Solution

What...

A combination of ongoing visual communication (i.e., communication boards) and monthly facilitated interactions (i.e., staff meetings).

Why...

To elevate transparency and to engage a team to advance goals, improvement efforts, and high standards.

How...

To utilize this successful combination approach of communication boards and staff meetings, other consistent communication tactics (e.g., daily huddles, a weekly blog/"Friday Five", etc.) must serve as the primary methods for the timely relaying of information and updates. When leaders stop saving informational updates for communicating at staff meetings, this frees up staff meetings to serve as a facilitated team meeting that engages employees in goals and improvements, versus simply serving as an information sharing session by the department leaders.

> *" The majority of meetings should be discussions that lead to decisions. "*
>
> *- Patrick Lencioni*

Staff meetings should be prepared for and facilitated more like you would for an improvement team or project team meeting. Facilitate meetings in such a way that employees are engaged in idea generation and decision making for action plans for department goals as well as improvements in department operations (e.g., technology, workflow, policies). You want employees to speak up, not simply sit and listen.

The sample meeting template below includes recommended agenda topics for a monthly department staff meeting. Your organization's Steering Team may create an organization-specific agenda template for use by department leaders.

Sample Department Staff Meeting Agenda Template

I.   Open - Positivity/Recognition/Celebration
II. Status & Action on Department Goals (huddle at Communication Board)
  o   Goal #1 -
  o   Goal #2 -
  o   Goal #3 -
III. Department's Monthly Focus(es) - Standards of Behavior &/or Positive Communication Standards
IV. Policy/Procedure/Technology/Workflow - Updates and/or Input
V.   Rounding Stop Light Report
VI. Organizational Updates
  o   Status of Organizational Goals
  o   Team-Related Activities/Focuses
      1.   Patient Experience Team
      2.   Employee Experience Team
      3.   Employee Training & Communication Team
      4.   Steering Team
      5.   Others, if applicable

TIPS

▶   Block time on your schedule to prepare for, and follow up, from staff meetings.
▶   Engage employees (or guests such as a leader/member from the patient experience team, etc.) to present/facilitate part of the meeting
▶   Arrange the seating so that participants are facing each other (circle versus classroom style).
▶   Huddle around the Communication Board (or if a virtual communication board is used, have that in view) during the portion of the meeting devoted to goals.
▶   Consider ways to sprinkle fun and positivity into this time together.
▶   Virtual staff meetings (or hybrid – some participating in person while others are connected via phone-/video-conferencing) may be preferred or needed

These **visual communication boards** are located throughout the organization, preferably in each distinct work unit/department in which departmental goals are established.

Pictured to the Left: Example of a Department's Communication Board
Organized by "Pillar" headings and includes weekly minutes from Administrative Team meetings (including "answers to burning questions" that were gathered during employee rounding), graphs with current status of organization's goals and department's goals, action plan updates and team communications.

Your organization's Steering Team will create an organization-specific Communication Board template for use by department leaders. This standardization help employees to know, and rely on, what up-to-date information can be consistently found on these boards. Content may be standardized to include:

▶ Annual goals of the organization and the department; quarterly goals and action plans

▶ Measurement results/trending for all organizational goals and department goals

▶ Minutes from staff meetings and administrative/senior leadership meetings (including answers to "burning questions" harvested during employee rounding)

▶ Event notices (CEO-Employee Forums, Employee Training Events, Celebrations, etc.)

▶ Quarterly updates from the employee-driven teams (e.g., patient experience team, employee experience team, etc.)

▶ The focus of the month for standards of behavior &/or positive communication standards

▶ Recognition

Getting started:

▶ Set a standard size/type of board for organization – order in bulk (or re-purpose existing boards that may be throughout the organization). Consider virtual options if more useful

▶ The communications are often organized by "Pillar" (e.g., Growth, Finance, Quality, People, Service, Community), "Balanced Scorecard", "Triple or Quadruple Aim" in keeping with the organization's strategies and annual goals.

▶ Set a "go live" date in which all boards must be installed, and first round of information posted.

▶ Set up a system for administrative meeting minutes and organization goal results to be distributed to each department for their communication boards.

▶ Dedicate "vital time" (dedicated time each month) for information to be updated. An example of this is "Metric Monday" in which every other Monday (opposite "payroll Mondays") is vital time for leaders to analyze their goal metrics and transparently report them on their Communication Board (as well as update the other information on the board).

TIPS

▶ Leaders can get employees involved in keeping the boards up to date. This is something to delegate to increase employee engagement.

▶ Information on the board should be presented in a way that certain key results/outcomes can be understood by employees quickly (e.g., smiley faces, colors (red/green/yellow, up/down arrows). You may need to train employees related to how the information will be presented on the board so that they understand the information that is posted.

▶ The organization's Employee Experience Team can serve as helpful eyes and auditors to validate that communication boards are in keeping with the organization's set standards for timely, well organized, and well-presented content. Make the process quick and simple. For instance, notes/forms that are simple to fill out and readily available for re-stocking and reprinting.

The Employee Experience Team's Role in Communication Boards

The Employee Experience Team will conduct random "audits" on an annual or semi-annual basis in regard to boards being "up to date" with relevant/required elements.

They are encouraged to make this fun and a positive improvement/feedback experience for all involved. The approach that often works for this team is to have their team members assigned to audit certain departments.

In follow up to these audits:

WHEN IT MEETS STANDARD: Recognize those leaders (and any employees that assist them) that have up-to-date, eye appealing, and informative boards that meet/exceed the standard. When audited, a "Stamp of Approval" or form of recognition could be placed on communication boards that meets or exceeds the standard. Take pictures and share best practices with other leaders either at leadership trainings or meetings, etc.

WHEN IT DOESN'T MEET STANDARD: Approach this a learning and improvement opportunity. Provide specific and timely feedback to the applicable leader. Identify trends of common opportunities to improve boards and provide that feedback to all leaders and the Steering Team.