

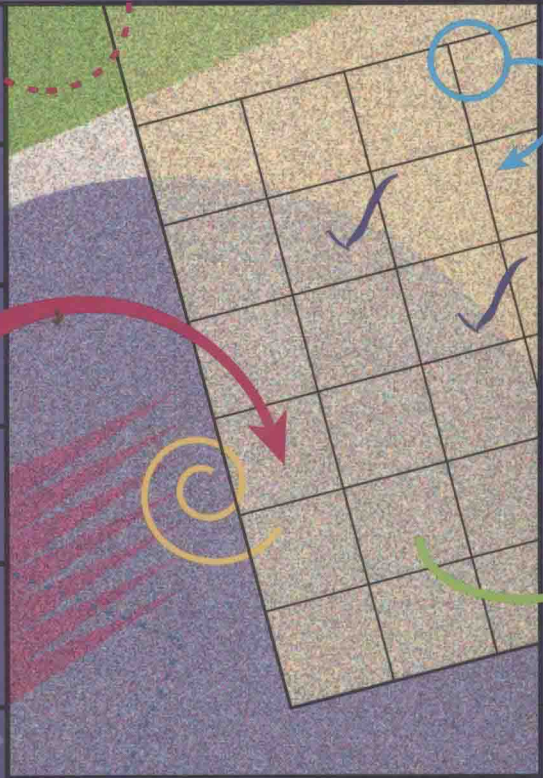
MANAGEMENT DECISION MAKING FOR NURSES



124 Case Studies

Bessie L. Marquis

Carol J. Huston



3rd Edition

Lippincott

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Third Edition

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Third Edition

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Dedication

*We dedicate this book
to the future leaders of the nursing profession:
those individuals who are willing to take risks
by challenging what is,
in hopes of what can be.*



Bessie L. Marquis
Carol Jorgensen Huston

Preface



The first edition of this book developed as a result of several events that occurred more or less simultaneously. The first event dealt with our growing conviction that, although our students enjoyed and performed well in our nursing management course, they appeared to have some difficulty applying management theory to the workplace following their graduation.

The next event occurred as we became involved with the “teaching to think” movement, which developed as a result of criticism leveled against academia by numerous investigative bodies examining the status of education in America. Among those criticisms were reports that there was a serious decline in the ability of young adults to problem solve, and many were incapable of inferential reasoning. Organizations were formed by educators to address this problem and to identify and develop teaching strategies that would do more than merely give learners information—strategies providing learners with opportunities to use information in a manner that would result in improved decision-making skills.

After becoming involved in the teaching to think movement, we were convinced that a primary reason for student difficulty in transferring theory to practice and drawing inferences occurred because students of management theory had less opportunity to practice their new skills than did students of other nursing theory courses. Thus, we began to examine modes of teaching management theory that provided opportunities for practice simulation.

The next step was our growing interest in the case method approach, as a result of the Harvard Business School’s use of the case method in their M.B.A. program. We began a search for an appropriate casebook for teaching new managers. Being unable to locate a text that would serve our needs, we undertook the task of writing our own casebook. After using the casebook for several years we added a theory component and published the first edition of *Management Decision Making for Nurses*. This is now the third edition of that text.

Since first publishing this textook, we have authored two editions of another text, *Leadership Roles and Management Functions: Theory and Application*. This second text uses a complete experiential approach to learning, with a dual emphasis on leadership and management. It also has an expanded theory base and a more sophisticated writing style.

However, there continues to be a need for a concise textbook with a strong management focus that uses a case approach for teaching management. Thus, we have written the third edition of *Management Decision Making for Nurses*. In writing the third edition we have made every effort to maintain the strengths of earlier editions and to correct shortcomings. We continue to respond to users' and reviewers' comments and have also included contemporary theory and new cases that illustrate the changing times in health care.

