

# One Path to Becoming a Nurse Entrepreneur in Healthcare Informatics

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## **Background**

Nurses are prepared in their educational pursuits to provide exceptional care to their patients. As nurses advance their career, the focus of that care delivery becomes more specialized. The specializations include advanced practitioners, administrators, informaticists, educators, researchers, and also entrepreneurs. However, the path toward nurse entrepreneurship is one that has limited formal education or training. Thus, personal accounts must be shared with other nurses to demonstrate the potential path for others. The purpose of this poster presentation is to provide a personal account in career development from a staff nurse to a PhD-prepared nurse entrepreneur.

## **Methods**

The methods taken to describe this personal account represent a combination of professional and educational experiences. Dr. Kelley will describe the importance of her own nursing experience and awareness of the nursing practice environment in order to advance her career. The nursing experience and awareness were instrumental in being successful as a Ph.D. student. While the focus of a Ph.D. program is on research, her research included observations, interviews, and document reviews to formally study how nurses use information needed to know their patients. Through such immersion and awareness she formed an idea for a product that could support nurses to know their patients. However, the execution of the idea, as an entrepreneurial effort, required new knowledge and skills that were not part of her past nursing education and experience.

The foundational knowledge initially came from Dr. Kelley's Master's education in Business Administration. She obtained her MBA from Northeastern University before pursuing her PhD. From that experience, she felt confident with knowing the different sectors of business. However, she recognized the need to tailor that education to the specific pursuit of entrepreneurship (Kawasaki, 2004; Vogel & Doleysh, 1994). Thus, she began attending events in the Boston community that discussed entrepreneurship and connecting with experts in areas that required her attention. She began to find herself surrounded with other entrepreneurs. Their expertise and experiences were helpful to answer questions about moving forward in a certain sector of the business. She also connected with a venture accelerator, IDEA, through Northeastern University for students and alumni.

## **Results**

Dr. Kelley did not anticipate starting a company until she formed an idea for a software application that could help nurses working in hospital settings from her Ph.D. research. After considering the options as to how best to bring the idea into reality, she decided to form a company. Building a company from an idea occurs in stages. The different stages will be described as well as the key knowledge, skills, and resources needed at each stage.

## **Discussion**

Nurses understand the existing problems and are best equipped to develop innovative ideas that can positively impact the nursing profession and the patients receiving care. For some, this may mean taking the formidable step of becoming an entrepreneur. Gaining the required knowledge, skills, finding appropriate mentors and being very resourceful can benefit aspiring entrepreneurs to maximize the potential for success.

## **References**

1. Kawasaki, G. (2004). *The art of the start: The time-tested, battle hardened guide for anyone starting anything*. NY: Portfolio.
2. Vogel, G., & Doleysh, N. (1994). *Entrepreneurship: A nurse's guide to starting a business*. NY: NLN.