



Leadership Through Entrepreneurship

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Entrepreneurship is the process of creating value through creativity and innovation to make a sustainable impact. To be entrepreneurial is to recognize the importance of creating something that is innovative, is useful and has the potential to transform the current standard. An entrepreneurial mindset enables you to make an impact regardless of what position you hold or where your career takes you. Being innovative is a natural function of nursing; we are problem finders and problem solvers. The creativity we bring to solving the problems is the nursing process at its core.

Some nurses will take their innovation to bring new goods and services to the market—this is nurse entrepreneurship. Other nurses will use their knowledge to effect change and growth in their current position. This is known as being an intra-preneur, seeing a gap, and leveraging existing resources of the institution to create local change. Worldwide we have seen the expansion of “Innovation Centers” in the healthcare delivery system, recognizing that nurses, creative problem solvers, are the key drivers to system change resulting in better health outcomes and cost savings.

The REshape Innovation Center at Radboud University Medical Center in the Netherlands is one such example. Shawna Butler, RN, MBA is the EntrepreNURSE in residence, bringing the nurse perspective to early-stage ventures, large-scale enterprises, and to new emerging and converging technologies. The international company, Johnson and Johnson, has launched a comprehensive innovation

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platform, with programs that focus on advancing nurse-led innovation (<https://nursing.jnj.com/innovate-with-us>).

MakerNurse (<http://makernurse.com/>) sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is a community of inventive nurses who are creating solutions to improve patient care every day. Nurses are supported with tools and training to create a new generation of healthcare technologies.

Both nurse entrepreneurs and nurse intrapreneurs are needed to transform our healthcare delivery system. Indeed, there is overlap in the skill set of the entrepreneur and intrapreneur. In this chapter, we will focus on nurse entrepreneurship examining opportunities for new business development based on social trends and provide practical guidance that nurses need to be successful entrepreneurs. If you are reading this chapter and thinking *I will never be an entrepreneur*, we urge you to think again. It may be true that not all APRNs are entrepreneurs, so, too is it also true that we must expand our thinking on nurse entrepreneurship, build skills and embrace the profound impact entrepreneurship has on nursing practice, the nursing profession, and people who need nursing care.

Nursing entrepreneurship—often termed private practice, independent practice, independent contractor, and self-employed practice—sees the nurse as “a proprietor of a business that offers nursing services of a direct care, educational, research, administrative or consultative nature. The self-employed nurse is directly accountable to the client, to whom, or on behalf of whom, nursing services are provided” (ICN 2004, p. 4). Leadership through nurse entrepreneurship increases autonomy in practice, advances professionalism and will transform the healthcare delivery system (Smith et al. 2015).

Global estimates indicate that less than 1% of working nurses are business owners (ICN 2012). There are several plausible explanations for this phenomena. Economic conditions may contribute to this low number. Seventy-eight percent of all countries offer free or universal health coverage, typically funded by taxes (InternationalInsurance.com, n.d.). Most nurses in these countries are employed by agencies that provide healthcare services. However, countries with national health insurance also vary in the type of services provided; often citizens purchase supplemental insurance or pay cash to ensure an appropriate standard of care. Thus, worldwide there is still opportunity for nurse entrepreneurs to launch businesses to meet gaps in healthcare, and to receive payment for their services.

Many other compelling reasons may explain the low number of nurse entrepreneurs. Nursing school curricula typically do not include business principles, and when they do, it is featured at the doctoral level. While not all APRNs will be entrepreneurs, entrepreneurship is not limited to APRNs or those who achieve an advanced degree. There is a dearth of research on nurse entrepreneurship. Most reports contain anecdotal summaries or are guidebooks with tips to successful practice. In addition to economic factors, legislative and political factors may impede entrepreneurship. Over-regulation, restrictive scope of practice, and sub-optimal reimbursement are all policy concerns that can negatively impact the viability of a healthcare business. In order to increase the number of nurse entrepreneurs and to demonstrate the impact of nurse entrepreneurship, system change must occur.

22.1 Introduction

Most countries realize that their economy depends on a robust small business sector. In his article, *Six ways countries can support entrepreneurship*, University of Western Australia Professor [Tim Mazzarol](#) wrote that the heads of state attending the G20 Leaders' Summit meeting in Brisbane, Australia had called for enhanced efforts to grow economies through innovation and entrepreneurship (Mazzarol 2014). The European Commission (2003) noted that entrepreneurship is an important driver for economic growth, competitiveness, job creation, and a means to resolve social issues, including the escalating cost of healthcare.

