

The Inverted Pyramid™ Unit Risk Assessment

Instructions: Please answer the following questions based on your current unit or department profile. Be as honest as possible; this is for your eyes only to help you identify your leadership "danger zones."

Section 1: The Experience Audit

1. **The Median Tenure:** If you lined up all your nurses by their years of nursing experience in your specialty area, how much experience does the person in the middle have?
 - A) Over 5 years (1 pt)
 - B) 2–5 years (3 pts)
 - C) Under 2 years (5 pts)
 2. **The Night Shift Profile:** Think of your typical Tuesday night shift. What is the average experience of the staff on the floor?
 - A) Robust mix of veterans and novices (1 pt)
 - B) One or two veterans "carrying" the floor (3 pts)
 - C) The "Senior" nurse has less than 24 months of experience (5 pts)
 3. **The "Missing Middle":** What percentage of your staff has between 3 and 7 years of experience?
 - A) More than 40% (1 pt)
 - B) 15%–40% (3 pts)
 - C) Less than 15% (5 pts)
-

Section 2: System Support & Infrastructure

4. **Clinical Decision Support:** How does a novice nurse on your unit get help with a complex clinical decision at 3:00 AM?
 - A) They have an assigned, experienced mentor available to them (1 pt)
 - B) They have to find the Charge Nurse, who is usually busy (3 pts)
 - C) They "Google" it or ask another novice nurse (5 pts)
5. **Failure to Rescue Safety Nets:** Does your unit utilize virtual nursing, AI-driven acuity alerts, or remote telemetry monitoring to assist nurses in recognizing early warning signs of patient deterioration?

- A) Yes, and they are integrated into our workflow (1 pt)
 - B) We have the technology, but staff don't trust/use it (3 pts)
 - C) No, we rely entirely on the nurse's manual recognition (5 pts)
6. **The Preceptor Burden:** Are your "Expert" nurses (those with 5+ years) precepting more than 50% of the shifts they work?
- A) Rarely (1 pt)
 - B) Frequently (3 pts)
 - C) Almost every single shift (5 pts)
-

Section 3: Leadership Style

7. **Rounding Focus:** When you walk the floor, what is the first thing you usually check?
- A) The patient's clinical trajectory and the nurse's plan (1 pt)
 - B) Whiteboards, hourly rounding logs, and room cleanliness (3 pts)
 - C) Whether or not the shift is fully staffed (5 pts)
-

Scoring Your Unit Stability

- **7–15 Points: The Balanced Pyramid.** You have a healthy mix of staff with and without experience. Your leadership focus should be on **Succession Planning**.
- **16–25 Points: The Leaning Pyramid.** You are losing your "middle" layer. Your leadership focus should be on **Standardization and Retention**.
- **26–35 Points: The Inverted Pyramid.** Your unit is at high risk for "Failure to Rescue" and leader burnout. Your leadership focus must be on **Hardwiring Safety**.