



Treating Employees as Clients

Monica Maxwell, SPHR-SPC, DoveLewis Chief Administrative Officer

DoveLewis Annual Conference Speaker Notes

Introduction

Managers often spend a great deal of time concentrating on paying clients. They are, after all, the people that keep the clinic doors open. But what if managers began to look at their staff as clients? What if we spent time analyzing and measuring their work experience?

In this lecture, Monica Maxwell discusses the changing expectations of the employee and how you can change your clinic environment to maximize your employees' work experience and how this leads directly to increases in revenue and overall client satisfaction.

Overview

Most managers when asked would report knowing their employees quite well. After all, work is where we spend the majority of our time. We may know our employees' birthdays, favorite things to eat for lunch, and what they like to do on their off time, but I would challenge us to take a different approach.

The employment market is changing. Employees have a lot of options and company loyalty is at an all-time low. The expectations of those in the workforce are also changing. As of 2015, millennials (those born after 1982) make up the majority of workers in the US. Their expectations of their leaders are different than their counterpart generations (the boomers and Generation Xers).

According to *The Wall Street Journal*, millennials believe that "pursuit of profit" is important to sustaining business, but a larger sense of purpose in terms of impact to the community the business serves is **most** important. Additionally, millennials are less interested in short term financial gains than they are in making a larger contribution to their community. They also think their leaders should prioritize employee well-being, growth, and development over other larger goals.

Why is this important?

Well, just like we do with client data, if we as leaders begin to look at the data about our employees, we can make better decisions about how to hire them, communicate with them, and retain them.

Employee data collection is big business, with companies like Intel hiring PhD level employees to collect data on everything about their staff. For the rest of us with smaller budgets, we can still make gains in terms of employee data collection.

Step 1: Review what you have and what you know. As managers, we actually have quite a bit of information available to us to analyze. If we start simple, we can actually gain quite a bit of knowledge.

1. What is the average age of your employees?
2. How much experience does your average employee have prior to starting work with you?
3. Why did they say they applied to work at your clinic?
4. Are there any commonalities to where you hired your best performers? Worst?
5. Are there any commonalities in the backgrounds of your best performers? Worst?

Step 2: Gather more information, just like you would for clients.

1. Send out an anonymous survey to your staff.
 - a. What is the number one reason they work at your clinic?
 - b. Do they feel their role impacts the organizational goals? Why or why not?
 - c. What are their top three motivators?
 - d. What are their top three drainers?
 - e. Would they recommend your clinic to their friends?
 - f. If they had to rate their work happiness on a scale of 1 to 5, what number would they give?
2. Perform focus groups with your employees (having an outside person do these is best). The goal of these is to get a better and more complete sense of what your employees want in a workplace and from you, further expanding on the survey results you received.
3. Take some personality inventories (i.e. Myers Briggs). This information should be used to help you with crafting a communication strategy for your staff.

Step 3: Create a plan.

1. Based on what you know, create a communication strategy that can help you better connect the clinic goals for your employees.

2. Connect that strategy to a larger incentive program based on what you know that motivates your employees.
3. Create a way to gather consistent feedback from your staff to address drainers that can be fixed or tweaked (this is especially important for younger staff members who expect to have their opinion carry weight).
4. Be transparent in your plans. The world as it stands today has a barrage of information at its fingertips on any given subject. To some degree your employees, especially those millennials, expect the same from their employer. Be as transparent as you can about your plans and approaches.

Employees expect to be treated like individuals who have a host of employment options available to them. Gathering data and approaching them as your clients is the best way to ensure you are retaining your best people and tailoring the workplace to the experience your employees expect.