Resilience
Solutions Starter®

This Solutions Starter provides best practices, research and tools to help you improve the engagement of your workforce as it relates to resilience. These solutions are linked to standard survey sections and questions, making it easy to find the information you need. Many of these solutions can also be used to help you improve performance on your custom, or nonstandard, questions.

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I can enjoy my personal time without focusing on work matters

QUESTION DEFINITION

This question measures an employee's ability to spend time away from work on personal endeavors without worrying about or being preoccupied with work-related matters. Although many job roles necessitate putting in extra hours beyond a standard work week, being able to separate oneself from one's job and mentally refresh is a core component of the ability to decompress. An inability to do this may indicate the organizational overdependence of an individual, resulting in an inflation of tasks and responsibilities. Alternatively, it may indicate that an individual is reluctant to decline additional work even though he or she is able to do so, which can ultimately lead to workloads becoming overwhelming.

It is important to note that fully engaged employees may be relied upon more or be in positions that require them to do more, and they may be apt to take on additional responsibilities because of the enjoyment they derive from these tasks. However, it is also important to be able to rest and recuperate from time to time to avoid long stretches of being overworked and overwhelmed.

VOICE OF THE EMPLOYEE

The consistent support and teamwork within my unit makes me feel good about leaving at the end of my shift.

Staff should be able to leave at the end of shift or shortly thereafter. It is completely unacceptable for us to continuously have to stay after shift for sometimes 2 - 3 hours. This is a complete disregard to any of our personal obligations, and isn't conducive to having a life after work.

IMPROVEMENT SOLUTIONS

- Use the term "work–life fit" and mean it. The common term "work–life balance" implies that one must make a choice between work and personal life, ultimately evoking guilt if either is chosen.
    - Accomplish work life and personal life separately. Determine work and non-work priorities each week, and encourage the practice by modeling it. Share your own priorities in a huddle or staff meeting
  - Help employees focus on what they can do versus what they should do. Empower employees to say "no." Saying "no" is often regarded as negative: not being a team player, being judged later on in a review, being thought incapable of handling workload, etc. Instead, regard "no" as realistic self-preservation.
    - When a caregiver is faced with continuous, competing demands, encourage him or her to take a minute to breathe, focus and rest the mind. This can be helpful and re-energizing.
    - Explain that this also applies to personal life. Think about what you *can* do outside of work this week. It is likely unrealistic to say, "I will cook dinner every

night this week," but it is realistic to say, "I will cook dinner three nights this week."

- Ensure that leader practices do not contradict the promotion of work–life fit.
  - Be aware of asking employees to stay late to finish one more task. Evaluate whether the task must be done immediately or can wait.
  - Protect your employees. If a large improvement initiative is going on, avoid taking on other initiatives as you are able.
  - Don't allow the same people to always volunteer for ancillary tasks or projects. Frame opportunities positively to those who have not been involved. For example, one can say, "Diana, we need someone to represent our unit for this project. It will require you to attend about three meetings over the next three months and report back progress to me. How do you feel about being our representative?"

- Educate employees about the importance of resilience and how to maintain it. Transition from a focus on burnout to a focus on resilience to introduce positive psychology to employees.
  - Dedicate time to talking about resilience and why it matters. Include points such as the following:
    - Resilience is the ability of employees to recover and remain engaged even in challenging work environments and is interpreted as the opposite of burnout.
    - Taking care of oneself naturally results in better care for patients.
    - Resilience is also important because, according to Press Ganey data, organizations with highly engaged employees score higher on patient experience results (HCAHPS). Hospitals with highly engaged employees also perform better on core measures and earn more Value-based Purchasing points than hospitals with disengaged employees.
  - Inspire employees to engage in practices that help them manage stress. Coping with stress in healthy ways contributes to resilience.
    - Exercise
    - Meditate
    - Journal
    - Pray
    - Spend time in nature

    As an organization, further encourage practices by making them readily available to employees. Offer yoga classes, a meditation room, discounts on meditation applications for phones, discounts at gyms or fitness centers, onsite counseling, etc.
  - Inspire the organization to create a learning module about resilience that all employees must complete. Include leaders emphasizing the importance of self-care.
  - Recognize, as a leader, that employees in direct care positions score lower on employee engagement results than non-direct care employees. Understanding resilience and focusing on building resilience are vital to the health and well-being of your nurses, which ultimately affect the experiences and safety of patients and the well-being of the entire organization.

