



I HEARD IT THROUGH THE STEAMLINE

North Carolina Association For Central Service Professionals

President's Message

Dear NCAHCSP Members,

Is everyone ready to combine a little learning and a lot of fun? It is almost time for the annual meeting at Myrtle Beach. We have a wonderful program planned so do your best to attend, and bring a friend.

THANK YOU TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE!

One of the things I am really excited about is the added Wednesday afternoon session. It will be a great help for those getting ready to test for certification and a good review for those who need CEUs. Last year's Wednesday session had great reviews.

Take pride in what you do.

Know your worth.

Support your team.

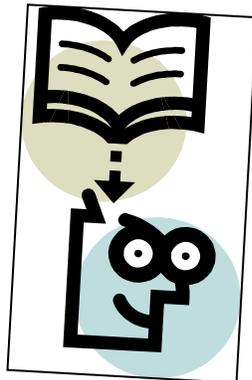
Never stop learning.

Remember you are a patient advocate, what you do everyday effects lives!

Proud to be part of the Sterile Processing and Distribution team

Judith M Carey

President



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The Spring has come again
For the grass is growing green,
And among the fields of clover
Bright butterflies are seen.
The little birds are singing sweetly
As they fly from tree to tree
The busy bees are gathering
The honey from the flowers,
And the merry birds are building
Their nests in sheltered bowers
~Josephine D.C., "Spring," c.1887



Exclusive Tips to Increase Employee Satisfaction within the Sterile Processing Department **Katrina Simpson, B.S., CST, CSPDT**

Objectives:

- Discuss some issues that may contribute to employee dissatisfaction.
- Define morale.
- Define employee work ethics.
- Discuss solutions to help improve employee satisfaction.

Work woes

Everyone has experienced at least one bad day at work. The question is do you let that day reflect the way you act towards your co-workers in sterile processing or any department? I'm sure everyone has



heard the saying, "It's not the job that makes me uncomfortable; it's the people"! Yes indeed! It's the people that can make some of the most amazing jobs in the world the most unbearable. Can you relate? Of course you can. What does the word morale mean to you? Could this contribute to employee dissatisfaction? Morale can be defined as "the level of individual psychological well-being based on such factors as a sense of purpose and confidence in the future" (Merriam-Webster, 2015). Depending on how we feel that we contribute to the workplace, rather it be positive or negative, can certainly determine our morale. How often have you told yourself that my job would be so much better if it was equipped with people I can work with? You may not have stated these precise words, but everyone has felt this way at least once during their career. Although there are many factors that can contribute to the betterment of the workplace, we first need to learn how to work with the people that make the establishment successful in order to maintain employee satisfaction

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Just another day in the dungeon

Morale in today's society is steadily plummeting. With more and more employees feeling invaluable, work ethics are decreasing and coming to work day in day out is becoming a need rather than want. Most of these concerns are stemmed from stress: "Sixty-nine percent of employees report that work is a significant source of stress and 41% say they typically feel tense or stressed out during the workday (American Psychological Association, 2009)". Unhappy employees breed other unhappy employees which can indeed turn out to be torturous to a facility. Positive employee morale creates employee commitment towards an organization. "There is a positive association between the level of job satisfaction in a workplace and the level of employee commitment in a workplace" (Menezes, 2012). This creates an environment in which the employees have a want to come to work and not just a financial need to do so. How would you rate your work ethics in sterile processing? Work ethics can be defined "a belief in the moral benefit and importance of work and its inherent ability to strengthen character. Quality management can also aide in increased employee satisfaction, however that may not always be the case. "Nonetheless, given that quality management initiatives in organizations change the nature of work, they may affect job satisfaction and different dimensions of quality management may differ in impact" (Menezes, 2012). Below are a few suggestions on what corporations no matter the size can implement in their departments in order to increase employee satisfaction.





Create a suggestion box

The suggestion box will allow your staff to anonymously write complaints, recommendations, or even things they appreciate within the department that can give you better insight of areas that are in need of improvement. This will help the supervisor with suggestive tips to improve the morale strictly from the feedback from the staff. Suggestion boxes are nice because they are anonymous, and allow the users to be as honest as possible without the fear of being reprimanded. This stratagem could work well with recognizing problem areas within different departments that may have otherwise gone undetected.

