



ECHO Idaho: Healthcare Vitality CASE RECOMMENDATION FORM

ECHO Session Date: 6/18/24

Thank you for presenting your case to the ECHO Idaho – Healthcare Vitality session.

Summary: A respected clinic manager was promoted to a director role. An expectation for this new role is that he develops and implements a new policy that changes how his providers are evaluated and compensated based on patient satisfaction metrics. The manager has no experience leading large-scale organizational change. Prior to the announcement he engaged in change planning and engagement, communicated the new change through a brief email, and did not provide any training or resources for his employees. This resulted in decreased morale and increased burnout, a decline in patient care quality, and high turnover rates. He was inundated with angry employees and too many emails and calls. He proceeded with the implementation without considering feedback. Later, he brought in a patient experience team to train, coach, and support his providers on how to improve their patient satisfaction survey results.

Questions: What opportunities for improvement come to mind from this case study? What could have been done differently? What worked well? Can you share examples of effective or not-so-effective change leadership and management from your experience? How did these examples have an impact on well-being? What do you foresee as some of the challenges or barriers in effectively leading and managing change, and how might we address these barriers or challenges? Effective change leadership and management seems to be infrequently practiced in organizations. Why do you think this is the case?

After review of the case presentation and discussion of this case among the ECHO Community of Practice, the following suggestions have been made:

Recommendations:

- **Senior Leadership Responsibilities & Lack of Training in Change Management:**
 - There needs to be more support from senior leaders in coaching new hires during systems changes. Without proper training for leaders, change management cannot be effective.
 - Consider providing the new director with a mentor who can help them hone their leadership skills and improve effective change management.
 - Healthcare leaders often lack the time to be effective leaders. While managing can be simple and easy to understand, leadership requires significant time and effort, which organizations need to allocate appropriately.
- **Gain Early Buy-In and Overcommunicate:**
 - Failure to explain the reasons behind system changes resulted in a lack of buy-in from employees. Given that people naturally resist change, it's important to provide the why and clear justification for any changes.
 - Ensuring that employees can be heard and that they have opportunities to voice concerns can improve their comfort levels with change and achieve early buy-in.
 - Many folks are uncomfortable with vulnerability in organizational settings. Leaders must recognize and address this to create a more supportive environment.
 - When implementing change, overcommunication helps prevent misunderstandings and ensures everyone is on the same page, reducing resistance and confusion.



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- **New Leadership Considerations:**
 - New leadership often drives change. This can be advantageous if there is early engagement and buy-in from stakeholders, making the transition smoother.
 - To be effective, leaders must demonstrate genuine care for their employees and stakeholders. Building strong relationships is crucial, as leadership involves more than just achieving objectives; it's about fostering a supportive environment.
 - Decisions made without stakeholder input often prioritize objectives over relationships, leading to mistrust and a sense of isolation among leaders. In order to have effective change in an organization, objectives and relationships need to be addressed together and with the same importance.
- **Patient Satisfaction Scores:**
 - This metric can often cause tension and anxiety among healthcare workers who feel their compensation and rewards are unfairly tied to factors beyond their control.
 - In one healthcare system, they eliminated patient satisfaction metrics from their compensation model and wellness scores of employees improved drastically.