Decompression

I am able to disconnect from work communications during my free time (emails/phone, etc.)

QUESTION DEFINITION

This question measures the ability of employees to cut themselves off completely from modes of organizational contact during their free time. This is similar to being able to spend personal time without focusing on work matters, but this merits specific attention, as the proliferation of technology runs the risk of constantly entangling employees with work communications. This is especially true with the popularity of smartphones, which create an easy communications conduit for both emails and phone calls, that many employees carry around with them at all times. Constant notifications can drastically impede one's ability to disconnect from work during personal time, especially if it is commonplace for this to occur at all hours of the day and night.

VOICE OF THE EMPLOYEE

My unit has an agreement about email responses, because we aren't expected to check email outside of our shifts. It is a comfort to know expectations are realistic.

Allow departments the room to hire more staff. No matter what the floors are always short staffed, and I feel like I'm always "on-call."

IMPROVEMENT SOLUTIONS

- As an organization, establish a strategy around cell phone and email use when employees are off shift (email, scheduling, chat features, etc.). Build a culture that allows employees to fully decompress.
    - Set email standards.
        - If an employee has work email programmed on his or her phone, encourage turning off email notifications when not at work.
        - Explain that employees are not expected to respond to emails in their free time. They *are* expected to meet deadlines that are applicable to everyone; however, this should not warrant work during free time.
        - Hold emails to send at a particular time. For example, an email written by leadership or management at 8:00 p.m. will not be sent until 7:00 a.m. the following day. This prevents people from thinking everyone else is working 24 hours a day. Considering that the health care environment operates 24 hours a day, the strategy needs to consider the dynamics of the organization, perhaps determining when most employees are on and off shift.
        - Program email to flag communications you need to read more quickly by identifying the sender (e.g., your manager or director). This helps employees prioritize and manage their time with email.

- Set call standards. Employees are only to be contacted for emergencies when they are not working or on shift.
  - If there is an excessive need to contact employees who are off shift, evaluate communication efficacy in the form of bedside shift reports, chart notes or whiteboard communication. Where are communication breakdowns occurring that may burden employees when they are not at work?
  - Use the "Do Not Disturb" feature on phones when not at work.
- Include a strategy for vacation. State that the true organizational request is to disconnect completely.
- As a manager, gauge employee compliance with organization standards.
  - If you notice that an employee frequently emails when not at work, ask why he or she feels it necessary to do so. The person may need help prioritizing work and recognizing the value of disconnecting.
- Communicate as much as possible in the work environment so that staff members do not rely as heavily on email.
  - Use daily huddles, staff meetings and 1:1 meetings to pass along necessary information.
    - Make organization updates fun. Ask questions related to pertinent topics, and award correct answers with a small prize (candy, snack, ten-minute break, etc.).
  - Post updates in visible and trafficked areas, such as a break room or the nurses' lounge.
    - Always remove old updates and clutter. Individuals will begin to ignore these areas if they are not clean and up-to-date.

Decompression

I rarely lose sleep over work issues

QUESTION DEFINITION

This item assesses an employee's ability to maintain adequate sleep habits without the interference of work-related matters. This is especially important, as sleep is a primary method of recharging, both mentally and physically. A lower score indicates not only an inability to maintain resting habits because of work-related issues, but also future performance issues due to the lack of adequate rest. These issues include making mistakes on the job or even increasing the occurrence of behavioral or health issues.

VOICE OF THE EMPLOYEE

I have a great person that I report to. She helps us focus on not getting burned out.

Remove management that have no clue about what is involved in patient care, and have no idea how to adequately retain nurses. The current leadership is absent from reality about the stress of this job.