Create a complainer box

The complainer box is for anyone in the office that consistently complains. There will be days that are justifiable days that an employee would need to complain. This box is not for those days! These are for the days that your employee woke up on the wrong side of bed because their husband or wife didn't come home the night before, the electric bill is four-hundred dollars, the dog couldn't wait to go out in the morning so they ruined the carpet, or we're running late because the alarm didn't go off. You get the point. Each time they complain because they woke up having a bad day, is when that particular individual would be required to put a selected amount of money in a box in a designated area within the department. Depending on what the company decides, the amount of money dropped in the box can range from a penny to one-hundred dollars. Anyone that complains habitually in your sterile processing department would have to contribute monies per day to the box that includes the employer themselves! At the end of the month a drawing can be done, and whomever name is drawn wins the money. Now to keep this method logical, only those that were not jotted as complainers for the month would be allowed their names to be drawn from the box. In time, hopefully the complainers would get tired of rewarding everyone else, but themselves.

Create an empowerment committee

If you have anyone willing to help with creating a positive environment, have a couple of people create an empowerment committee. These people will be responsible for creating a session once a month in which the employees are rewarded with words of encouragement, certificates of appreciation, gift cards, or anything else uplifting. They can create a small play mimicking an incident that jeopardize the morale of the department, and display effective ways they fixed that specific issue. This can be done briefly in the morning to help brighten up the day. Any other idea the committee could think of would be utilized monthly to keep the employees on track through encouragement. It could be as small as decorating the department with positive posters to donating vacation time to a random employee that has done their best to work as a team.



Source: <http://www.publicdomainpictures.net/view-image...>

Provide free lunch cards

Anyone that has done an exceptional job, and have gone above and beyond to lead and work as a team should if possible receive a free lunch card. All employees are required a lunch break when they work a full-time hour position. For those that are responsible for purchasing their own lunch, a lunch on the company could be very rewarding. When improving the morale of a person, expensive exchanges are not always required. A lunch card doesn't sound like much, but sometimes small rewards can boost an employee's confidence.

Have employees work in teams and not groups

Try to find ways to get the employees to work together as a team and not a group. Groups work together because they are assigned to do so, and don't have the desire to work outside of that group. For example an employee states: "I'm responsible for working in the Decontamination Department therefore; I can care less about helping anyone in Assembly". This type of behavior is from a non-team oriented point-of-view, and only benefits one sector of the organization. Teams work together because they want to benefit all "groups" of people. For example an employee states: "Although, I work in Tray Assembly, it is my desire to help my fellow Case-Cart Preparation co-workers because it's not about me, but customer satisfaction and the overall success of this company". This behavior exhibits a selfless type of attitude that benefits multiple sectors. Once the employees have an understanding that it is not just about them, they may become more selfless working better as a team.





Conclusion

In conclusion, the hopeful outcome would be to sustain increasingly positive atmospheres in which are beneficial to both the employer and employee. Increased employee satisfaction is an agenda that all corporations around the nation can benefit from. Effective communication, proper management, competitive salaries, customer service surveys, and an overall positive environment can all contribute to employee and employer satisfaction. Once employees are hired, the foundation should be pre-set that the company in which they are employed is a company built on integrity and employee/employer wellness. With proper education on how to enhance the work environment; there is a significant chance that companies across the nation will breed more exultant employees.

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T OGETHER
E VERYONE
A CHIEVES
M ORE



Dear Steamie,

My boss does not like for me to wear gloves in the clean area of SPD. I can't find any literature that supports wearing or not wearing them. What do you think about this practice?

Thank you.

Miss Informed



Dear Miss Informed

As you stated, I too have not been able to find literature or recommendations on this subject, therefore, I will give you my best opinion on why your manager may discourage this practice.

As you are aware, SPD is broken into at least two separate areas: dirty and clean. On the dirty side, we are required to wear multiple types of PPE's to protect ourselves from harm. With this being said, we process contaminated instruments using various chemicals, detergents and methods to decontaminate them (render them safe to handle) for use on the clean side of SPD. Therefore, there should not be a need to wear PPE on the clean side unless there is situation that may cause harm to a patient. An example of this would be artificial nails or polish that is chipped, a skin disorder (e.g. herpes whitlow) or injury (cut or abrasion with dressing) that has been documented by employee health with the recommendation gloves are worn.

