

## Perioperative Leadership: Managing Change With Insights, Priorities, and Tools

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### Purpose/Goal

To provide the learner with knowledge specific to perioperative leadership and managing change in the OR.

### Objectives

1. Describe important personal leadership qualities of a perioperative director.
2. Identify key issues OR nursing directors must understand.
3. Describe issues that concern surgeons when choosing a facility at which to perform procedures.
4. Identify how improvement in the OR can be accomplished.

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David L. Taylor III, MSN, RN, CNOR, has no declared affiliation that could be perceived as posing a potential conflict of interest in the publication of this article.

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## ABSTRACT

The personal leadership of the perioperative director is a critical factor in the success of any change management initiative. This article presents an approach to perioperative nursing leadership that addresses obstacles that prevent surgical departments from achieving high performance in clinical and financial outcomes. This leadership approach consists of specific insights, priorities, and tools: key insights include self-understanding of personal barriers to leadership and accuracy at understanding economic and strategic considerations related to the OR environment; key priorities include creating a customer-centered organization, focusing on process improvement, and concentrating on culture change; and key tools include using techniques (eg, direct engagement, collaborative leadership) to align surgical organizations with leadership priorities and mitigate specific perioperative management risks. Included in this article is a leadership development plan for perioperative directors. *AORN J* 100 (July 2014) 9-26. © AORN, Inc, 2014. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.aorn.2013.06.013>

*Key words: perioperative leadership, perioperative director, change management, strategy, OR culture, surgeon.*

One of the most important management skills in perioperative services today is the ability to lead organizational change. Ever-evolving standards of care, growing demands for improved quality and safety, and dramatic changes in reimbursement are requiring surgical services departments to adopt new practices, processes, and structures on a swift and continuous basis. In addition, most perioperative departments face a pressing need to improve financial performance. Incremental improvements are often not enough; increasingly, perioperative leaders must

accomplish transformational change aimed at creating a new organizational culture, one that meets or exceeds industry standards and enables the OR to respond effectively to new advancements, regulatory changes, and market adjustments.

The personal leadership of the perioperative director is a critical factor in the success of any change initiative. Many aspects (eg, executive support, surgeon cooperation, adequate budget) are important to effectively implement change; however, if the nursing director does not provide strong guidance, personnel will not alter their work

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