The Leadership Course “Leading an empowered organization” at the EOC: a 7 years’ experience

Willems-Cavalli Y. [1], Cavicchioli A. [2], Ferrara P. [1], Biegger A. [1]

Background
In 2007 we started to implement Primary Nursing in 60 wards on six sites of our multisite hospital in Southern Switzerland. This was the beginning of a big cultural change. To support and coach our nursing staff in this process our leaders had to be prepared. The introduction of a Leadership course in our multisite hospital should enhance the competences of our leaders and promote a positive work environment. In 2009 we decided to implement the LEO Program. We decided in 2016 to do a survey and ask the participants of the first 15 LEO courses about the impact (if any) of LEO in their daily work.

Vision
All our leaders are trained as transformational leaders and speak a common language; they are able to create an environment in which nurses can grow and develop. Our vision was and still is that if our nursing staff will be supported.

Inspiration
We were inspired by a RBC course held in the USA in 2008. There the idea was born to implement the LEO course in a Swiss hospital.

Infrastructure
We translated the manual into Italian, prepared our LEO facilitators and introduced the LEO program to our nurse leaders at middle management level. Very soon it became obvious to invite also leaders of other professional groups, so our LEO course became multidisciplinary.

In January 2017 the whole new Board of directors of our multi-site hospital joined the LEO course.

From now our LEO Program has been introduced at all levels. We started last year to offer refresher courses of one day for those who did the LEO course 6, 7 years ago.

Education
At the end of every LEO course, each participant is asked to give his/her evaluation. After six months a follow up course of one day is planned, where each participant is invited to give an example of how he/she implemented one or more LEO principles in her/his reality.

By May 2017 19 courses have been carried out for 400 participants.

In the meantime, the LEO “language” has become more common in the hospitals. But we wanted to know how common. So in march 2016, after 9 years of experience, we developed a questionnaire to assess the efficacy of the program. The questionnaire encompassed 7 questions and was send to 279 LEO participants including the different professions.

Evidence
Anonymous electronic questionnaires: N=279, 72% gave a feedback. 45% nurses, 7% physicians and 48% with another professional background.

The LEO manual was felt to be very or rather helpful by 71% of the participants (equally distributed among the different professions).

The results showed that the concepts which were most often utilized in the work environment were the three elements of empowerment [Responsibility, Authority and Accountability], articulated expectations and building healthy relationships.

We are very satisfied with these results, especially taking into account that for some participants the course was held already 7 years ago.

The results demonstrate the efficacy of this program.