AFUA ABAIDEN

STATEMENT OF INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

The Executive Internship experience has greatly enriched my career development in several ways. I fully achieved the course objectives of being able to evaluate the role of the Chief Nurse Executive and the integration of this role into the healthcare system; assess the role of the Chief Nurse Executive (CNE) and senior organizational administration in the strategic planning process for the organization; prepare a plan applying business development concepts to a specific product, program, or service within the health care organization, as directed by my preceptor, the CNE, among others.

Personally, I wanted to use the opportunity to understand the relationship between the CNE and middle level nursing management, and how the influence of the CNE ensures the provision of quality and cost effective care from the nursing discipline perspective. I was pleased to have realized that objective too. My CNE Preceptor was exceptional. He shared every experience with me and allowed me to be an active participant in the day to day operation of the Nursing Service on the days that I attended clinical. I felt included as a team member, accountable and responsible for my Strategic Business Plan Initiative and the patients and their families for whom the project would make a difference in their lives and their health status.

The internship helped me develop a set of much needed managerial skills. For instance, I learned in a more practical way certain important people skills, such as, using persuasion rather than directives to motivate people to action. Moreover, prior to the internship, I only had a fuzzy understanding of the strategic business planning process. The experience not only helped me honed my business planning skills, but also equipped me with much desired financial budgeting skills.
One of the biggest contributions I made to the employer organization was to help them develop a formal business plan for a health screening community outreach program they had recently started. One of the goals of the enterprise is to reduce non urgent emergency room visits which serve as financial drain to the hospital through uncompensated and or undercompensated care. The drain stems from the fact that a significant number of the community members have chronic diseases, are uninsured and therefore resort to using the emergency room for conditions that could perfectly be taken care of by provision of primary care. This plan resulted in a potential annual savings of about $ 1.5 million to the organization. (Please refer to Appendix 1 – Executive Summary of my Strategic Business Plan).

I have been involved in a number of leadership activities. For instance, I have organized a number of my colleagues at work to implement strategies we designed to prevent injury to clients, employees and visitors; I have also in collaboration with other colleagues, organized a group of people with healthcare needs but, who do not know how to access the needed care, by providing them with the necessary education. I am a leader of the women’s group in my church, with the duty to organize health fairs every quarter and so far, all the fairs I have organized have been very successful. My experience in Strategic Planning greatly enhanced my ability to engage in these professional, social and cultural activities with confidence and greater proficiency.

My church runs a food pantry for the needy in the community. One weekend a month, I volunteer and assist with bagging and giving out the bags to the needy families. I find this activity very rewarding and I do get some sort of fulfillment anytime I get home after rendering such a voluntary service.

The servant–leader concept put forth by Robert Greenleaf describes individuals who draw their authority not from their superiors or their positions but from their followers.
Becoming a servant-leader begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve first, then make conscious choices that inspires one to lead. There is a sharp contrast between such a leader and the one whose first preoccupation is to hold a leadership position. Drawing power from followers gives the leader a measure of trust and respect that cannot be gained simply by virtue of title or position. The most important issue that needs consideration in the servant-leader concept is to ensure that those served grow as persons while being served, and become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous and more likely themselves to become servants. A servant leader is perhaps the most fundamental and valuable source of leadership needed for organizational, community, societal or national growth and development. My Executive Internship allowed to grow in many ways but more importantly it allowed me to give back to my CNE Preceptor and to actualize the Community.
APPENDIX 1

Executive Summary of Strategic Business Plan.

A population at risk for hypertension, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases is a great concern due to the associated healthcare cost, disability and morbidity risks. With the current reimbursement cuts, one strategy hospitals like the East Orange General Hospital (EOGH) that serve a community with most of the members either uninsured or underinsured can use to prevent losses is to educate the people they serve to adopt and sustain those daily habits that contribute to health and also, identify disease manifestations early and provide needed intervention.

The catchment areas of EOGH has predominantly black population with a significant number being uninsured. According to Braithwaite (2009), Among African-Americans, 40.8% of women and 39.1% of men have hypertension.

Verbal reports I received from some of the authorities of the hospital indicate that the hospital has a substantial amount of uncompensated care. In early 2002, the hospital had very severe financial difficulties and at a point, was at the verge of closure. Although the hospital has stabilized financially under the leadership of the new President and Chief Executive Officer, the current healthcare environment requires thoughtful financial management.

Another issue affecting the hospital is that over the years the image of the hospital among the community members has remained unfavorable. This is because several years back, the hospital staff were not friendly to people of color and that information has been passed on from generation to generation with the resultant effect that those with health insurance prefer using other hospitals in the county rather than the EOGH. It is believed that through the proposed
health screening community outreach project, the image of the hospital will be recovered in addition to the other expected benefits to the hospital as well as the community members.

Reference