Because we believe that management problems are universal but that management science changes rapidly as our knowledge increases and the needs of society change, we have included a current bibliography at the end of each chapter to help readers solve the cases. In addition, we have updated content and references so the text remains contemporary. Some cases have been rewritten to make them more effective, new cases have been added, and ineffective or outdated cases were deleted. We have also somewhat reorganized the book's format, moving some theory to what we believe are more appropriate units, and although we have added a unit, we have not increased the book's size. We have eliminated outdated material, but for the most part the format remains the same. Per reviewer feedback, the *concise* theory component and writing style have been retained.

We continue to believe that the ability to transfer management theory will not occur unless the learner has an opportunity to apply management concepts over and over again in real life situations. Therefore, major concepts and theories are repeated throughout the book as each chapter builds upon information presented in prior chapters. In this way, learners develop skills in solving complex problems through the use of inferential reasoning.

We believe the abundance of cases in this text contributes greatly to its value and its potential for learning. The third edition contains 124 cases. Of these cases, approximately 20% are solved, and the rest are left for the learner to solve.

Many of the cases are straightforward and use traditional management theory as the rationale for decision making. Other cases are complex, requiring a greater degree of analysis and the need to synthesize a larger amount of didactic theory. The variation in complexity allows the book to be used with a wide range of learners, who have varying maturity levels and theoretical knowledge. The instructor therefore has a variety of choices in selecting case studies to best meet the needs of a particular group. We have made an effort to include case studies representing problems beyond the traditional hospital setting. All cases use current terminology and concepts, and most cases are derived from situations the authors or their nursing management colleagues actually experienced.

In this edition, we incorporated additional assignments requiring group problem solving. Regardless of the audience or the cases selected, we urge that the group process be used in some manner to facilitate problem solving. We believe group problem solving expands alternatives for decision making.

In order to assist individuals who have not previously used this mode of teaching/learning, there is a teacher's/learner's guide in the front of the text. In

addition, the first chapters of the text are devoted to decision making and the management process. Those experienced in these aspects may not need to use all of this material.

We have found that management principles are just as applicable for managing one's personal life as for managing a nursing unit or department. Indeed, we have found that when learners begin to apply management principles to managing their personal lives, it not only makes their lives function better, it also makes learning management theory fun. Therefore, we have again included a personal notebook section at the end of each set of cases. We strongly encourage students and instructors or facilitators to use this unique part of our text, for we believe that the personalization of learning adds another valuable dimension to vicarious learning.

We have created this book in an effort to promote critical thinking in management. This will not occur if only past approaches to learning, such as lecture and discussion, are used. We therefore urge users of this book to incorporate experiential teaching techniques in order to facilitate analysis, synthesis, and communication—three elements of critical thinking most important in nursing management.

Reader and Instructor Guidelines for Using Case Studies



There is little question that vicarious learning, or learning through “simulated experience” has tremendous value and application to nurses. Examples of experiential or vicarious learning methods include group discussions, role playing, simulations, games, guided fantasy, psychodrama, and problem-solving exercises (Marquis, 1994). In all these methods, learning occurs *through* or *with* experience. In learning *through* experience, a situation is designed to allow participants to gain insight through participation. In learning *from* experience, participants look back at past experiences in their lives in order to glean new meanings from them or to compare them with their present situation.

Using case studies is one form of vicarious learning that allows participants to learn both *through* and *from* experiences. The case study approach allows learners to ask the “what, they, and how” questions to instill a habit of inquiry, gain a sense of how securely a conclusion is held, learn to discriminate clearly when evidence is available or not, discover implicit and explicit assumptions, analyze the reasoning of others, draw inferences, test their own line of reasoning, draw conclusions, and learn to transfer knowledge from familiar to unfamiliar concepts.

The case study provides a means for new learning for both students and teachers. Teachers can use case studies to demonstrate critical conditions in concrete situations rather than using abstract generalizations. Students derive additional significance from the information gathered about a problem when they have the opportunity to take action on the problem.