Recognizing that women-led business represented untapped potential and that women have often been subjected to numerous hardships, the International Labour Organization launched Women's Entrepreneurship Development and Gender Equality (WEDGE) to address the practical needs of women entrepreneurs, to remove the socio-cultural, legal and political barriers for women's entrepreneurship, and to advocate for an enabling environment for business development and gender equality ([ilo.org](#), n.d). And in the United Kingdom, the Department of Trade and Industry Small Business Service stepped up efforts to increase female entrepreneurship, creating a strategic framework to support expansion of these businesses (DTI 2006).

In the USA, the State Department created the Academy of Women Entrepreneurs (AWE). Also originating in the USA was a sentinel policy report, issued by the Institute of Medicine in 2010, *The Future of Nursing, Leading Change, Advancing Health* (IOM 2011). This report has changed the healthcare landscape in America by leveraging the largest and most trusted profession of nursing (Brenan 2018) to transform a crippled healthcare system. Two key ways this is occurring is through an increased emphasis on nurse-led innovation and nurse entrepreneurship.

While we believe that entrepreneurship represents the future of nursing's untapped potential, we have also observed that nurses feel ill equipped to translate their knowledge into innovative processes or to the private sector to open their own businesses. Traditionally, nursing students are primarily focused on learning the clinical skills of diagnostic reasoning; however, this dynamic is changing.

More and more students, particularly millennials, are seeking out opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship. As a profession, we need to be equipped to provide these opportunities or risk the possibility of losing these students to other programs. We agree with the IOM recommendation that influencing nurses at the beginning of their career likely has the greatest impact on future entrepreneurial activity.

Nursing education has not emphasized the importance of nursing innovation. Thus, nurses do not often see themselves able or equipped to innovate. Nurses tend to view themselves as employed providers of healthcare, rather than leaders in the business of health, as either an intrapreneur or entrepreneur. This mindset is slowly changing as nursing education begins to incorporate business principles into the curriculum and nursing leadership embraces its role in this culture shift.

The good news is that entrepreneurship is not an inherited or genetic trait. The skills can be learned! In this chapter, we explore benefits and barriers to entrepreneurship and suggest strategies to expand the foot-print of nurse business owners.

22.2 Turning Innovation and Creativity into Entrepreneurship

Nursing is an art. We have all heard this, but what we do not recognize is that owning our creativity is inherent in that phrase. Artists are creative by nature. They do not see things for what they are, they see them for what they could be. This mindset is at the heart of innovation. As a nurse, you use your creativity every day. By leveraging that creativity, you can create well beyond what you think is possible.

Nurses have been innovating in healthcare since Florence Nightingale. Examples of early nursing innovations include the Henry Street Settlement in the USA, established by nurse Lillian Wald in 1893, and the Frontier Nursing Service established by nurse Mary Breckinridge in 1925. Wald and Breckinridge were examples of nurse innovators who created opportunities for nurses to practice independently within an organized nurse-managed setting.

Dame Cicely Saunders of the United Kingdom founded the modern hospice movement. Contemporary nurse entrepreneurs include Anna Sort, of Barcelona, a specialist in Digital Health and Gamification, who has founded two digital healthcare companies. Her products bring new technologies to patients and nurses to improve care. Tiffany Kelley, of the USA, is a nurse inventor and owner of **NIGHTINGALE APPS**, a mobile health technology company that provides digital solutions to nurses to support their care delivery needs.

There are countless other examples of nurses who saw a need, created a solution and changed practice to make it happen. You can too.

An entrepreneur is someone who organizes, manages, and assumes the risk of a business (Merriam-Webster 2016). The heart of entrepreneurship is a curious mind, a mind that finds solutions to problems. Entrepreneurship is about seeing a need and filling it.

Nurses in administrative practice have skills in managing personnel, time, budgets, and other business skills. All nurses use the nursing process including assessment, identification of needs/problems/gaps, interventions, and evaluation measures to improve patient care and outcomes. These are also skills of effective entrepreneurs.

