12.1: Introduction

Learning Objectives

- Recognize the role of nurse leaders, and nurse managers in particular.
- Integrate the role of the professional nurse into the role of the nurse leader or manager.
- Illustrate the importance of examining personal, professional, and organizational values in nursing practice.
- Describe how the CNA’s Code of Ethics can be used in your nursing practice to deal with environmental threats.

Let whoever is in charge keep this simple question in her head (not, how can I always do this right thing myself, but) how can I provide for this right thing to be always done?

—Florence Nightingale (1860, p. 37)

According to the Canadian Nurses Association, “Nursing leadership is about critical thinking, action and advocacy—and it happens in all roles and domains of nursing practice.” It exists across all domains of nursing (clinical, academic, administration, research, and policy) in every setting and at various levels. Leadership can occur in formal, appointed positions or in informal roles that nurses assume. In administration, it is

about innovative and visionary administrators from the first level to the most senior nurse executives—leaders who understand and hold themselves accountable for creating vibrant, exciting practice settings in which nurses can deliver safe, accessible, timely and high-quality care for the Canadians they serve. (CNA, 2009a, p. 1)
This chapter will focus on the tools and resources required to support the first-level manager (nurse manager) and builds on the ethical nursing practices and professional nursing values discussed in Chapter 10.