Read aloud the directions listed below:
 - Directions: Discuss with your partner your personal planning style and effective/ineffective planning outcomes from your recent history. After, circle the label below you believe is most representative of your planning style.
- Instruct them to quickly review the planning styles listed on SIDE A of the worksheet. Using that information as a guide, discuss which planning style with each identifies. Ask them to be specific and to use examples as rationale for their selection.
- After a few minutes, invite volunteers to share.



ACTIVITY #3

Planning Activity

- Finally, ask them to take their seats and transition to the next PowerPoint slide to begin part-two of the activity.

Part Two: SIDE B

- Ask participants to turn over the “Planning Activity” worksheet to SIDE B and, working independently and quietly, complete the survey.
- After a few minutes verify that total scores are being documented.
- Once the worksheet is completed and scores totaled, ask participants to turn over the worksheet to SIDE A and to sit quietly while everyone finishes.
- Transition to the next PowerPoint slide revealing only the title to begin part three and conclude the activity. ***Do not reveal the chart until step one of part three has been completed.***

Part Three: Activity Conclusion

- For credibility of the survey instrument as a valuable assessment, explain that this planning activity and quiz was adapted from the work of Hyrum Smith, time management and planning expert associated with FranklinCovey.
 - See frankincoveyspeakersbureau.com for additional information if desired.
- Next, reveal the chart on the PowerPoint slide and review each planning style.
- Remind participants of the first part of the activity and ask them to review their actual scores and planning style from SIDE B. Returning to SIDE A of “Planning Activity” worksheet, compare survey scores with what they initially self-identified and circled on SIDE A.
 - Provide a copy of the “Planning Styles, Scores, and Next Steps” handout to each participant and ask them to independently review it.
 - Invite participants to share their experiences with the larger group as time allows.
- Conclude the activity by emphasizing that while planning is an important function, becoming overly rigid with planning, not planning effectively, and/or focusing our time and energy on matters that do not align with our priorities can be problematic for an enjoyable outcome from lifelong learning opportunities.



ACTIVITY #3

Planning Activity

Worksheet (SIDE A)

Directions: Discuss with your partner your personal planning style and effective/ineffective planning outcomes from your recent history. After, circle the label below you believe is most representative of your planning style.

Label	Description	Leave Blank
Terrible Planner	You should consider using new tools and perhaps focusing on time management tips and techniques.	
Below Average Planner	You probably already have a planner or system but need to use it more effectively.	
Average Planner	Your planning system is working.	
Above Average Planner	Your planning system is working well.	
Excellent Planner	You have mastered planning and should be feeling good about having control of your life.	



ACTIVITY #3

Planning Activity

Worksheet (SIDE B) “How Well Do You Plan?”

Directions: For each question, circle the number that best describes you. Total columns for your score.

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
How often do you plan in an effort to keep on top of your life?	1	2	3	4	5
Do you write out daily plans ?	1	2	3	4	5
Do you allow flexibility in your daily plans?	1	2	3	4	5
How often do you accomplish everything you planned for that day?	1	2	3	4	5
How often do you plan time for what matters most to you?	1	2	3	4	5
How often does your daily plan get destroyed by urgent matters?	5	4	3	2	1
COLUMN TOTALS					

Adapted from quiz written for US Weekend by Hyrum Smith

Total all columns for your score: _____



ACTIVITY #3

Planning Activity

Planning Interpretation Scores and Next Steps Worksheet

Label	Description	Scores and Next Steps
Terrible Planner	You should consider using new tools and perhaps really focus on time management tips and techniques.	6-10: Terrible Planner. A great first step would be to take a time management course.
Below Average Planner	You probably already have a planner or system but need to use it more effectively.	11-15: Below average planner. You may already have a planning system, but using it more effectively will help to reduce the stress and lack of control you feel in your life.
Average Planner	Your planning system is working.	16-20: Average planner. Your planning system is working, but you can do better. You may need help focusing on priorities, dealing with urgent interruptions, or writing your daily plan.
Above Average Planner	Your planning system is working well.	21-25: Above-average planner. Your planning system is working well. Keep up the good work, with periodic reviews to be sure you're planning around what matters most in your life.
Excellent Planner	You have mastered planning and should be feeling good about having control of your life.	26-30: Excellent planner--or candidate for burnout? You have mastered planning and should experience the serenity that comes from taking charge of your life. But make sure you're in control of your planning rather than letting it control you.



ACTIVITY #4

Dreams, Goals and Planning



Goal: Participants will identify specific professional and personal lifelong learning goals.