Some common qualities of entrepreneurs include being resilient, motivated, accountable, honest, passionate, goal oriented, curious, comfortable with uncertainty, able to take risks, enthusiastic, critical thinking, assertive, creative, able to thrive on change, able to handle stress, self-confident, and willing to collaborate. Hopefully, right now you are thinking, *“I see these qualities in myself—and the nurses around me.”*

Healthcare is changing, and the nurse entrepreneur is forward thinking, recognizing the requirements of a changing system well in advance of when the need

arises. Healthcare of the future is person-centered, authentic, based on experience and value driven. Because nurses already practice via science and art, we are perfectly positioned to blend compassionate, heart-centered care with sustainable creative businesses. As nurses take center stage in healthcare transformation, they will be encouraged to think beyond the patient to greater impact, sustainability, and growth, all of which are critical components of an entrepreneurial mindset.

22.3 Trends Supporting Nurse Entrepreneurship

No matter what business you are involved in, success is primarily dependent on providing a necessary service or product. Who drives this? Consumers. Savvy entrepreneurs must understand their population and what it is that they want or need. Population trends and policy changes are two significant factors entrepreneurs must consider.

22.3.1 Population Trends

People worldwide are living longer. Between 2015 and 2050, the proportion of the world's population over 60 years will nearly double from 12 to 22% (WHO 2018). Worldwide, 125 million people are aged 80 years or older. By 2050, there will be almost this many (120 million) living in China alone, and 434 million people in this age group across the globe (WHO 2018). In the USA, nearly 10,000 baby boomers turn 65 every day! This has been happening every day since 2012 and is projected to continue for another 20 years (Pew Research Center 2010). Japan is experiencing a “super-aging” society both in rural and urban areas. According to 2014 estimates, over a third of the population is 60 years or older (ILC-Japan 2013). While longer life brings with it, opportunities, not only for older people and their families, longer aging also challenges countries to ensure that their health and social systems are ready to make the most of this demographic shift.

Older consumers need personalized attention for chronic care management including coordinating multiple providers, medication management, loneliness, and cost concerns. Previously, multigenerational households used internal resources to care for elders. As jobs shift to larger cities and families are increasingly separated by geography, adult children need more resources to meet the care needs of their parents (Elango et al. 2007). Many elders suffer from mobility-related problems, creating opportunities for nurses to offer mobile services. A relatively wealthy, aging population is willing to pay for services delivered to them at home, or improve their access to a clinician, as is typical in a concierge type practice. As people live longer, we see a shift to creating enhanced quality of life after retirement. Each of these factors translates to a host of new business opportunities for nurses.

At the other end of the age spectrum are Millennials (born between 1980 and 1994) and Generation Z (born in the mid 1990–2000) who are changing everything—from the way we shop, eat, travel, and even access healthcare. Generation Z represent 32

million of the global population, with Millennials, another 31 million. In the USA, these younger groups far surpass the Baby Boomers (Miller and Lu 2018). What are the unique features of these consumers? Most significant, wrote Morris Panner in *Forbes* magazine, is that they have grown up in a technology powered, consumer-oriented environment, with high expectations of efficiency. They value convenience, transparency, and rapid delivery of services. They get their health information from the internet and no longer rely solely on a healthcare provider to answer their questions. They want to know what they are buying and how much it costs (April, 2019). Their culture of health values nutrition and exercise over antibiotics, promotes mental healthcare through expanded services, and includes an increasing awareness on gender fluidity and social tolerance (Global Marketing Group 2019).

The Millennials are also responsible for what might be called a new Baby Boom. An analysis of US census data showed that motherhood and overall family size are on the uptick (Bednar 2018). New business opportunities that harness technology and easier access to care will have traction with younger consumers. Retail clinics, evening hours, drop in clinics, and published prices for care are all important care delivery trends that are the result of shifts in consumer needs and wants.

With all that is good about technology, we also know consumers crave balance of high touch with high tech. Nurses, rated as the most trusted profession for nearly 20 consecutive years (Brenan 2018), are perfectly positioned to balance high tech with high touch, personalizing care within a context of evidence-based information and advocacy. Nurses can be the bridge between the patient and technology, helping consumers to use technology to better their health.

