



## Innovation Team Structure

Solution

### What...

A standing team structure, aligned with the key strategic imperatives of creating great patient and employee experiences, creates a place for organized innovation which includes employee-driven contributions.

Why...

- ▶ Engagement is a noble ideal, backed with much research on the organization-wide positive impacts. An organized innovation team structure provides a place, and purpose, that invites engagement.
- ▶ Employees are willing and able to contribute beyond their day-to-day job duties to make things better. And when employees do, positive change and improved results can happen faster while leaders are freed up to focus on additional strategic priorities.
- ▶ The structure is a place to give more people a voice in change and to honor “deference to expertise” as part of the innovation process.

### INNOVATION TEAM STRUCTURE



***“Move away from the mindset that the fulfillment of the organization's mission, vision & strategic plan is only the work of leaders.”***



## Purpose

In alignment with the strategic plan, organizes and champions the organization's transformation initiative by empowering and supporting the employee-driven innovation teams while strengthening the organization's leadership, culture, and agility.



## Major Responsibilities

- ▶ Provide overall stewardship and coordination of initiative
- ▶ Engage and empower the employee-driven teams.
- ▶ Strengthening and synergizing leadership
- ▶ Identifying and overcoming (and even preventing) change challenges.

## Steering Team Membership

- ▶ Initiative Champion (chairperson)
- ▶ Leaders/Facilitators of each of the three employee-driven innovation teams
- ▶ Senior Leaders (preferably all in the initial 2 years)
- ▶ 2-4 Department/Front-line Leaders (minimum one clinical, one non-clinical; also include HR and Quality department leaders if not a senior leader)
- ▶ May also include a physician/provider and/or a member of the board of trustees

## Steering Team Leadership - The Initiative Champion (IC)

The Initiative Champion, selected by the CEO, is usually a senior leader. If the CEO chooses a leader who is not at the executive level, it is vital that the Initiative Champion have easy access to the CEO.

### IC Qualities

- ▶ Excellent communication skills; ability to have crucial/difficult conversations
- ▶ Excellent relationships with leaders, employees and physicians
- ▶ Excellent organization skills
- ▶ Loyal and committed to the organization and the community
- ▶ Visionary - able to look ahead to identify "what's next"
- ▶ Attitude - positive, optimistic, passionate, and energetic
- ▶ A respected leader in the organization
- ▶ Role model for the behavior and performance standards that are expected of everyone

### IC Major Responsibilities

- ▶ Chair the Steering Team and coordinate the efforts of the employee-driven innovation to ensure that all are acting in alignment with their purpose
- ▶ Support the individual and collaborative work of the teams
- ▶ Review the impact and progress of the efforts and to make appropriate adjustments to ensure success
- ▶ Help maintain open communication lines between the teams and the rest of the organization



## *Purpose*

Develops and helps implement solutions to create a more engaged and satisfied workforce, to increase the organization's ability to recruit and retain talented employees, and to create a work environment that is considered "The Best Place to Work" locally and beyond.



## *Major Responsibilities*

- ▶ Develops (revises) the organization's "Behavior Standards" (for service, co-worker relations, etc.) and helps to bring and keep these standards "alive" (...top of mind)
- ▶ Develops and adjusts action plans that contribute to the organization's priority opportunities to improve the employee experience given the use of data (e.g., employee engagement survey, culture of safety assessment, turnover, vacancy rate, etc.)
- ▶ Develops/improves, promotes, and evaluates employee recognition and peer-to-peer feedback

## *Purpose*

To develop the organization's workforce, systems, and culture that consistently delivers a safe and satisfying patient experience.



## *Major Responsibilities*

- ▶ Champions the organization's consistent and competent use of the "Positive Communication Standards," including standards for employee-empowered service recovery
- ▶ Develops and adjusts action plans that contribute to the organization's priority opportunities to improve the patient experience given the use of data & information (e.g., patient satisfaction surveys, culture of safety assessment, quality/safety data, patient rounding, patient call-backs, etc.)

***"When change affects the front line, do it  
with them, not to them."***



## *Purpose*

To organize and deliver high quality training, campaigning, and communication for employees in support of the strategic initiatives and the transformational journey.



## *Major Responsibilities*

- ▶ Coordinates with the Patient Experience Team, the Employee Experience Team, and the Steering Team, to determine and coordinate training, campaigning & communication needs and takes actions to meet those needs.
- ▶ Plans, implements, and evaluates a branded cadence of monthly, quarterly, and semi-annual efforts that support the employee training, campaigning, and communication needs.
- ▶ Supports the process to keep new hire orientation current with the latest and greatest standards and tactics.

## *Team Membership*

- ▶ These innovation teams function well with approximately 8-10 employee members; realizing that not all members will be able to attend all meetings.
- ▶ The membership should be diverse in make-up as to represent many aspects of the organization's services/functions (e.g., clinical and non-clinical, inpatient and outpatient, main campus and remote sites, etc.) and workforce (tenure, generation, FTE status, shift, etc.).
- ▶ While not every work unit or department will have an employee on each team, a cross section of the organization should be represented to the extent possible.
- ▶ Steering Team to decide if membership terms are going to be established (e.g., 1, 2 or 3-year terms); noting that successive terms are recommended to provide stability and historical knowledge for the teams. At the end of a defined term, a member recommitment for an additional term can be requested.

## *Qualities of Team Members*

- ▶ Believes in, and supports, that changes and improvements are necessary and important to the success of the organization
- ▶ Passionate about the team's purpose
- ▶ Willing and able to regularly attend team meetings in person or by phone/video-conferencing (usually 1-2 meetings per month in years 1 and 2; then 1 meeting/month)
- ▶ Willing and able to follow through on action assignments in between meetings
- ▶ Committed to role modeling the behavior standards that are expected of everyone in the organization
- ▶ Viewed as people who want to be part of a high performing team and organization
- ▶ Able to function and contribute well in team efforts

NOTE: Not all team members need to feel comfortable and be skilled at training or public speaking to be a valuable member of a team.





## *Team Leaders*

Each of the employee-driven innovation teams are chaired and facilitated by one of the organization's leaders, usually a "front-line" leader (meaning, a leader that is closer to day-to-day operations than those in a "senior" leadership role). These team leaders are selected by the senior leaders & initiative champion.



The primary role of each team leader is to facilitate employee-engaged contributions (e.g., idea generation, decision making, completing action assignments) that lead to the success of the team's purpose and action plan.



## *Qualities of Team Leaders*

- ▶ Passionate about the team's purpose
- ▶ Knowledgeable as to the organization's processes for making change
- ▶ Excellent communication skills; ability to have crucial/difficult conversations
- ▶ Excellent organization, meeting, project, and facilitation skills
- ▶ Attitude: Positive, optimistic, passionate, and energetic

## *Modifications*

The above information provides a helpful guide to establishing a team structure that has been already utilized in dozens of healthcare organizations to support the organization's successful change and improvement efforts. In particular, this team structure is specifically designed to correspond with the execution of the 2-year transformation plan and resources incorporated in Capstone Leadership Solutions' ASCEND™ platform.

During the initial setup of your Innovation Team Structure, your dedicated transformational expert from Capstone Leadership Solutions will guide the Steering Team to determine if any modifications are recommended or needed based on your organization's size, current situation, and/or existing teams.

The Initiative Champion, Steering Team, and Team Leaders have access to additional resources and coaching to support the set-up and ongoing functioning of these teams.

