



Wendy Leebov's

HeartBeat



On The Quality Patient Experience

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Wendy's Soapbox

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"Do As I Say, Not As I Do": Double Standards and Accountability

Everyone is talking about how we need to strengthen accountability for living the organization's values, for adhering to Codes of Conduct, to complying with policies, and to following behavioral standards consistently.

It wouldn't be so hard if leaders would model the behavior they want. Then, they would no longer be accused of promoting "Do as I say, not as I do". They wouldn't have to spell out nearly so many rules, codes and expectations if they could just say, "Do as I do."

You don't need to hear me harangue about the negative impact of double standards as we work hard to improve performance and the patient experience in our organizations. You know that employees point to double standards among higher-ups as a KEY reason they resist behavior changes.

- "The boss walks right by me in the hallway. Why should I break my neck to be welcoming to people?"
- "Amazing.... my supervisor is nasty to me and then expects me to be all charming to the people I serve."
- "My boss comes down on us about behavior, while he acts like his same old rude self."
- "We're supposed to do rounding with our staff, but do the administrators do rounding on us?"
- "They think because they're getting paid more and have big titles, they're exempt from our values."
- "We're supposed to follow our Code of Conduct, but you think the big wigs follow it?"

In summary, "When they do, I will. And until then, get off my back!"

Double standards breed resentment and low morale. And they make it utterly impossible to excel. Employees continue to make excuses. The champions for change among us become drained and encourage people to make the changes anyway "because it's the right thing to do."

Imagine if leadership teams could say with integrity, "Do as I do."

Imagine if leadership teams would invite people to give them personal feedback if they see or suspect a double standard.

Imagine if leaders would thank people for the feedback and commit to changing their





"Do As I Say, Not As I Do": Double Standards and Accountability (continued)

behavior so that one and only one standard applies to everyone.

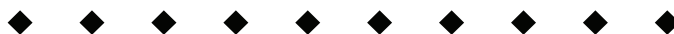
Now you might be thinking, "But it's in the nature of capitalism. Some people at the top get more power, more rights, more money and are not subject to the same rules." I know that. Just know that when leaders follow their own code of behavior and expect employees to follow a much more stringent one, they are not going to get the behavior they want. And replacing "problem" employees with new employees isn't going to solve the problem, because double standards will soon demoralize great new employees too.

A suggestion: Make a list of double standards you see among your leaders. If there are behavioral items on that list that make it hard for you to tirelessly champion high standards of employee behavior, get gutsy. Talk with someone you respect on the leadership team. Tell this person that employees perceive double standards among leaders and that these double standards are impeding the effort to produce employee performance at a consistently high level. Ask this person if they will suggest to their leadership colleagues doing a Double Standards Self-Assessment.

*"When they do, I will.
And until then, get off my back".*

[Click Here](#) for a *Double Standards Self-Assessment*

Then openly discuss the results and their implications with each other. Dare the leadership team to commit to PERSONALLY eliminating double standards, even if it's one double standard at a time over a period of months. And, to get the biggest bang from this, suggest that they communicate to employees that they REALIZED they were living a double standard, that they apologize because it isn't fair, and that they have personally committed to STOPPING it for the sake of widespread, consistent excellence.



Quoteworthy:

"Vision without execution is hallucination."

—Thomas Alva Edison

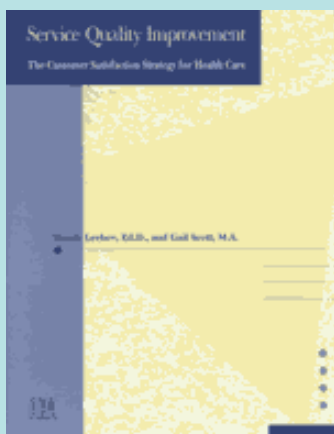
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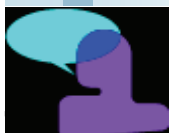
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Employees Speak

About Double Standards

- "I've known the president for 25 years, and he still acts like he doesn't know me when I see him in the hallway. This is a guy who lectures us on giving personalized care."
- "Our head of finance is notorious for abusing his employees. I've confronted the president about doing something about it. He just says, 'But he knows so much and I need him.' Our values are a joke."
- When I had my first kid, my mother said she wanted to give me one piece of advice: "Monkey see, monkey do." I need to get my mother in here to tell that to the administration!"
- "Managers here don't get raises until we've completed all of our employee evaluations. Of course, I haven't received a performance evaluation from my boss in five years. Do you think HE doesn't get HIS raise?"
- "In the last few years, MOST of our administrators have turned over and now we have a great group. They walk the talk and they don't expect us to do things that they won't do."



Newsbyte

Women are 83% of the Hospital Workforce

I attended a terrific 2-day program by The Studer Group a few weeks ago. Among the many valuable things discussed, Quint reminded us of a 2007 study performed by the Studer Group that pinpointed the unique needs of a predominantly female workforce (and women are 83 percent of the hospital workforce). The point: Understanding your employees can ensure they are satisfied. While it's very important to strengthen your organization's culture of execution and accountability, people's sense of values and goals, it's also important to address the unique needs of a predominantly female workforce into your strategies and plans. More than 7500 women responded to a 20-minute online survey. The two questions most important to women in the workplace:

1. Do I like my boss?
2. Do I get development?

This finding certainly has clear implications for those of us involved in planning strategies to enhance the employee experience (which in turn enhances the patient and family experience).

We must develop leaders so that they are effective and so that they are valued and respected by their employees.

We need to routinely invest in developing employees, because not only does this upgrade people's skills, it is also a critical factor in staff retention.





Ask Your Team This Cage-Rattling Question: A Trigger For Crucial Conversations

"If I worked for you, how would you want to change my behavior?"

If only our coworkers and direct reports would square with us and tell us how they view our behavior! It's not that people don't talk about the behavior of higher-ups, it's that most of that talk is directed at everyone BUT the person being discussed. And this breeds negativity. Consider asking the above question to find out directly what people think. Consider what they say, commit yourself to specific improvements and make these improvements. Since staff tend to mirror the behavior of their leaders, your improvements will, over time, have a very positive impact on everyone's behavior.

Coming Up

- Kneejerk Negativity
- Patients Speak About Staff Attitudes



I Love This Resource

Ask Me 3 is a patient education program that promotes communication between health care providers and patients in order to improve health outcomes. The program focuses patients on three core questions:

1. What is my main problem?
2. What do I need to do?
3. Why is it important for me to do this?

Developed by the National Patient Safety Foundation, NPSF makes available FREE pamphlets and posters in multiple languages. These materials encourage patients to ask their doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and therapists these three simple questions during their appointments or visits. Also, NPSF encourages caregivers to be sure their patients understand the answers. The benefit is obvious: People who understand health instructions make fewer mistakes when they take their medicine or prepare for a medical procedure. They may also get well sooner and be better able to manage their health conditions.

Click [here](#) to learn about Ask Me 3 and [here](#) to download their free materials.



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