22.3.2 Policy/Workforce Trends

Radical changes in healthcare reform brought about by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) in the USA, brought upwards of 20 million people into the healthcare system, clamoring for services and access to providers (ASPE 2016). This massive influx not only increased the demand for clinicians but also for a broader variety of goods and services. Entities that could rapidly respond to the policy impact of the ACA benefitted the most. Since a primary care physician shortage existed long before the ACA was passed, the medical establishment has been less able to react quickly or adequately to meet the demand for providers (AAMC 2019). On the other hand, the nursing profession provided a ready solution, increasing the supply of advanced practice nurses. By 2018, APRNs were providing over one billion health care visits annually with nearly 90% of all Nurse Practitioners (NPs) prepared in primary care (AANP 2019). APRN care outcomes are shown to be equal to or better than the same care provided by physicians. Patients report a higher satisfaction with APRN care, and they adhere better to the treatment plans they design with an APRN (Stanik-Hutt et al. 2013).

Indeed, the healthcare landscape has changed with APRNs providing high-quality cost-effective care, in retail clinics, home/mobile practices, and the

community. Consumers are experiencing APRN care and they like what they are getting! While some states in the USA still have work to do to remove onerous practice barriers for APRNs, the environment is rich with opportunities for nurse-owned businesses to meet the need and population trends.

22.4 What Nurses Need to Lead as Entrepreneurs

All nurses are leaders, regardless of the particular position they hold in the health-care system. Seeing yourself as a nurse leader is a mindset, as is seeing yourself as a nurse entrepreneur. Nurses need to know they have the ability to lead change, be business owners, and create new models for health delivery. How does this happen? By changing nursing culture, by incorporating business skills into nursing curricula and creating business cultures that support innovation.

When schools of nursing support innovation and entrepreneurs, they not only influence current nurses, but also engage the next generation of nurses. When you see entrepreneurship happening, it becomes real and normal—not an outlier role. While schools have expanded their curriculum, we note a definite trend toward skill development for the nurse executive in a hospital setting or C suite, rather than on business development.

Some programs, however, truly embrace nursing innovation. For those thinking about this career path, we suggest checking out The Ohio State University School of Nursing Innovation Studio (<https://nursing.osu.edu/offices-and-initiatives/office-innovation-and-strategic-partnerships/innovationstudio>) and Northeastern Healthcare Innovation & EntrepreNURSEship (<https://nuhealthcareinnovation.com/>).

In Australia, Swinburne University of Technology has established a Master of Entrepreneurship and Innovation degree. The program focuses on the specific needs of entrepreneurs and innovators who want to successfully commercialize their innovation. It is tailored for those who want to bring visionary attitudes and possibilities to existing business ventures or non-business ventures (www.swinburne.edu.au 2011).

What about all the nurses not in a formal nursing program? Our experience has shown that nurses do not lack creativity or ideas for a nursing business. Nurses start out with a passion for helping others and desire to make a difference in quality of life. Yet, nurses rate themselves as low on having the actual skill set of a business owner. What nurses need are principles of business development, resources, and mentors. Nurses need technical support to take their idea from dream to reality. To fill this knowledge gap in our own state, we developed a nurse entrepreneur course, a blend of on-site and online instruction, which helps nurses move along on the path to business ownership.

We identified **four steps** to support nurses taking ideas and passion into business.

22.4.1 Transform Passion into Vision

“What the mind can conceive and believe, it can achieve.” Napoleon Hill (1937).

Take a moment to dream about your ideal clinical practice. Write out your vision—what does your company look like? What is your mission? Why does your business exist? What do you value? Why do consumers need you in the marketplace? In our nurse entrepreneur course, we have participants create a vision board with photos and words that capture the essence of the vision. Images speak to the mind more powerfully than words, as they capture the feeling for the project. Passion is the driving force that provides the energy to persist through the challenges in starting a business.

22.4.2 Make a Plan

Develop a framework for your business. Yes, you absolutely need a business plan! But do not get hung up on this step. Writing a business plan, though necessary, need not be arduous. You have to think broadly about elements that go into opening a business. The basic components of a business plan are displayed in Fig. 22.1. (Flanagan, 1993).

The good news is there are plenty of free tools available—and people too! In West Virginia, USA, we partnered with our state-wide small business development office as we created our nurse entrepreneur course. We use a business canvas tool (Fig. 22.2) to help our budding nurse entrepreneurs work through the steps of writing their business plan.

Each participant works through several modules that are designed to be adapted to any variety of small business. For our US readers, free resources like the Small Business Administration’s Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) are available in every state to provide tools and coaches who can assist with this process.