IMPROVEMENT SOLUTIONS

- Help employees disconnect.
    - Create awareness that work affecting sleep is a known issue. A 2013 survey from Career Builder states that three out of four workers lose sleep over work issues. A study by RAND Europe found that: "Sleep deprivation not only influences an individual's health and well-being but has a significant impact on a nation's economy, with lower productivity levels and higher mortality risk among workers."
    - Encourage employees to track their sleep to make sure they are getting enough. The same study by RAND Europe found that a person who sleeps less than an average of six hours a night has a 13% higher mortality risk than someone sleeping between seven and nine hours a night. Additionally, severe sleep deprivation mirrors alcohol impairment.
    - Conduct open discussions about the things employees cannot free their minds from when they leave work. Is it typically patient issues? Is it poor interactions with colleagues or physicians? Is it worry about low performance? Is it the inability to remember if something was done?
        - "Numerous studies show that job stress is far and away the major source of stress for American adults and that it has escalated progressively over the past few decades," according to The American Institute of Stress (http://www.marketwatch.com/story/why-44-of-workers-cant-sleep-at-night-2016-03-11). One major reason is because of technology and the ability to access work 24/7 rather than only during a shift. See solutions to the prior question, "I am able to disconnect from work communications during my free time (emails/phone, etc.)" to assist employees with disconnecting from technology.
        - Have a closing moment. Think about the ways employees close the day so there truly is closure, and they can free their minds from work.

- Ask employees to think about the following at the end of each shift: "What is the one thing you're concerned about, as you leave [this shift, these five patients, etc.]? What is top of mind?"
      - Communicate these concerns. For example, a nurse might be concerned about one patient swallowing water, which he or she worked on all day, and the nurse can voice this during shift handoff.
- Establish empathic, open and honest communication with employees. It builds trust and does not leave staff wondering what will happen next.
    - Regard mistakes as learning opportunities, not punitive situations. Mistakes *will* happen.
      - If an employee makes a mistake, find the time to talk to him or her as soon as possible. Making a mistake and then worrying about the consequences will distract the employee from delivering care to patients. It is likely the employee will then take that worry home.
      - If there is not enough time to discuss immediately, have a quick interaction with the employee to say that you are aware of the situation or issue and that you will discuss it at X time (e.g., end of shift, next shift). Include a positive motivator in the end, such as, "You are an excellent nurse, and you care about your patients. Don't let this make you think otherwise."
    - Never respond to an employee question or request for help with, "I don't have time." Instead, listen to the employee's issue, and offer an honest suggestion or timeframe:
      - "Marie, I understand you need assistance with the new system, and I will be available in 15 minutes when I finish this report. How does that sound?"
      - "Marie, it sounds like you need help with this family. Let's visit them together in 10 minutes. How does that sound?"
      - "Marie, I won't be able to discuss the new initiative today. How do you feel about me scheduling us time on your Wednesday shift?"
- Educate employees on ways to promote restful sleep.
    - Tea. Avoid caffeine at night, and drink decaffeinated tea.
    - Journaling.
      - Write down one work accomplishment and one personal accomplishment from the day.
      - Write down concerns before bed. The transfer from your mind to paper can relieve your mind of the concern.
    - Keep paper by your bed to write down concerns that wake you up. People lose sleep reminding themselves not to forget things that may wake them.
    - Sleep meditations and exercises. This includes self-guided practices (many of which are available on the internet), phone applications and apps or podcasts.
    - Room environment. Be aware of ways to make sleep more comfortable. Consider:
      - Temperature
      - White noise (e.g., white noise machine, fan)
      - Sleep shades or an eye mask
      - Earplugs
    - Calming music: no words, soothing nature sounds or repetitive sounds.

- ▪ Phone placement. Most people place a cell phone within arm's reach while sleeping, such that notifications or calls disturb sleep. Consider leaving a cell phone in another room and/or using a different device as an alarm clock.

Decompression

I am able to free my mind from work when I am away from it

QUESTION DEFINITION

This item encompasses a broader scope of being able to disconnect from work, as it can extend to longer periods of time being away from work, such as weekends (or the equivalent days off) or vacations. During these periods, the ability to mentally recharge while being free from work-related stresses is important. If an employee cannot disentangle his or her personal life from his or her work life during days off or vacations, then there is the risk of this extended permeation of work-related matters upsetting time outside of work, ultimately eroding the employee's resilience.

VOICE OF THE EMPLOYEE

My manager is so supportive of us taking care of ourselves. She demands we don't check our email when we take vacation days.