Because experiential learning provides the unique opportunity of gaining and sharing experiences without actually having to undergo the experience, case studies provide an opportunity for learners to vicariously live and learn how to make difficult decisions in a systematic and analytical manner. This allows for immediate application of learning and translating theory and principles into practice. This results in a reduction of risk, as novice managers are allowed to make simulated decisions before they occur in a management setting.

Use of case studies provides the opportunity for teachers/facilitators to recognize students or group members as mature, responsible human beings. Students gain confidence in their ability to problem solve and be risk takers.

The nurturing of decision-making skills through the use of case studies encourages self-growth. An understanding of our own values, beliefs, and perceptions, and how they affect our decision making is invaluable. All successful managers are self-aware. Learners must be encouraged to acknowledge their own priorities, personal preferences, and biases in solving the cases. In addition, learners should allow for these same factors in other group members. Learners have the opportunity not only to solve the cases themselves, but also to see how others would solve them. They may be given feedback by other group members as to their handling of the problem, fostering the development of interpersonal skills. By sharing our perception of a case with others, we learn to more objectively evaluate their feedback as well as our own perceptions. Listening skills, as well as verbal skills, are enhanced.

Case studies also allow learners to determine “universal” solutions to long-standing, familiar problems. History has shown us that even the best managers make mistakes, and that most mistakes are significant only if nothing is learned from them. Every situation in which people work together can be lived through and learned from in case studies.

The reader of this book will consistently be asked to take action, to be involved in the situations presented, and to observe the problem solving of others. It is important then that the reader understand how to effectively use the case study process to enhance learning.

◆ The Case Study

What is a case? A case is a real, fictional, or semifictional description of a situation that requires some form of decision making. It describes what the characters did and said. It may include opinions, speculations, and value judgments, or it may be objective. It is always incomplete to some degree, as the manager in a real-life situation never has all the facts.

This book uses four basic types of problems that can be used for problem solving, either individually or in groups.

1. The individual problem
2. The isolated incident
3. The organizational problem
4. A combination of any or all three of the above.

Individual problem case studies involve employees who have problems that affect not only their jobs, but also the efficiency of the organization as well. Because managers spend much of their time dealing with individual problems, identifying “universal problems” and alternative solutions is very beneficial.

Isolated incident case studies identify situations that are not covered by regulations, policy, or procedure documents and that disrupt organizational functioning. These cases encourage managers to examine the causes and address the problems themselves rather than simply treat the symptoms.

Organizational problem case studies are much more complex. The manager is often personally involved in the problem and must include colleagues and subordinates in reaching an appropriate solution. The role of the organization versus that of the worker is often a major component.

Case studies that represent a *combination* of the three other types of problems present a more realistic picture of problems common to managers. Individual needs and concerns, resultant isolated incidents, and organizational needs all present ramifications that must be considered.

◆ The Case Presentation

The preparatory basics for any case study presentation include a review of the case, data gathering, analysis of solutions, a presentation of findings, and a critique of the presentation.

REVIEW OF THE CASE

Time is generally a constraint for most individuals. However, if a case study is to be thoroughly analyzed, sufficient time must be allowed for reading and rereading the case itself. Reading for meaning is different than skimming and verifiable facts must be differentiated from unsupported opinions. Making brief written or mental notes will help organize information into categories and distinguish critical information from superfluous data. Questions to be asked could include:

1. What are the key issues of this case?
2. Is there relevance to the timing?
3. Are there any hidden issues?
4. Are there any primary unassigned questions?
5. Are creative assumptions required?
6. What is unique about the case? What is “universal?”
7. What is fact? What is opinion?

DATA GATHERING

If individuals are to gain new knowledge and insight into managerial problem solving, they will have to reach outside their current sphere of knowledge when solving the case. Some data-gathering sources include textbooks, periodicals, acknowledged experts, colleagues, and current research. The following questions should be examined in data gathering:

1. What is the setting?
2. What is the problem?
3. Where is it a problem?
4. When is it a problem?

5. Who is affected by the problem?
6. What is happening?
7. Why is it happening? What are the causes of the problem? Can the causes be prioritized?
8. What are the basic underlying issues? Areas of conflict?
9. What are the consequences of the problem? Which of these is most serious?