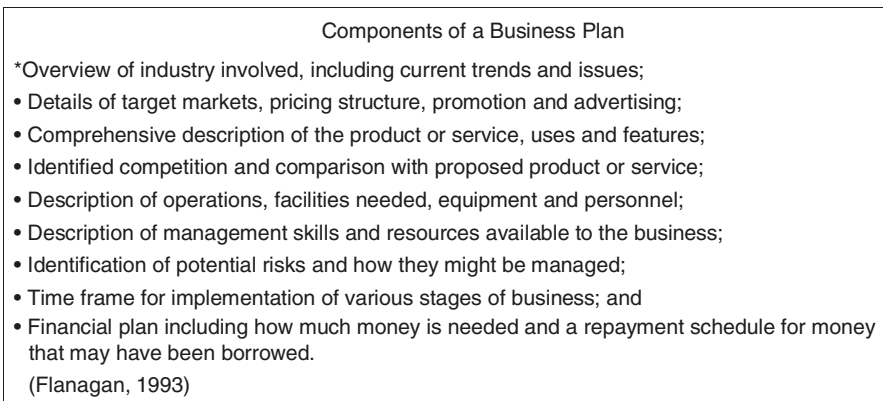


Fig. 22.1 Elements of a business plan

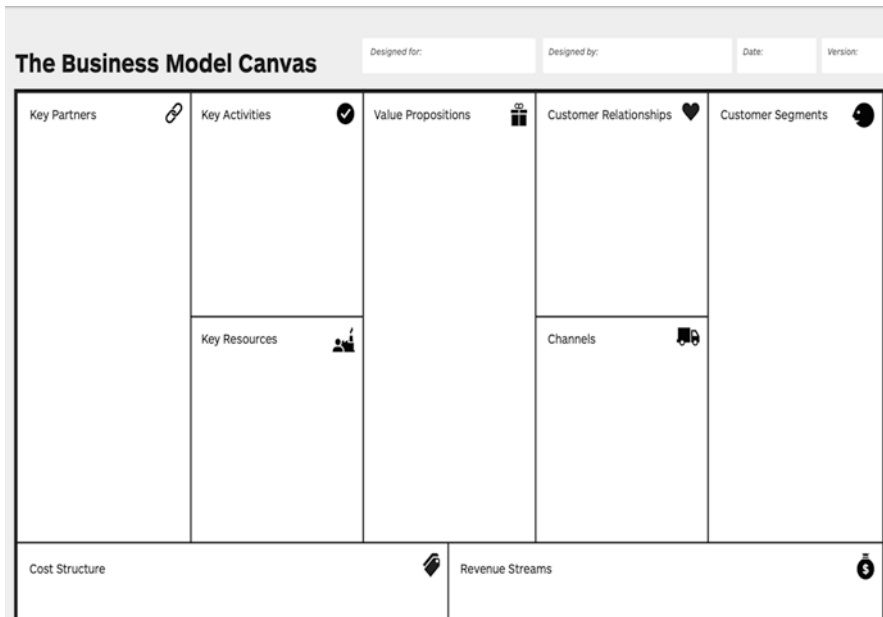


Fig. 22.2 Business model canvas (free download from [Strategyzer.com](https://assets.strategyzer.com/assets/resources/the-business-model-canvas.pdf)) <https://assets.strategyzer.com/assets/resources/the-business-model-canvas.pdf>

Your business plan will include a market scan to help understand what your consumers want, a SWOT analysis to identify opportunities and obstacles to your business idea, and legal considerations. You will need to decide what business structure is best for you. It is important to find a balance between your passion and skill set and what the consumer wants and for which he/she is willing to pay. Above all, if you are low on resources, the best place to spend your money as a new business owner is on legal support. Incorporating a business and creating a sustainable structure is critical to long term success. If you are new to this area, we urge you to think twice about doing this part on your own.

How do you know what your consumer needs? Every successful business meets a need and fills a gap in the marketplace. Identifying the gaps and needs and creating a service or product to fill that need is the foundation for developing and marketing the business. Being aware of the direction of trends in healthcare is a good start. Riding the wave of change in the direction of change supports momentum for business success. Back these observations up with data that identifies the area with the biggest need, desire, and ability to pay for the product or service being provided.

At the end of this chapter, a resource list is provided to help you to identify population health trends. You might also conduct polls or focus groups to further identify and personalize the dynamics and specifics regarding what people are seeking and willing to purchase. These processes also help to shape the message from nursing jargon to language with which the public identifies for marketing.