They need to work with people on things like promoting healthier lifestyles for employees.

IMPROVEMENT SOLUTIONS

- Keep track of employees using their time off – not as in micromanagement but rather to encourage employees to take time off or vacations.
  - Refer to organization standards about vacation, as referenced in the question, "I am able to disconnect from work communications during my free time (emails/phone, etc.)."
- Prepare for vacations or long periods of time off to help employees detach from work during this time.
  - Prior to an employee's vacation, set aside 10 minutes to discuss prepare for it.
    - Ask the employee if he or she has any concerns. This is an opportunity for the employee to relieve his or her mind of concerns rather than toil over them while away.
    - Emphasize that it is NOT an expectation that the employee be available when away from work or on vacation.
    - Ask whether he or she is awaiting an answer for anything, and offer to serve as a point of contact while he or she is away. This could be a pending decision about an initiative or an answer for a workgroup or committee.
      - Ask your employees to include your email address as part of their out-of-office email replies, so they do not feel compelled to answer any incoming emails.
  - Similarly, schedule a short meeting for when employees return from vacations or long periods of time off.

- – Provide only necessary updates. The employee may feel overwhelmed when returning to work and likely does not need to know every corporate update immediately.
  - Leftover work distractions can prevent employees from freeing their minds. Help employees recognize that if there is an issue bothering them (e.g., someone says something in a meeting that hurts their feelings), take it as a notification to do something about it. It is occupying space in their head and will thus prevent them from disconnecting. There are three options to handle a nagging stress:
    - Say, "I'm going to choose to let this go." This is a conscious choice to deal with stress. By choosing to let the issue go, you have control of the situation.
    - Talk to the person the issue is related to. Communication often resolves issues.
    - Allow the issue to turn over and over in your head. This method may result in poor sleep and form a larger issue than is at hand. Thus, it is NOT recommended.
  - Highlight how people in the work unit can trust and rely on one another – that employees can leave their shifts and trust their colleagues will also do high-quality work. They do not need to fret about a decision for a patent or whether something will get done. Share examples of teamwork with your employees in daily or staff meetings, including:
    - Building a sense of teamwork and camaraderie.
    - Managing up.

  High-scoring items on the Press Ganey employee engagement survey reflect nurses' feelings about the teamwork and effectiveness of the work unit. This shows that confidence in teammates is crucial to building resilience.

  - Request that employees turn off work email on their phones. It is easiest to free one's mind from work if the temptation is not accessible.

Activation

Activation

I see every patient/client as an individual person with specific needs

QUESTION DEFINITION

This item measures the ability of employees to see their patients as individuals rather than part of some faceless mass or other internal clients if not in a care role. Over time, with heavy workloads, it becomes easy to treat individuals in a checklist-like manner, doing only what is necessary in order to move on to the next. For those in a caregiving role, this can be compounded by the introduction of additional administrative or bureaucratic tasks that are necessary in many organizations. While this sort of rote approach can be efficient in some circumstances, too much of it can detract from the human element of healthcare, which consequently undermines the intrinsic rewards employees receive from their work, as well as their levels of personal commitment and motivation.

For those in caregiving roles, low performance on this item can also impact the patient experience. Some patients may require more empathy and reassurance, while others may prefer more education, and so forth. Even for those not in caregiving roles, internal clients will have their own preferences for reports, information exchange, communication styles, etc. A chronic inability to see others as individuals with specific needs can indicate a lack of intrinsic motivation within a role or simply the lack of time and energy to give these individuals specific attention, which can eventually result in reduced levels of resilience.

VOICE OF THE EMPLOYEE

Providing the highest quality care to each patient is the best part of my job.

There are so many tasks, it can be difficult to focus on patients. I want to get back to the core of my work as a nurse.

IMPROVEMENT SOLUTIONS

- Make a personal connection with each patient. According to Press Ganey's Chief Nursing Officer, Christy Dempsey, it only takes 60 seconds to make a connection with someone. Once you make this personal connection, you keep it throughout the patient's stay.
    - Inquire about a particular topic the patient is interested in: sports, gardening, grandchildren, books, television shows, music, cooking, etc.
    - Solicit details with open-ended questions and statements. For example, "Tell me more about [X]," or, "How is [your hobby] going?" Probe for more information rather than asking a yes/no question.
    - Ask yourself at the end of a shift, "Can I tell myself three things about the patient that is not in the chart?" From a manager's perspective, ask caregivers if they are able to tell you three things about a patient that are not in the chart.
- Exhibit empathic body language.

