The movie *Selma* depicts Martin Luther King Jr.’s personal and public struggles as a leader committed to social change. As I watched the movie, I thought about what it takes to be a transformational leader who changes the mind-sets of people, groups, organizations, and even a nation. During the movie, the audience witnesses King evolving into a leader who demonstrates the full range of personal attributes associated with transformational leadership. These attributes, known as the 4 I’s, include idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and inspirational motivation.

During the march on Washington, D.C., in 1963, it was King’s “I Have a Dream” speech that provided the compelling vision that would help him and others face and overcome the future challenges depicted in *Selma*. His speech was truly an example of inspirational motivation. As leaders of Magnet®-aspiring organizations, we often underestimate the power of inspirational motivation as part of the change process.

Emerging research in the field of neuroscience and leadership has revealed that inspiration and motivation aroused by transformational leaders help followers use their talent, seek innovative solutions, adapt to new technologies, and adapt to changing environments. In their book *Full Range Leadership Development*, Sosik and Jung (2010) emphasize that energizing followers during challenging situations, championing collective action and team synergy, and articulating a clear vision of the future can not only create strong emotional bonds but also lead to an increased willingness to exceed expectations. It is this willingness to exceed that is required to create a professional practice environment worthy of Magnet designation.
Although the Magnet Recognition Program® application requires you to have a nursing strategic plan that is in alignment with organizational priorities, having a plan is not enough to inspire and mobilize others to create a professional practice environment. When questioning clinical nurses during interviews or focus groups, I have found most of them to be unaware of the initiatives in their nursing or organization strategic plan and unable to articulate examples of empirical outcomes associated with strategic initiatives.

Along with a plan, chief nursing officers (CNOs) must have a vision that inspires, motivates, and creates a sense of optimism about the future of nursing in their organization. They must also take as many opportunities as possible to share this vision. In other words, CNOs must have their own version of an “I Have a Dream” speech.

**Tips for Strategic Visioning**

1. Share your “I Have a Dream” speech with your staff so they experience your vision of the future of nursing in your organization.
   - Use a TED Talk format with very little use of PowerPoint slides, graphs, or tables. Remember, you are speaking to their hearts, not their heads.
   - Use your Intranet and website to share your vision.
   - Be able to customize your “I Have a Dream” speech when invited to speak in other forums to other stakeholders.

2. Tap into the unspoken dreams and aspirations of others by inviting a group of senior nurse leaders, managers, and clinical nurses to envision the future of nursing in the organization.

3. Encourage them to write their own “I Have a Dream” speech (no longer than a short paragraph) about the future of nursing in the organization.

4. As individuals are sharing their visions, ask the participants to listen and capture the recurring themes.

5. Use these themes as the foundation for the development of a nursing vision for your strategic plan as well as your professional practice model.

6. Once nursing has a vision, you and your staff are ready to talk about how you are going to make this vision come alive. This is a great kickoff to any strategic planning session, because you now know where you want to go as an organization!

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