Business models vary. Many APRNs think about owning their own clinical practice, starting out as a solo practitioner, maybe growing over time to a group practice. Maybe a brick and mortar practice does not appeal to you but you can consider opening a house calls practice or offer tele-health services from your home. Take your show on the road, contract with small employers to provide on-site primary care at certain intervals, augmented by tele-health visits. You really can and should be creative to meet the needs of your consumers while engaging your passion.

Expand your thinking on how people will pay for your care. Perhaps your services are not typically covered by traditional insurance or national health service. That does not mean you cannot or should not open your business—it just means you need to figure out demand and for what people are willing to pay. Perhaps your business can contract with the ministries of health, expanding their slate of services. Trust us when we say that you do not have to rely on health insurance to open a business—but you do have to rely on excellent market analysis, provide a product or service that is needed and price it attractively enough that people will pay cash for it.

Today, health insurance is pretty costly, with high co-pays and deductibles. It can be helpful to think of consumers as mostly cash pay when they have to meet very high deductibles before insurance coverage begins. Can you offer affordable primary care for less than the deductible? With an emphasis on health promotion and wellness, nurses are perfectly positioned to provide these services.

22.4.3 Find Startup Money

Financing and projecting profits is critical. For anything we do, we need to know if it is sustainable, how long will it take for us to cover our costs and make a profit and most importantly who is going to pay for it. It is not a bad thing to make money, in fact your business depends on it! Therefore, financial planning is critical. It is important to know how many clients, hours, or products must be sold to break even and be profitable.

Thinking about finances can be as simple as comparing it to how you manage your personal wealth, or as complex as creating a projection that drives a company 5 years into the future. Either way, one has to have a basic understanding of profit margins, loss, checks and balances, and assets. Cash flow is king, so any business you create will be laser focused on cash flow. You do not need to be an accountant or finance expert to participate in these conversations, but you do need to have a general overview of these terms and understand the driving factors. You may need to read some articles, take a class, or listen in on seminars. It may also be a good idea to get a finance mentor, or trusted friend who is really good at these things and connect with them early and often.

Startup costs for a business vary and depend on what type of goods and services you plan to offer. The more planning you do, the more refined your slate of services is, the more you can figure out what it will cost to open your business. This pre-planning is also critical to knowing what type of goods and services you need (quantity wise) to sustain the business over the years ahead.

Startup funding can come from multiple sources, including personal savings, bank loans or independent funding organizations or angel investors who may be interested in supporting your idea. Foundations are an excellent source of funding for not for profit businesses that are serving the needs in a local population. Foundations range from large national foundations and government grants to small community and family foundations. A local nonprofit association is a great resource for locating sources in each community. Here again your local SBDC will be a source of information on funders and can help you shape the proposal for success.

22.4.4 Build a Network

Opening a new business is exciting, exhilarating, and a lot of work! Do not go it alone. While this may be your first business, others have gone before you. Getting feedback and input is important. In addition to coaches, creating a small mastermind group of people who are working toward similar goals can be a source of inspiration, creativity, and support as the business starts to take shape. Finding a mentor who can share insights and support is another excellent resource. Every new venture has ups and downs. The wisdom of an experienced entrepreneur can support you to persevere in challenging times.

22.5 Journey to Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurs do not wake up one morning and say, I am an entrepreneur. Embracing an entrepreneurial mindset is a process. It happens as part of a journey. Your years of practice or age do not have anything to do with how you progress through this journey. What does work is your ability to practice self-awareness.

Take time for personal reflection to recognize your strengths and weakness, see challenges from a different perspective, and then create innovative and value-driven solutions that fill the need you see. For some entrepreneurs, this process happens rather quickly after embarking on a career, maybe because resources are available or opportunities are presented. For others this journey takes some time. Many entrepreneurs spend years understanding and studying a need before they ever begin to think about creating comprehensive solutions to address it.

The journey is personal. One can be trained in aspects of entrepreneurship, yet the process of becoming an entrepreneur is just as individual as becoming a leader. What we have learned over the course of our collective careers is that one of the most critical steps to nurturing an entrepreneurial mindset is self-awareness and deep respect for this process.

