



LONGMONT UNITED HOSPITAL

Employee Engagement is an important issue for all businesses, but it's especially so for healthcare providers. Just think — when you or a loved one requires a hospital stay, you want to assume that every professional who has a hand in patient care is fully committed to his or her job, has the competencies needed to perform the job well, and is comfortable discussing any issues or problems with his or her supervisor.

Longmont United Hospital, located just outside of Denver, recognized the importance of **Employee Engagement** long before the phrase registered with most HR and business executives.



“Back in 1999, Longmont was one of the first hospitals to adopt the Planetree model, which revolves around patient-centric care. Today, we’re one of only 14 hospitals in the United States to have a Planetree Designation,” said Warren Laughlin, Longmont’s vice president of HR.

*“The model is based on a collaborative, team approach to patient care — and **Employee Engagement** is an important factor for successful implementation.”*

But Longmont United executives wanted to go beyond the relationship between **Employee Engagement** and patient care and explore its impact on other business outcomes, such as patient satisfaction, employee retention, and employee performance. Additionally, executives wanted to investigate the correlation between manager performance and various aspects of employee engagement.

For six years, the hospital has worked with Newmeasures, a Boulder-headquartered workforce research and consulting company, to conduct an annual employee survey across its 58 departments. However, this isn't the typical employee engagement initiative.

A Customized Survey and Extensive Analysis Yield Business Insights

Along with items proven to reliably predict **Employee Engagement**, Longmont United's survey also includes items on which employees rate their managers and items related to Longmont United's patient safety culture. This year, 75% of Longmont United's employees 1,250 returned the five-minute online survey. Response rate has steadily ticked up since the survey initiative was begun in 2006.

Once the survey is closed, the next step in the initiative is an extensive data analysis. The survey itself goes far beyond analyzing survey responses. Newmeasures consultants also obtained business data from various Longmont United systems — including employee performance data, manager performance data, departmental turnover rates, and departmental patient satisfaction scores — to examine the relationship of **Employee Engagement** to various aspects of the business.

For instance, the most recent analysis correlated **Employee Engagement** results with manager performance, department turnover, and patient satisfaction (by department). Using proprietary research algorithms, the analysis also provided key insights, such as the three top predictors of high employee performance and which manager behaviors had biggest impact on **Employee Engagement**, performance, and intent to stay. Reports show data in multiple views – for the entire hospital, by divisions, by departments, and at the managerial/supervisor level. The sliced-and-diced data helps Longmont executives easily make comparisons and spot problem areas.

Analysis Informs Business Actions, Decisions, and Priorities

Upon completion of the analysis, Newmeasures consultants work directly with Laughlin and his team to review results, recommend particular actions for the business, and discuss how managers can use the information to improve departmental and employee performance.

According to Laughlin, results from the annual survey initiative are used in a variety of ways. Results are discussed in managers' annual evaluations and are factored into goal setting and personal development. Discussions are also on the agenda of divisional and department review meetings; areas in need of improvement are tied to division and department goals, which are monitored quarterly. Critical skills emphasized by the survey — such as the ability to resolve conflict, communicate effectively, and handle change — are factored into hiring. A top-level analysis is even sent to every employee's home, along with an executive thank you for participation.

"This annual initiative has brought us great management consistency over the last six years," said Laughlin. "Employees see that we take the information very seriously and truly value their feedback. By repeating the process every year, employees get that this isn't some kind of 'flavor of the month' management project."

"What we do really isn't rocket science. But, I believe that our track record of consistency and the processes we've built around the initiative demonstrate to employees that when it comes to engagement, 'we walk the talk' in all aspects of our business."

On Going Focus on Engagement Pays Off

Laughlin points to the hospital's low level of turnover (approximately half the industry average) and its high rate of new hires from employee referrals as two important business benefits of the hospital's ongoing focus on engagement — both critical indicators given the competitive Denver healthcare market.

We Can Make a Difference in *Your* Business

Contact us today to find out more about our mission-minded approach to employee engagement.



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