ANALYSIS OF SOLUTIONS

In analyzing possible solutions for a case study, individuals may want to look at the following questions:

1. What factors can be influenced? How can the positive factors be enhanced and the negative factors minimized?
2. What are the financial and political consequences of each possible solution? What are the departmental and interdepartmental consequences and time constraints? Is adequate support available?
3. What are the criteria for action?
4. What are the alternative plans of action?
5. What are the influencing factors?
6. What should be done?
7. What is the “best” solution?
8. Will a less than optimum solution be satisfactory?
9. What is the means for evaluation?

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

When assigned or called on to present a case and its solution, the presentation usually includes:

- Introduction of self
- Identification of the situation or problem
- Analysis of key alternatives
- Recommendations for specific action
- Means of evaluation

If case presentations are to be graded, how factors are weighted should be determined in advance and shared with group members prior to case presentations. The evaluation of the presentation by facilitators and group members should consider the following factors:

1. Poise, clarity, dynamism, articulation, accuracy, nonverbal communication (appropriate and inappropriate), and use of audiovisual aids
2. Soundness of rationale used to support decision making and problem solving, and the quality of the problem solving
3. Evidence of preparation to address the questions posed in the case, and whether the objectives and questions were addressed completely

CRITIQUE OF THE PRESENTATION

Case studies provide an opportunity for critique by either the instructor/facilitator or peers. Those critiquing should present feedback in a manner that is neither aggressive nor passive, but assertive. They must contribute information to the case presentation — for example, why the presentation was an example of effective problem solving or wise decision making, or what was faulty, illogical, or omitted. As with case presentations, it is possible to measure an individual's ability to objectively and assertively critique a presentation. The critique should be evaluated in terms of:

1. Poise, clarity, articulation, and concision
2. Soundness of rationale used
3. Fairness and assertiveness

Individuals selected to critique a case presentation may be assigned in advance or may be chosen at random immediately following the case presentation or critique. A case presentation and solution may be done on a volunteer basis.

◆ Strategies for Implementing the Case Study Approach

The preparation, presentation, and analysis of a case study requires a systematic approach if it is to be beneficial. However, there is no single, specific system for case preparation, as several principles are necessary for its successful use.

1. There must be a sufficient number of cases for participants to begin to draw conclusions. The case study approach is inappropriate if a spectrum of cases cannot be offered. Individual cases will often reveal variances from the norm but do not allow the participant to draw generalizations or to recognize patterns.
2. There is no absolute right or wrong solution to a case presentation, although some solutions will have a much greater possibility of successful implementation. Divergence, rather than convergence, of ideas and problem solving must be the goal. Perhaps the greatest value in using case studies is the number of solutions that are generated in response to every problem and the subsequent increase in the experiential and knowledge base of all the individuals involved in making that decision.
3. The particular organizational setting in which the case takes place is not of critical importance. Management concepts are transferable from one type of organization to another. Likewise, participants should not be concerned about the decision maker's position within the nursing administration hierarchy. Incidents should be analyzed using the best judgment possible, even if the participant never has occupied the particular role reflected in the incident.

4. It is critical to look for underlying problems in each case study as opposed to simply treating the symptoms of the problem, as this will only allow the problem to recur.
5. Experiential learning is frequently used in conjunction with, but is not synonymous with, group work. However, if the desired outcome for teaching critical thinking is an interaction between the participants that results in the ability to critically examine issues, then the group process must be employed in some manner (Marquis, 1994).

◆ Group Work Using the Case Study Approach

When the case study approach is used in a group, certain responsibilities must be recognized by group members.

THE FACILITATOR

There is little agreement about how active or passive the teacher's or the facilitator's role should be in learning. However, because experiential learning is still relatively new, the following proposals may assist educators in facilitating the application of theory.