I had a new hire tell me she wears gloves "just in case" a dirty instrument comes through. Believe me, this is not what you want to say to someone from TJC (The Joint Commission) or CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) that is inspecting your unit! If you are experiencing dirty instruments on the clean side, your management team needs to get together a team to look at the processes being utilized in the decontamination area. Are the instruments being taken apart appropriately? Are cannulated items or items with grooves or crevices being brushed and rinsed? Are the right chemicals or cleaning methods being used? Do items need to be placed in the sonic washer before the mechanical washer? Are the washers in good working condition? Are the drains clear and the fluid impingement nozzles free of debris? Does the staff need to be reeducated on the proper cleaning and handling of instruments?

I feel certain that your manager would see frequent "dirty" instruments on the "clean" side of SPD as more of an issue than you wanting to wear gloves "just in case".

Steamie





Exclusive Tips to Increase Employee Satisfaction within the Sterile Processing Department Post-Test 2015

1. Morale can be defined as “the level of individual psychological non-existent well-being based on such factors as a sense of purpose and confidence in the future
TRUE FALSE
2. Bad morale cannot contribute to employee dissatisfaction.
TRUE FALSE
3. Sixty-nine percent of employees report that work is a significant source of stress and 50% say they typically feel tense or stressed out during the workday.
TRUE FALSE
4. There is a positive association between the level of job satisfaction in a workplace and the level of employee commitment in a workplace.
TRUE FALSE
5. Quality management does not increase employee satisfaction.
TRUE FALSE
6. Two things that suggestion box provides is an opportunity to submit anonymous complaints or recommendations to the supervisor.
TRUE FALSE
7. You should never work together as a team in the sterile processing department.
TRUE FALSE
8. Providing a lunch card for your employees could potentially improve employee satisfaction
TRUE FALSE
9. Increased employee satisfaction is an agenda that all corporations around the nation can benefit from.
TRUE FALSE
10. Employee satisfaction should never be a concern for corporations.
TRUE FALSE

To receive one contact hour complete the quiz after reading the article and send the quiz only, via normal mail to:

Lana Haecherl
PO Box 568
Pineville, NC 28134

DO NOT SEND QUIZ CERTIFIED

Your certificate will be sent via email if your score is greater than 70%

If you are not a member of NCAHCSP please include a fee of \$20.00

Please allow at least six weeks for processing

CEU Expiration Date: February 28, 2020

PRINT NAME: _____

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What I know for sure.....

What I know for sure..... Is that the picture above became a reality last month, in February, 2015. 2 days of staying at my place of employment snowed in reminded me why I am still in the profession of Sterile Processing. With a very busy surgical volume case load on both snowy days in February, all of my Sterile Processing & Medical Equipment staff members made it into work safely. Some of them even stayed over -night with me at my facility! (What a night we had)

What I know for sure..... Is that I work with a great group of professionals that also care about what they do day to day to help save & enhance human being lives each & every day! I have an awesome team! I am so fortunate to be their leader & to be able to work beside them each & every day saving lives of hundreds of patients that trust us as Sterile Processing to make their lives better! Thank you SPD & MEQ Team at CHS NorthEast!

What I know for sure..... Is that Life is all about giving and taking. There are some issues that cannot be compromised. When situations calls for drastic & dramatic measures, you have to draw the line in the sand, and or in the snow; climb up on a soap box, and protect the hill that you are willing to die on.

- ◇ Take a stand for what you believe in & know is right
- ◇ It's not always easy..... Anything worth fighting for is never easy.....
- ◇ But the most noble thing you can do is stand up for what is right, no matter what the cost!!

What I know for sure..... Is that every once in a while you have to do the thing that you most fear & are most afraid of. Faced those fears with all that you have & all that you may not know that you have.

Never under estimate the power of what you have inside of you!