- Maintain eye contact, and always look the patient in the eye when speaking.
- Decode facial expressions. The ability to decode facial expressions is a way to identify emotions that patients cannot or will not express verbally, and it is tied to the care provider's ability to express empathy. If a nurse detects that a patient is nervous because of fidgeting hands, he or she will know to inquire further about the patient's fears by asking probing questions.
- Sitting down with patients at the eye level conveys interest in, and time for, these patients. Given equal time – sitting or standing – patients report more meaningful interactions when caregivers sit.
- Balance the need to interrupt with allowing the patient to tell the whole story. Allow enough time for understanding.

- Integrate Compassionate Connected Care™ into daily practices with patients, as well as to support employees.
  - For staff members:
    - Pause and center yourself before entering a patient room, especially on difficult days, to remind yourself about compassion. The patient is suffering, and *you* have the ability to alleviate suffering.
    - Visualize the interaction you *want* to have with the patient, and ask yourself, "What does this patient need, and what can I give to meet those needs?"
    - Acknowledge when things are distracting you away from the current interaction. Be 100% devoted to this moment; don't think about what is going on in the room next door.
  - For managers/leadership: Don't forget about the suffering of employees. Employees have a need for compassion like patients do. Display empathic body language as described above, acknowledge their suffering, make personal connections and see employees as individuals.

- Include an employee's ability to display compassion during annual reviews; make compassion a requirement.

Activation

I care for all patients/clients equally even when it is difficult

QUESTION DEFINITION

Similar to seeing every patient/client as an individual, this item focuses on the level of engagement that employees have with each patient or internal client in terms of caring. It is normal to experience times of heavy workloads and stressful situations that necessitate being more attentive in some areas than others. However, if this is a chronic occurrence, individuals may simply run out of the psychological resources necessary to continue to care for and about everyone else equally. When circumstances are occasionally difficult, resilient individuals will still retain the capacity to be able to care for all patients and clients. If they cannot, then this is an indicator of eroding resilience, potentially due to circumstances always being difficult, thus resulting in a lack of energy and motivation to become fully engaged in one's profession.

VOICE OF THE EMPLOYEE

A lot of wonderful employees work here, and they really try their best under very stressful conditions to do the best job possible.

The organization needs to put less emphasis on expansion and corporate structure and place more emphasis on patient care and employee satisfaction.

IMPROVEMENT SOLUTIONS

- Tell employees to take five. This is about recovery. If you notice an employee is having a particularly difficult or overwhelming day, tell him or her to "take five" and walk away for five minutes.
    - Offer to check on a patient, so the employee doesn't feel he or she will further lose ground by taking a few minutes.
    - Encourage the employee to spend the five minutes doing something to support decompressing. Tell him or her to:
        - Go on a walk, and leave the unit. Ideally, walk somewhere where you can step outside.
        - Find a quiet place to do a breathing exercise. Breathing exercises are naturally tranquilizing and help relieve tension. One example is 4-7-8.
            - First, exhale all your air.
            - Then, fill your lungs up to a count of 4.
            - Hold your breath for a count of 7.
            - Lastly, exhale slowly while counting to 8.
            - Repeat the cycle five times.
    - Do not bring phones with you. Completely disconnect for the whole five minutes.

- Discuss with employees how resilience affects the safety of patients. The 2015 Press Ganey Nursing Special Report about the influence of the nurse work environment cites evidence that supports the relationship between nurse engagement and the safety and quality of patient care. Additionally, engaged nurses feel a sense of ownership, loyalty and dedication to creating a safe environment for patients.
- Conduct an Ideal Day exercise in a staff meeting or unit gathering.
    - Ask staff to honestly draw how their typical day feels (for approximately one minute). Oftentimes, staff draw images showing chaos, a hectic environment, multi-tasking, etc. Invite one or two people to share their drawings with the group.
    - Next, ask staff to draw how their ideal day would look. Oftentimes, staff members draw images with fewer patients, lots of smiles, etc. These new drawings often indicate more positive time spent with patients. Invite one or two people to share their drawings with the group
    - Lastly, ask your team what they can do to better achieve their ideal day drawings. Task each person with working on one thing to have a more ideal work day.