1. An essential prerequisite for a successful case study is planning. The teacher or facilitator must try to imagine him- or herself as a participant and ask: What would I learn from this case? How would I go about solving the problem? If I found myself faced with these problems, would I miss the real problem? What parts of the case would help me toward an understanding of the real problem?
2. The facilitator must understand the cases and be able to identify their learning objectives. When alternatives are not formulated or issues not clarified, it may be difficult for group members to see what is involved in the case. The facilitator must try to identify the "universality" or primary focus of the case without squelching creativity in identifying solutions.
3. The group should be assisted past the point of dependence on the leader as solver of the problem. The facilitator should be the "enabler" of the group.
4. With increased experience in managerial and leadership problem solving, it is very easy for the facilitator to unconsciously direct group members toward a particular solution and to consider other solutions inappropriate. Flexibility and objectivity, therefore, are essential. The facilitator must also be willing to relinquish some control.
5. Discussion questions should be correlated to the participant's level of theoretical knowledge and practical experience. These questions should promote discussion rather than single-word responses, elicit a variety of appropriate problem solutions, highlight important concepts or principles, and build to generate increasingly complex responses.

6. Time can be a constraint in any type of experiential learning. The facilitator should predetermine how much time should be devoted to each case study or how many case studies the allotted period of time allows. Factors to consider include the learning objectives and the maturity of group members.

GROUP MEMBERS

Group members must assume the following responsibilities:

1. A willingness to listen to what is being said by other group members and the facilitator, rather than focusing on their own rebuttal.
2. A responsibility to share ideas to allow mutual learning. Consistent participation in group discussions will strengthen verbal skills.
3. Advance case preparation. This includes careful reading of the cases and completion of assigned didactic material before attempting to problem solve.
4. A willingness to subject themselves to open debate and criticism, as little can be gained when nothing is risked. The ultimate goal of criticism is to assist other group members in making good decisions. Criticism received must be viewed as an opportunity to learn with the risks being small and the potential for gain great.

◆ Modes for Case Study Presentation

Case studies traditionally have been used in group work for group problem solving. The case studies in this book can be used individually, or by a large or small group. The primary factors determining appropriate modes are the learning objectives for class and the maturity of group members. This book has been written for use by senior generic nursing students, the new first- and middle-level manager, and LVN/LPNs and RNs returning to school.

◆ Use of This Book with Senior Generic Nursing Students

With senior generic nursing students, the cases may be assigned to individuals or solved by the class as a whole. Many nursing students have limited knowledge regarding management theory and have had even less exposure to management in a clinical setting. The instructor or facilitator must recognize that outside preparation and reading will be necessary before group members can attempt to solve the cases. Assigning students specific cases in advance allows them to fully prepare for their specific case presentation. Calling on students spontaneously encourages advance preparation by all class members, but probably not to the extent as when cases are assigned in advance. The instructor must scrutinize the academic workload of the students in determin-

ing how many cases students will have adequate time to prepare for each class session, as well as how many cases can be solved during the academic quarter or semester. The instructor should seek case studies that provide many significant factors related to the problem, as the students will bring limited prior management experience from which to draw in their problem solving. As the book progresses the complexity of the case studies increases, and students may want to creatively embellish details of the situation.

The instructor may prefer group problem solving over selecting individuals to present cases. Using group problem solving presents both advantages and disadvantages. In a formal academic setting, time constraints often limit the use of group problem solving, as a knowledgeable instructor can often deliver the same content in much less time. In addition, digressions should be expected in groups that are not accustomed to the case method, as students frequently find that their listening skills are not as well developed as their verbal skills.

Evaluation of individual group members is also more difficult when group case study preparation and presentation are used. Instructors must be careful in grading individual group members based on the group product. The input into the case study analysis most likely will not be equal, as the abilities of individual group members usually differ. When using group case study analysis, the instructor must decide in advance if and how individual students will be evaluated. The instructor must also decide how problem solving will be weighted versus the appropriateness of group process. Although most instructors weigh quality more heavily than quantity of contributions, the assertive, articulate student will probably do best in evaluation.