Patricia Baldwin
NCAHCSP BOD





SPD, Life, Death and Taxes

Change is a part of life that must be embraced in the world of Sterile Processing. Why change? Some may say “we did it this way for 5 years, 10 years, 15 years, 20 years. Why change now?” Well there are some real important reasons: Life, Death, and Taxes. Let’s review the Life, Death and Taxes scenario and how they play a part in our profession.

Life

Sterile Processing is the heart beat of any surgical suite and serves almost every department in the hospital. Although SPD professionals may never go in and assist in the actual care of the patient what is done with the surgical instrument or equipment has a huge impact on the outcome of the patient’s recovery. The alphabet of diseases are so hard to combat these days, that without change the patient’s life is at risk everyday they enter the hospital. To enhance life, SPD techs must know all levels of HLD (high level disinfection) to all modalities of sterilization. The infusion pump today is very different from the one we saw twenty years ago. The appendectomy that surgeons perform today is real different than the way it was done 30 years ago. The lap instruments from fifteen years ago are different than the latest technology of today. SPD is relied on to stay current on technology because technology is developed to improve the life and recovery of the people hospitals care for. Remember if the heart is not healthy they body suffers so, it very important to keep it healthy and fit.

Death

The bacteria we try to clean away or sterilize to death have a more severe impact on patients’ lives when they become infected with these deadly diseases. Yes, death is something SPD techs can prevent and all they have to do is have the knowledge to do their job and willingness to change when necessary. Laryngoscope blades, who knew 25 or 30 years ago that a person could get **VRE** (*VRE Vancomycin resistant enterococci, Vancomycin is an antibiotic that is used to treat some drug-resistant infections caused by enterococci.*), **MRSA** (*MRSA Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus is a bacteria that is resistant to many antibiotics.*), or **CRE** (*CRE Carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae, are a family of germs that are difficult to treat because they have high levels of resistance to antibiotics.*) from an improperly processed blade? Who knew that a simple routine GI lab procedure could kill? Pretty sure that we never thought that an infusion pumps could be deadly; it only takes a little MRSA in the crevice of the door to cause a flesh eating disease. What about that drill not inspected and flashed and used on an immune compromise patient (they didn’t know that the patient before him had HEP-C and that the drill’s IFU’s were not followed when processed.) Due to many of the reasons above the IFU’s of all medical devices are more critical to our profession. SPD Techs today cannot rely on how it was done a year ago much less years ago, they must rely on how to process items the way it was tested and validated when manufactured. SPD techs are the super Hero’s that fight the villainous bacteria’s of today. Their armor is knowledge; the weapon used to fight is change, the super power comes from willingness to care for the patients they serve.

Taxes

Some may wonder why SPD Techs have to be concerned about taxes. The reason is reimbursement. If the hospital we work for is at fault for the harm of a patient Medicare or any other insurance company will NOT pay for the care of the patient harmed. CMS (*Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services*) can stop payment to any hospital they find negligent in the care of the patient they are responsible for. If a surgical site infection is caused by improperly processed instruments, insurance will not cover that surgery, the cost to care for that patient comes from the entity that caused the harm. Not following proper protocol is one reason patients are being harmed. Example, if the IFU requires special parameters such as: an extended cycle or must use ETO for sterilization and these instructions are not followed then we have failed the patient. If the germicidal cleaner requires a contact time and is not followed and **CDIFF** (*Clostridium difficile is a spore-forming, Gram-positive anaerobic bacillus that produces two exotoxins: toxin A and toxin B. It is a common cause of antibiotic-associated diarrhea (AAD).*), MRSA or CRE is spread then again the tech/ hospital is at fault and payment can be denied. It is not a big secret that a hospital cannot run on an empty bank accounts. Most hospitals rely on Medicare reimbursement and that takes tax dollars, so as SPD professionals taxes are a concern of ours.