Remind staff members that even when they cannot spend a lot of time with their patients, every interaction matters – truly, quality over quantity. A smile or touch takes only a second and means more than two hurried minutes in the room.

- Promote conscious acts of kindness among staff members. Conscious acts of kindness ask you to pause and intentionally do something kind or thoughtful to promote optimism, build relationships with colleagues and reset attitude. For example:
    - Compliment someone with whom you have difficulty working.
    - Greet someone warmly.
    - Bring someone a coffee.
    - Ask about something personal in someone's life.
    - When someone is in a hurry, let him or her step in front of you.

Keep track of kindnesses – for example, in a journal, during meditation or noted as you leave your shift. Ask, "Have I done something kind today?" If not, you do have an opportunity to still do something.

- Everyone should focus on Compassionate Connected Care™ for every patient. It may be difficult to feel you can provide excellent care to patients when you are stressed. Break down what you can do to continue to show empathy in overwhelming times.
    - Acknowledge suffering. Say "I'm sorry" or "I can see you are feeling X" to show patients you care and to acknowledge their suffering (please note that you should not verbalize when you see certain emotions – for example, embarrassment).
    - Display empathic body language. Make eye contact, sit at the patient's level when talking, lean forward when listening and do not rush through interactions.
    - Demonstrate real caring that goes beyond the delivery of medical interventions. Offer a blanket to someone who looks cold, or spend a moment to ask a patient about something personal.

Activation

My work is meaningful

QUESTION DEFINITION

This item is a measure of how much meaning an individual derives from his or her work. In this case, meaning is an indicator of intrinsic value of the work, which in turn serves as a force of motivation. Without this present, motivation can be compromised, which ultimately results in decreased levels of resilience as the work feels more like going through the motions rather than a rewarding endeavor in and of itself.

VOICE OF THE EMPLOYEE

I love feeling like I bring compassion to people who need it, at a time in their lives when they need it.

Treat employees like they matter, no matter what the job is they do. If they do good with their jobs, they should be acknowledged for it.

IMPROVEMENT SOLUTIONS

- Conduct a reflection exercise. In a group setting, ask why people went into health care or why they stay in health care. Encourage employees to think about a meaningful example or story, because every time we appreciate an action or moment, we reinforce the "why."
    - Staff may write down their answers, or, in a group setting, consider having them write answers on post-it notes that you can stick on a flip chart.
    - Ask a few people – or everyone – to share a response. Typical responses include: "to help others," "to make people feel better," "because a family member or friend had a tragic event" and "for job security."

    Remind staff that the work they do every day, regardless of tough days or stresses, is valuable, necessary and healing. Helping others contributes to resilience.
- Seek and value empathy. Empathy reduces patient suffering, and staff members should be encouraged to have and recognize empathic interactions. Here are some ways appreciate empathy:
    - Shadow employees interacting with patients, and look for ways that employees show empathy, as well as opportunities to show empathy. Examples include using open-ended questions and making eye contact when talking. Share general observations in group settings and specific observations in 1:1 meetings.
    - Identify empathy beyond patient interactions. Look for employees who assist family members who are lost, comfort visitors who are upset or offer support to a colleague.
    - Recognize specific interactions that exemplify empathy. Give handwritten thank-you notes or small gifts, highlight the interaction in a group setting or ask an organization leader to send a note.
- Start the shift with gratitude. Whether in a daily huddle or as staff members begin their shifts, ask them to think about one specific thing they are grateful for.