Self-awareness is the ability to look within to understand and accept your strengths and weaknesses so you can build upon your strengths, and create teams that fill your weaknesses. Without deep personal reflection, you risk the potential of missing something big or going into something headfirst that would never work because you have blind spots. Personal growth is paramount to long-term

sustainability and success. Just as leadership requires personal time and attention for growth, entrepreneurs need to give themselves time to develop and identify the best ways in which to use their gifts to impact the greater good.

Nurture your creativity. Recognize that you have a creative spirit. Then honor and develop that creativity through doing things that fuel your soul. For example, you may like to build things, or work with your hands, so roll up your sleeves and do something that excites you and sparks that inner creativity. You may enjoy learning and decide to study something in an entirely different area, maybe change your scenery for a few days while working, or even take a few minutes out of your morning to vision how you want to use your creative bones in your current practice. Maybe you paint with your patients, or sing with them. Whatever it is, just do it and you will notice over time that your creative juices start flowing!

I am a Nurse combined with I am a Nurse Entrepreneur gives you permission to change the world. The world is waiting for you to own your truth, so do not hold back, take that first step on your journey today!

22.5.1 Taura's Journey

I never imagined I would be a business owner; it was never a part of my plan. As a young nurse, I was not exposed to the possibilities of nursing outside of academia and practice. I was often encouraged to avoid the business conversation. Fortunately, I was blessed with very progressive nurse mentors, healthcare mentors, and coaches who helped me shift the way I thought about my work.

I stepped into entrepreneurship when an opportunity arose that I could not resist.

Valtari Bio Inc. (<http://valtaribio.com>) was launched in 2015 as a result of my nursing passion and practice to improve stroke care and ability to step outside my comfort zone. As a young trauma nurse, I was intrigued by the possibility of leveraging the immune system to better understand stroke and provide patients and their families more information regarding their ability to recover. I became a nurse scientist and began the arduous task of studying the immune system in stroke patients. After 10 years of research, I found that not only could we use patterns in the immune system to aid in stroke diagnosis, we may even be able to use the immune system to stratify treatment and help patients recover more fully. I remember the day clearly when I said yes to taking all of that knowledge out of academia into the marketplace! A colleague saw tremendous value in the intellectual property I created and half-jokingly suggested we start a company.

The journey has changed since we launched. The experience enlightened me to think beyond what I thought possible for my career. Not long after creating Valtari Bio, I launched Deep Roots Healing LLC (<http://www.deeprootsh healing.org/>) which is based on an innovative model combining health and wellness with leadership and career coaching for those who have experienced significant health crises. And Deep Roots Healing is not the last of my business ventures! Once I took the first scary step, the next step was a little easier. Opportunities presented themselves and I was transformed in the process. What drives me is the real promise of making

an impact at the level of the individual patient. I am a nurse whose clinical experiences drive innovation. This simple statement has made a difference when talking to clients, investors, collaborators, and strategic partners.

22.5.2 Aila's Journey

I was a breech birth. I think this set my course in life. Often I find myself in a non-traditional situation, and then I have to figure out what to do with it. When an Occupational Alcoholism Program grant I was working under ran out in 1974, one of the businesses for which I was consulting decided they wanted to continue the relationship and offered to pay me as a consultant. I had a customer before I had a business. At that point I consulted an attorney friend who recommended that what I needed was an accountant. The accountant instructed me to register the business with the Secretary of State for a nominal cost, open a checking account, deposit the consulting check, and purchase supplies from the checkbook. Instantly, I was in business. That business evolved into what is known as an Employee Assistance Program today. I developed contracts with many employers, trained supervisors and did employee seminars, which took off into a national public speaking part of the business. That led to developing books, tapes, and CD programs sold back of the room and online.

To the assessment and referral part of the EAP I added a coaching certification, evolving into a health coaching service. *LifeQuest International, LLC* (ailaspeaks.com) continues to evolve, grow, and change. I have been a sole proprietor, created and dissolved two partnerships and contracted with other professionals and a non-profit coalition. I have had a large office with employees and now work virtually from home. The journey has been challenging and extremely rewarding. Coaching new entrepreneurs, especially nurses is one of the highlights of my business today!

22.5.3 Anna's Journey

Meet Anna Sort, an entrepreneur from Spain. Anna Sort is a nurse who has found her passion as a digital health pioneer, nurse entrepreneur, inventor, professor, author, and public speaker. Follow Anna on Twitter at Anna Sort @ Lost Nurse. Here is her story:

“I am a nurse and a gamer and I am here to make health fun.”