The challenge is given to all SPD professionals to do the following:

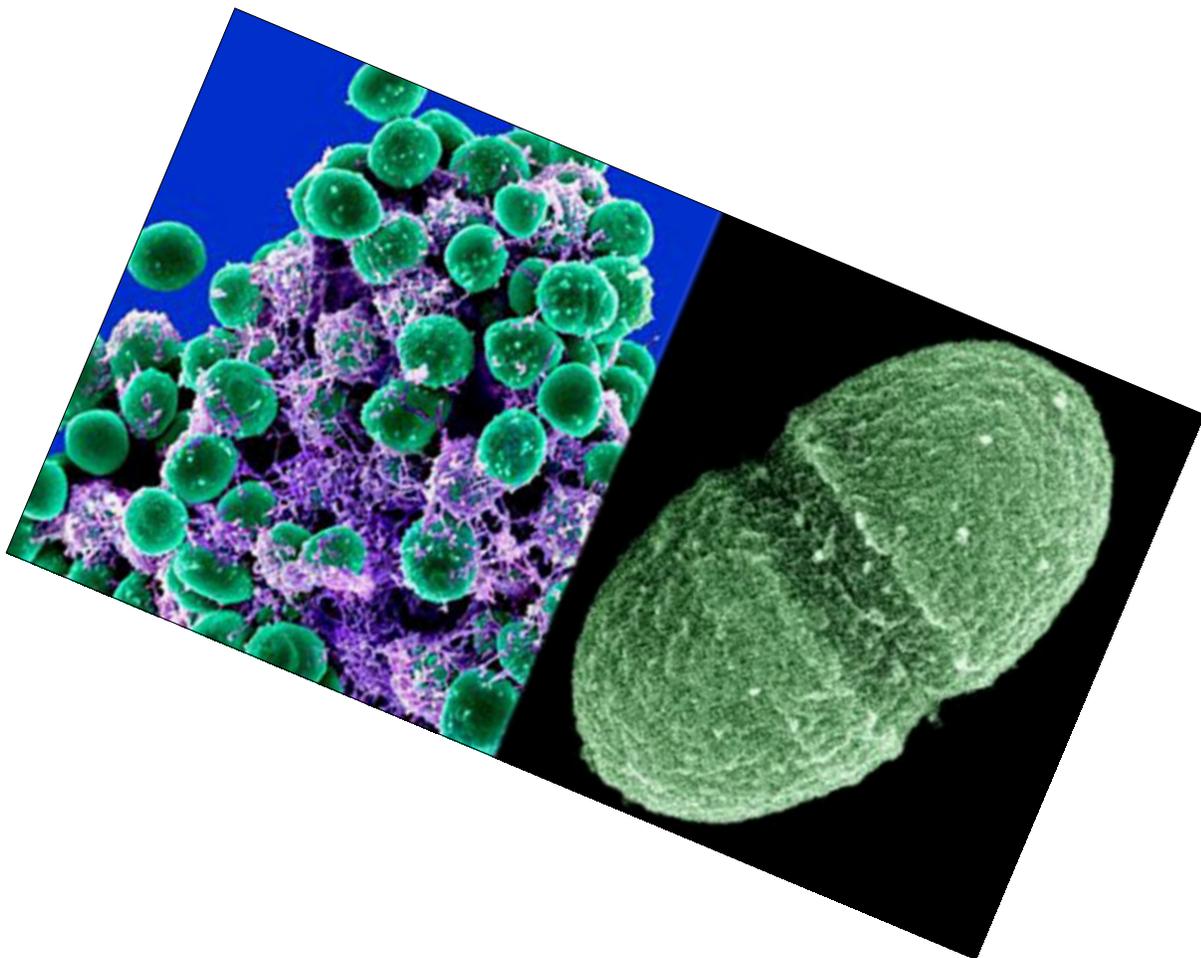
- Promote life and protect it by doing the job called to do.
- Process and maintain that high level of excellence.





Prevent death, combat all those deadly diseases.
Put on that armor and wield that sword.
Care for that patient that put their life in your hands.
Keep the tax man away and save that revenue.
It is better to be able to buy that new washer or sterilizer or any needed equipment in your area with that money.
Be the heartbeat of the hospitals. Stay fit and healthy and keep the deadly diseases away from your patients.

Karen Furr
NCAHCSP BOD





North Carolina Association for Hospital Central Service Professionals will establish itself statewide as the leading educational organization through innovative programs that enhance the development of the Central Service Professionals.



Thank you to this vendor and all the other vendors that support the NCAHCSP





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