

Top Ten Practices of Exceptional Healthcare Organizations

by Bo Snyder

Here—in no particular order—are management practices I see most often in industry-leading hospitals and health systems.

I emphasize “no particular order” because each of these has been used by current industry leaders as a first step on the journey to excellence. Are you already doing some of these? That’s great! If not, pick one that seems most doable for your organization right now, and start there.

1. Define your most important patient groups (from a competitive perspective) and the key requirements that each patient segment has for your organization.
2. Engage your doctors in a process to discern their top five requirements of your organization (or, perhaps, their top five dissatisfiers). Develop a scorecard to track performance and goals for improvement on those requirements.
3. Revise your mission, vision and values. Simplify them and remove buzzwords. Make them more compelling to your key stakeholders. Then revisit them in every management meeting. Bring them into your decision-making. Talk about them often.
4. Develop a set of long-term goals for your organization. Set them absurdly high! Then bring these into your decision-making, too. And talk about them often.
5. Identify five to seven processes in your organization that most impact your patients’ satisfaction. Shine a light on them. Measure them. Improve them.
6. Assess your management team to identify their top five professional development needs.
7. Develop more ways to listen to and learn from patients – focus groups, secret shopping, a complaint management system, etc. Then develop a short list of things patients want done differently.
8. Establish an employee bonus system based on rewarding improvements in patient satisfaction. And share your organization’s results with your employees monthly.
9. Ask every department to identify one process that can be improved to increase satisfaction among patients. Repeat this exercise with an eye toward physician satisfaction.
10. Revise managers’ individual performance standards to align with your organization’s strategic goals.