And so the interview begins, telling Anna's story of how she came to be an entrepreneur. Recognizing the important role that nurses have as educators in health promotion and prevention, she also observed that traditional approach of teaching, sitting with the patient, covering important concepts, and closing with a take home pamphlet just seemed to fall short.

“We need to make a way for newer technologies, to help people get and stay addicted to health.” Thus, she created PlayBenefit, a digital technology company

designed to better connect the individual patient, with his or her care needs through behavior change and feedback about the change- and have fun doing it! Engaging apps, merge concepts from video games with health and wellness activities to get people to move more, (also called exercise), eat for better health, to take medications as prescribed, and to gain disease control.

Anna offers three tips for beginning nurse entrepreneurs:

1. *The problem isn't the problem, it's your attitude about the problem*

We tend to make things bigger than they are, taking them out of scope. Keeping this tip in mind helped me take a step back and rationalize the problem objectively. Helps you to see where you are going, the resources and strategy needed, and not see it all from your own personal perspective.

2. ***Deal with frustration***

I cannot empathize how important this is. What is frustration? Frustration appears when your team, your provider, your whatever, is not meeting your expectations. This might be for several reasons, but most likely, it is because they are not aligned with you. To prevent this, always, always, communicate your vision, a “why,” and a validation: “We are going to climb the mountain BECAUSE we need the resources that are only available on the top AND we will know we climbed the mountain because we will put a flag on top.”

3. ***Delegate the right way***

I read everywhere that it is important to delegate. In my experience, it is not about knowing what to delegate (that is the easy part at least for me now), what I am learning now is HOW to delegate. This is very related to point number 2 and can cause, besides frustration, mistrust with your workers. To prevent this, have meetings where you let everyone know the minutes (what you will discuss), provide the vision, discuss the methodology and the “why,” provide validation, and write it down for the others and send it by e-mail after.

22.6 Recommendations to Support Entrepreneurship in Nurses

We close this chapter with specific recommendation for various sectors in nursing.

22.6.1 For Individual Nurses

- Embrace and nurture an entrepreneurial mindset, maybe through hiring a personal coach or seeking out learning opportunities.
- Align daily schedule with life and career goals.
- Support and develop holistic, transcendental, and entrepreneurial leadership.
- Use career planning, training, and education resources.
- Creatively leverage existing resources.

- Tap into Alumni for mentoring and funding opportunities.
- Seek public and private partnerships for financial support.
- Partner with local clinicians to identify innovations.
- Seek funding beyond traditional grants/contracts.

22.6.2 For Nurse Educators

- Incorporate the processes of innovation, entrepreneurial concepts, and mindset into nursing curricula at all levels of nursing.
- Create fellowships, training programs, and mentoring networks to train/mentor nurse entrepreneurs and encourage students to seek out opportunities to build their innovations, like the Johnson & Johnson Nurse Innovation Fellowship <https://nursing.jnj.com/innovate-with-us/nurse-fellowship>
- Select nurse entrepreneurs as preceptors for APRN students.

22.6.3 For Governments and Healthcare Delivery Systems

- Support policy reform that reduces scope of practice barriers for all nurses.
- Implement reimbursement mechanisms that pay nurses directly for care.
- Create a culture of innovation, incentives to support nurse entrepreneurship.
- Develop mechanisms to track nurse-led innovations, businesses, and companies.

22.7 Links to Resources for Nurse Entrepreneurs

NurseMakers <http://makernurse.com/>.

International Council of Nurses (2012). Handbook on Entrepreneurial Practice. https://www.icn.ch/sites/default/files/inline-files/2012_Handbook_entrepreneurial_practice_eng.pdf.

SONSIEL: Society of Nurse Scientists, Innovators, Entrepreneurs and Leaders <https://www.sonsiel.com/>.

Small Business Development Centers (<http://www.sba.gov/sbdc/>).

National Nurses in Business Association (<https://nnbanow.com/>).

National Nurse Practitioner Entrepreneur Network (<https://www.nnpn.org/>).

County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (<https://www.rwjf.org/en/how-we-work/grants-explorer/featured-programs/county-health-ranking-roadmap.html>).

Business Canvas Model. <https://www.strategyzer.com/> Excellent resource for business planning.

Aspen Institute Health Innovators Fellowship <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/programs/health-innovators-fellowship/>.

American Academy of Nurse Entrepreneurs <https://aane.us/>.

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