Materials Needed:

- PowerPoint slides #13 – 16



Procedures:

- Ask participants the questions listed below. Instruct them to raise their hand and to continue to raise their hand if they can answer “yes” to the question.
 - How many of you have dreams?
 - How many of you have goals?
 - How many of you could list some of your goals now?
 - How many of you have written down your goals?
 - How many of you have written down plans that specify dates for when these goals should be completed?
- After asking all of the questions, instruct the participants to look around the room to see how many hands are still raised. (Note: it is likely that few to none will still have their hand raised at the end of the questioning. Discuss how rare it is for people to have well developed plans even though most will acknowledge the value of having such plans and/or ask those with their hands still raised to share their perspective and strategies).
 - Discuss how important it is to our professional and personal success to not only identify our goals, but to develop a specific plan to ensure we accomplish our goals.
- Reiterate that without taking the time to take stock of our attitudes and to establish clear lifelong learning goals we will continue to “aim at nothing.”
- Discuss the definition and examples of dreams (slide 14).
 - Remind participants that if we don’t take time to set goals, we don’t “plan to fail; but, we do fail to plan.” In other words, if we don’t plan ahead then we’re aiming for nothing and achieving it! Therefore, a goal without a plan is just a wish which may or may not come true!
 - Ask participants to write down as many dreams as they can in 1 minute.



ACTIVITY #4

Dream, Goals and Planning

- Explain that goals are an extension of dreams. Goals are wants and do not represent a clear plan of action. Discuss the right and wrong ways to write a goal statement and then ask participants to choose three dreams and to write down a goal statement following the “right” example shown on slide 15.
- Explain that plans have a definite purpose and that success is determined by those plans. Instruct participants to write down a plan for one or more of their goals (slide 16).



ACTIVITY #5

Dr. Seuss, Self-Reflection, and Creativity



Goal: Participants will self-reflect and write a poem demonstrating synthesis of learning and creativity.



Materials Needed:

- PowerPoint slide 19
- Paper/pen for each participant (suggest using the back of the “You Have New Messages” worksheet)
- Timer or stop watch



Procedures:

- Reveal PowerPoint slide 19 and read aloud the Dr. Seuss poem.
- Tell participants they will be visualizing and quietly self-reflecting; afterwards, they will be engaging in a moment of creativity and participation.
 - First, ask participants to sit comfortably, to breath normally, and to close their eyes.
 - Second, ask them to take three deep-cleansing breaths, breathing in slowly with the nose for four seconds, holding breath for two seconds, and then breathing out of pursed lips for four seconds (based on NIH anxiety reducing method).
 - Now inform them to keep eyes closed and that for the next 30 seconds, they are to reflect on the presentation. After 30 seconds tell them they will again have 30 seconds to reflect but now they are to narrow the focus of their reflection to one useful outcome or “take-a-way” that resonates with them.
 - Ask them to open their eyes and to write down the “take-a-way,” including the reason why it resonated with them.
- Now, inform them it’s time for creativity. (Trainer: Stress that there is no right or wrong way to complete this task and that there will be no judgment as some people feel they are not creative and this can cause angst).
- Ask them to use the back side of the “You Have New Messages” worksheet (or any paper) and to write a similar style, three-sentence poem about what they learned today or something of interest from today. The reflection time should



ACTIVITY #5

Dr. Seuss, Self-Reflection, and Creativity

have primed this a bit but assure them they can use any idea not just their reflection. (An example of a poem is below).

- After a few minutes, no more than 5 minutes, ask them to partner up and share their poems, illustrations, and/ or help each other finish. Encourage fun.
 - Because some will readily complete this activity, encourage those participants to draw accompanying illustrations or create another poem with a partner (someone who also finished quickly).
- When it appears that everyone is ready, invite volunteers to read their poems aloud and to share illustrations.
 - Ask volunteers who share why they chose the topic/illustration and its significance to them.
 - Ask if anyone chose a poem topic that corresponded with a dream, goal, or plan and ask them to share with the group.
- Conclude by reinforcing the best plan for lifelong learning is a plan that aligns personal and professional outcomes for holistic, integrated benefits for each individual.
- **OPTIONAL CONCLUSION:** Relate this creative activity back to the WIIFM on page 4 of this manual and summarize the idea of “flow.” Ask for show of hands for those who had fun and ask if anyone lost track of the time while engaged in the creative effort. Make clear that cultivating and preparing for lifelong learning to align with personal and professional dreams, goals, and plans leads to a more holistic, integrated lifetime experience.

EXAMPLE Dr. Seuss Style Poem

Ode to my cell phone

You have knowledge and skills

You have hair for a locket

You have information in hand or nearby in your pocket!



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