Solving cases by the group process enhances both verbal and listening skills as well as group dynamics. Students learn to become better listeners. They learn to give and receive constructive criticism. Group process also encourages risk taking. As individual verbal and listening skills improve, the group learns how to improve its collective performance.

Perhaps the best approach for the use of case studies is for the problem solving to occur outside of actual class time. Use of small study groups prior to class allows learners to use small group process in solving cases. This method is advantageous because it does not consume needed class time and one member from the group can be randomly selected for the presentation.

There is much to be said for an individual rather than a group making the presentation of the case solutions. The individual making an unassisted presentation practices the art of communication, a critical thinking skill (Marquis and Huston, 1996).

◆ Use of the Text with Returning Students

All returning students, both vocational/practical nurses and ADN or diploma RNs, generally have a wide range of management/leadership backgrounds. They may have been managers in other fields, or held positions of management in nursing. Many returning students have held management posi-

tions and functioned in a variety of leadership roles. Even those who have not held management positions will have had the personal experience of being managed by someone in health administration.

It is important that the previous experience of these students be acknowledged. However, the instructor must also see that their practical experience be supplemented with concrete didactic information. Some may have had a short course in management theory, but many will not have. Occasionally, returning students have histories of being exposed to poor management and leadership styles. Such student exchanges will add personal meaning to the case studies.

Because there is a wide variety of life experiences in these groups, group process works very well and members tend to learn from each other. However, for this same reason there is still a need to add some structure. The text itself may serve adequately as the structure for the class, or the instructor may find that some class time needs to be devoted to short organized lectures. Returning students also respond well to teacher-led discussion and if the class is not too large this often serves as an excellent alternative to the lecture.

◆ Use of This Book with New Managers

New managers may use this book within small seminar groups and workshops, or on an individual basis should adequate resources be available or should the new manager have a sound management theory base. If the case studies are used in the seminar/workshop setting, the instructor/facilitator must recognize that group members most likely have varying levels of knowledge and expertise. Applying an awareness of adult learner concepts, the facilitator should attempt to include the work experiences of group members, and should focus on case studies that examine problems relevant to group members at the time. Case studies selected for this group may be less specific or complete than those used for senior generic nursing students, as participants should have the benefit of life experience from which to draw or relate.

Seminars/workshops will probably not allow for advance preparation by group members and therefore, individual problem solving and case presentation is not a viable option. The facilitator should also recognize that because of the varying levels of expertise, some group participants will contribute more to the problem solving than others. The new manager with little experience will probably find the seminar the most helpful, whereas more experienced nurses may define their role as being that of a teacher and mentor.

Because there is rarely a need to evaluate individual performance in the seminar/workshop setting, the instructor/facilitator does not have the same concerns as with nursing students in differentiating between individual and group performance.

The relatively new manager with a sound management theory base may find value in reviewing the cases on an individual basis. With adequate resources, the new manager can search for the various alternatives to the case study solution and recommend solutions. Certainly, the lack of feedback or cor-

roboration by peers is a drawback, but the purpose of individual use may lie solely in reviewing the scope and complexity of universal nursing management problems.

◆ Summary

The workshop facilitator, teacher, in-service instructor, or group may choose to structure the class in one of a number of ways, including using methods the authors have suggested. However, if the case studies are to produce the level of critical thinking necessary for successful decision making, the following elements must be present.

1. The group process must be used in some way for problem solving.
2. There must be enough members available to allow for many alternatives and approaches.
3. There must be a way to promote individual accountability and decision making as well as group problem solving.
4. Communication, as well as problem solving, must be a part of the critical thinking process.
5. Analysis must be stressed, rather than arriving at the right answer.
6. Many cases must be assigned, so there is ample opportunity to make decisions and develop analytical skills.

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