- Go beyond things like "work" or "family," and focus on something more detailed.
  - "I am grateful for my husband, who surprised me by making dinner last night so that I had time to exercise."
  - "I am grateful that my job makes me appreciate my own health, and it makes me want to make better choices to preserve my health."
  - "I am grateful for my dog, who wags her tail and is happy to see me, no matter how great or tough a day I had."
- If in a group environment, ask one person to share what he or she is grateful for.
- If people do not want to readily share in a group environment on an impromptu basis, designate the next person to share gratitude. For example, during Tuesday's huddle, ask Wendy to be prepared to share an instance of gratitude on Wednesday's huddle.
- Enable employees to be architects, not construction workers. This is a philosophy embraced by the Mayo Clinic to provide staff with a sense of control to help reduce burnout. Ask employees to participate and give input regarding new processes or improvements rather than only receive and execute new ones.
  - Staff are more likely to accept and appreciate change if they themselves or their colleagues created such change.

Activation

The work I do makes a real difference

QUESTION DEFINITION

Similar to deriving meaning from one's work, this item assesses the sentiment of whether the respondent's work impacts the state of being of others. It is an evaluation of the tangible effect their day-to-day work efforts have on patients/clients and also on other employees. Even if one's work has meaning, the nature of one's efforts may become devalued if one continuously sees little influence coming from it. This can be especially true in attempts at innovation or process improvement that are hampered by organizational bureaucracies. Over time, this can erode the sense of value of one's work, leading to a lack of motivation and a reduction in overall levels of resilience.

VOICE OF THE EMPLOYEE

I really enjoy my job. I don't see myself as just a tech—I see myself as an extension of the patient, like a family member who stopped by to help.

I'd like to see more recognition for hard work within the units.

IMPROVEMENT SOLUTIONS

- Focus on pride. For example, it is extremely difficult to discuss a scary diagnosis with a patient. However, a nurse may take pride in his or her ability to offer empathy and help guide the patient through understanding it. Rather than regarding it as the delivery of bad news, the nurse can serve as a means of comfort.
    - Ask in a regular forum (staff meeting, huddle, etc.) for staff members to share moments in which they felt proud of their work.
    - Hang a "You Make an Impact" board displaying employees' proud moments. This board may be posted in an employee-only area, such as a break room, or publicly for patients, families and visitors to see.
- Present and represent new initiatives or process improvements with positivity and empathy. Change is daunting, even when it is for the better. In the hectic health care environment, staff members typically have a routine that enables them to complete their work efficiently. When a new process is introduced – regardless of the positive potential impact – staff naturally think about the implications to their routine and the difficulty of change.
    - Take a change management approach.
        - Provide a clear message about why change is needed and why now. Link the change to the organization's mission and vision. Include the what's-in-it-for-me for staff members.
            - If available, talk about data on how the process impacts patient care, staff efficiency, etc. For example, share how no-pass zones have decreased the number of adverse safety events or toileting accidents

or how a new computer system has resulted in higher patient satisfaction scores on survey teamwork questions.

– Be an advocate for change. Speak positively about the benefits of change.

– Proactively discuss concerns about barriers to change, and tackle them one by one.

– Communicate openly and frequently whenever possible to reinforce the need for change, and report progress. Use staff meetings and team huddles for this.

– Work with individuals in one-on-one settings to overcome personal barriers to change, such as confidence and skill level.

▪ Watch out for zero resistance. Change is difficult, and, if you don't encounter some form of resistance, it probably means that people are hiding their reactions.

▪ Do not forget the process change when official implementation is done. If a process does not develop new behaviors that are continuously reinforced, employees will believe that any new initiative is unnecessary and won't stick, thus resulting in a lack of commitment.

– Continue to report progress in terms of both data and patient feedback.

– Reference individual employee progress in one-on-one meetings or reviews.

▪ Establish processes to share positive patient feedback. Caregivers may not directly receive gratitude or praise from patients and families, and sharing and celebrating this information highlights the difference they are making in people's lives.

▪ Collect feedback from:

– Patient experience surveys. Review survey comments regularly, and establish a process for sharing positive responses, as well as learning from negative ones.

– Nurse leader rounds. During rounds, ask patients if they would like to recognize anyone for the care he or she provided or for something meaningful done.

▪ Share the feedback:

– Share each positive comment, either verbally or with a handwritten note, with the caregiver to whom it is attributed.

– Share comments related to the entire unit or teamwork among the unit staff in a staff meeting or huddle.

– Consider creating a "What Patients Say About Us" board where you may post positive comments about patient care in an area that is visible to visitors and family members. This helps promote a favorable image of your unit or area.