

SOLUTION: Using a Culture of Safety Survey to Elevate the HRO Experience

Use your Culture of Safety Survey for GOOD.

Your employees are surveyed often. Sometimes we see that the Culture of Safety Survey gets seen as the red-headed stepchild of data mined from the voice of your physicians, providers, and front-line employees.

However, in the world of high reliability, the voice of your employees, providers and physicians is key in your decision-making ability to work on the right thing.

If we trust our work to “what we think we should be working on”, we may be wrong.

Our mantra is for employee driven teams to always work on the RIGHT THINGS the RIGHT WAY.

“It takes humility to seek feedback. it takes wisdom to understand it, analyze it, and appropriately act on it.” --Stephen Covey

Why focus on Surveying & Improving the Culture of Safety?

- The “WHY” is NOT because it is required by a regulatory or accrediting body or because it is linked to financial incentives or disincentives.
- The “WHY” is the value of the voice of your employees, providers and physicians in the improvement efforts.

HOW TO CONDUCT A CULTURE OF SAFETY SURVEY.

We recommend a high-quality survey methodology. Your organization likely does a survey annually, or at least every other year to survey the Employee Experience. Request that a Culture of Safety Survey be administered at the same time.

If this is not possible, you may administer your own (homegrown) culture of Safety surveys, however benchmarking and data analyses will not occur. When you use a high-quality survey methodology, the survey vendor will analyze the statistical relevance of your results. In other words, you will not have to GUESS at what to work on due to your team's interpretation of the results. Please ask for help if you are interpreting your results on your own! Sue and I have a lot of experience choosing which data is statistically relevant and we have the Capstone partners to benchmark you with.

Some Culture of Safety Statements that provide great data, should you decide to do a survey on your own (or, these may be used in “in-between years” when you need great data to work on!)

- My co-workers are competent.
- Our department is committed to doing quality work.
- Our procedures are good at preventing errors from happening.
- We have a work climate in which we can report errors.
- We openly discuss errors.
- Safety concerns are promptly addressed.
- We have a work climate that promotes error prevention.
- Our communication during shift change or handoffs is effective at preventing errors.
- I have the training I need to do my job right.
- I have the equipment and supplies I need to do my job right.
- I am competent to do my job.
- My workload leads to exhaustion.
- I can initiate action to change things that need to be improved.

For information on “SOPS” Survey of Patient Safety (AHRQ), please go to their website:

<https://www.ahrq.gov/sops/surveys/index.html>

AHRQ has many surveys to fit the broad expanse of care provided across clinics, and nursing homes, as an example.

It is VITAL that you have a high participation and return survey rate. The more data you have the higher chance you are being given the RIGHT things to work on. Set your goal at 75% or higher participation rate. Involve leaders and get the word out to everyone.

There is conflict in the discussion as to whether or not employees should get a “prize” for taking the survey. It has been our experience that a small gift and participation prize does not affect the results of the survey. Competition between departments for participation, a favorite cookie from the cafeteria, a pizza party for those departments at 100% participation, are all ways to engage the employees that this is important enough to pay attention to.

Now on to acting on the results and creating good from them!

“Don’t waste customers’ time asking them questions unless you are prepared to act on what they say.” --Bruce Temkin, Co-Founder of the Customer Experience Professionals Association

We recommend that the HRO team set a goal for improving the Culture of Safety survey scores annually, and then develop a quarterly action plan to carry out the work of that goal. Even if there is not an organizational goal to align your goal with, your work within your Journey planning and the actions you take to improve a Culture of Safety will align with many pillars across your organization (safety events cost Market Share, Growth, money loss, employee morale issues, and patient dis-satisfaction with care!).

Bring out the substantial power of an employee driven team to work on a culture of safety.

We recommend that you choose moving your score from Good to GREAT. Do not align your work and the work of your team with your lowest score. How to choose what you develop an action plan around is to choose what you can move from “Good to GREAT”. In other words, you are choosing to do the greater good for the greater amount of people.

When we focus our attention on the low volume of very poor, or poor, responses (and the comments that accompany them), we often aren’t prioritizing the improvement opportunities that affect the majority of our employees or patients.

This allows you to focus on the importance of Top Box Responses. Humans react differently to “Good” vs. “Very Good”.

First – Analyze your data:

- Analyze current results, trends and comparisons
 - Compare yourself to a benchmark if available, both state and nationally
 - Compare yourself to last year.
- Use the Likert Scale:
 - 1 = Strongly Disagree, Very Poor, or Strongly Dissatisfied (0 points)
 - 2 = Disagree, Poor, or Dissatisfied (25 points)
 - 3 = Neutral or Fair (50 points)
 - 4 = Agree, Good, or Satisfied (75 points)
 - 5 = Strongly Agree, Very Good, or Strongly Satisfied (100 points)

Look at the questions with your highest number of “4’s” or “Good” and set a goal to move them to “5’s” or “Very Good”.

But what about the comments? They are so negative! Remember, negativity screams at us, and positivity only whispers. Do not pay attention to isolated and negative comments. Instead, focus on trends of comments, and those that you can create an action plan around, or that lend themselves to back up the data you are seeing in your scores.

Depending on how long your team has been in existence, you may tackle a quarterly issue or question to focus on, if you have the rest of your HRO tactics firmly in place. If not, apply at least two items from the Culture of Safety Survey to your annual action plans.

Remember, in order for high engagement surrounding the Survey, your employees need to see that “Good” was achieved from the survey. In other words, do your employees, providers, and physicians feel as though they were listened to and appreciated for their insight into the safety of the organization.

Whenever your team achieves an action plan item, have the CEO announce it at forums, have your leaders announce it at staff meetings, your team can announce it through training, or other means of communication.

THE MESSAGE SHOULD BE:

“You spoke, we listened, and we are making change based on what you told us”.

Just Start and do great things with your survey!

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