

Faculty Research and Creative Work Award Proposal
Spring 2014

Proposal Title

Improving employee relations in health care facilities

Applicant

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[REDACTED]

College of Nursing and Health Professions

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College of Nursing and Health Professions

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Submission Date

February 10, 2014

Project Start/ End dates

Beginning June 2014

Ending June 2015

Total Amount Requested

\$4323.20

Literature Review:

Healthcare facilities are diverse organizations with a large turnover rate. Challenges with health care reform, multiple generations in the workplace, demanding positions, weak onboarding programs, and conflict in the workplace are just a few issues that are of concern for clinicians and administrators today. Physician turnover rate is at an all-time high and not expected to turn around in the next year (Irving 2013). Overall hospital turnover is expected to be over 15.5% with Registered Nurse (RN) turnover rate expected to reach 14% this year (Nursing Solutions 2013). Turnover is a major economic issue that cost companies money to replace the employee. One study found that to replace jobs paying \$75,000 or less costs employers 20.4% of their salary to replace them and jobs earning \$50,000 or less costs employers 19.7% of their salary to replace them (Boushey & Glynn 2012). Hessel (2003) reports that 65% of exit interviews state that unresolved conflict was a deciding factor in leaving and 50% of involuntary leave. In a 2010 article from the *Journal of Organization Management* that studied intention turnover in hospital administrators in conjunction with anger provoking events, concluded that improving communication and conflict resolution can be an effective retention strategy.

Specific Goals and Objectives:

With recruitment and retention issues in all aspects of health care, facilities must look at different ways to retain employees at individual levels. One avenue that health care facilities can explore is the notion of creating a more nurturing environment for their organizational staff. Examples include a better onboarding experience, increased communication skills, and a conflict resolution plan.

Personality tests (i.e. Myers-Briggs, Color Code, etc.) can be used in creating and fostering a supporting environment for the entire workforce. Individual personality types affect every aspect of the work environment. For instance, how an individual will respond (or sometimes not) to conflict, work styles, decision making, change, and communication (Demarest 2012). The introduction of personality tests into an organization gives supervisors and administration tools to understand and how and why their employees react to different situations. While the focus of the project will be on the supervisor/staff relationship, we will also explore the employee/employee dynamics.

The project will explore employee and administration's perception of their onboarding experience, communication, and conflict resolution in their current environment. Additionally, the project will examine the different ways these areas are approached between clinical and nonclinical staff. The staff will attend a half day workshop on the Color Code. Supervisors and administrators will go through the workshop first and their workshop will include additional training on how to use the Color Code in leadership roles and how to integrate it into their culture. The Color Code has been chosen over other personality test for several reasons. One reason is with the simplicity of 4 color system versus other personality tests which have up to 16 categories. The color system is easier to remember, understand, and is less intimidating than other assessments. Another reason is that color code looks at motive instead of behavior. We feel

that motive will help administrators understand not just how to work with employees more efficiently but also understand why they work a certain way.

After the workshop and training we will work with the facility to help integrate the information into their culture and then survey the staff and administration to explore if introducing the color code changed their perspective on how their organization communicates and deals with conflict resolution. If the organization integrates personality testing into their onboarding experience, we will survey the new staff members about their onboarding experience and compare them to other staff member's experience.

Goal

- To evaluate if introducing a personality assessment into a health care facility, can it improve overall employee relations
- Increase retention of staff by creating a positive and nurturing culture

Objectives

- Examine if onboarding experience will be a more positive experience by including a personality assessment and training component
- Measure employee change in perception of communication in their organization after integrating materials from a personality assessment workshop
- Measuring employee perception of positive conflict resolution processes after integrating materials from personality assessment workshop
- Increase awareness of supervisors and administrators on conflict, work styles, decision making, change, and communication using a personality assessment

Significance of project

The project and research collected in this study would benefit many different areas in health care and education. As faculty, understanding personality assessments in health care setting can help them be better health care leaders. This benefits both clinical and nonclinical faculty and students on how an interdisciplinary approach to employee relations can improve morale and increase retention. While some students go straight into administration many of our health care leaders start out as clinicians and then leave patient care for administration. One goal of the study is also to publish and present our finding in health care leadership journals and health care leadership and educator's conferences.

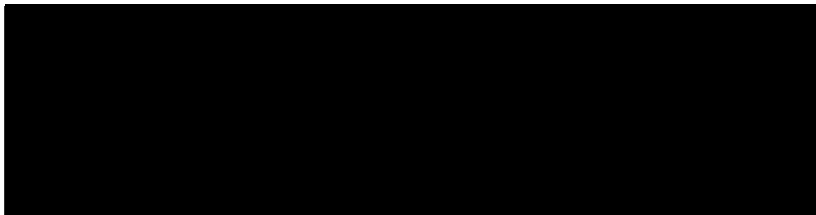
The research finding can also help of health care community by establishing a model of this practice they can integrate into their facilities. Most of my research is focused on patient care and higher education. I believe there is a positive correlation between employee satisfaction and patient care. Increase in work relations creates happier, efficient, and more experienced workforce.

Research Methods and Timeline

- Phase one - Two day online workshop training in the color code. This training will take place in at the end of month that funding becomes available.
- Phase two -Consists of educating the subjects at the health care facility about the project and goals that we hope to accomplish and done the same month as the online workshop. The objective is to create acceptance at every level of the organization.
- Phase three- Surveys will be given to staff (including administration) to investigate their perceptions on onboarding, communication, and conflict resolution. This will be done one month after educating the staff about the project. Data will be collected analyzed through Qualtrics.
- Phase four- A half day workshop for supervisor and administrators (lead by the PI and graduate student) will be held and in the same month several half day workshops will take place for the staff. Most the workshop will be the same material, but there will be emphasis on how to use this is a leadership role with the supervisors and administrators.
- Phase five – A follow up survey with both the staff and administrators will be done 6 months after. If the facility incorporates the personality assessment into the onboarding experiences, the survey questions about their onboarding experience will be given to new employees. Data will be collected analyzed through Qualtrics.
- Phase six- Data will be analyzed and shared will stake holders.

Evaluation

Through this project we hope to create a model with a pilot program to evaluate how personality assessment can improve employee relations. The project will be considered a success if we see a statistically positive perception on employee relations at the health care facility. We will also measure success if the research is chosen for publication or presentations. Dissemination of our findings will include: a final report to the grant review committee, a presentation to key stakeholders at the health care facility, a one page report to staff, and submission of proposals for publication and conference presentation.



References:

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- Hartman, T.(2007). *The people code*. New York, NY: Scribner.
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