



HeartBeat

ON THE QUALITY PATIENT EXPERIENCE™

Insights, tips, tools and resources to help you achieve the unparalleled patient, family and employee experience



RESHAPING
THE CULTURE
OF CARE



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Soapbox: Refreshing our Commitment to Impressive Service—A Timeless Goal

By Wendy Leebov, Ed.D., Partner; Language of Caring, LLC

Recently, I was cleaning up my files and came across a relic from 1986 (yes, three decades ago!) titled *Patients and Families First: My Commitment to Impressive Service*, which I wrote when I was strategy coach for service excellence in a large healthcare system. This ‘relic’ began with a short declaration of commitment to patient and family-centered care, followed by six specific aspects of commitment: The Six C’s. As I read it, with a pang of nostalgia, I was struck by its timelessness. It addresses what I see as an enduring truth: people rely on the attention, empathy, trustworthiness, and resourcefulness of those ministering to their health care. This has always been true, is true today, and always will be. Therefore, we need to scrutinize our behavior again and again, and be open to altering it so we can put forth our best selves.



I suggest reviving this relic. I’ve reprinted it here (after updating a few passé terms such as ‘customer’ and ‘mail’) to be used as a refresher for execs, managers, frontline staff, physicians and everyone who is engaged in improving the patient experience.

Patients and Families First: My Commitment to Impressive Service

I promise to never lose sight of the reason we’re here...to serve our patients. As a dedicated member of our team, I recognize that I am key to providing impressive service whether I serve patients and families directly or I serve and support the people who do.

Six Commitments: “The Six C’s”

1. **Concentration.** I will give my full attention. Wherever I am, I’ll be there completely.
2. **Comfort.** I’ll make patients and families feel comfortable. I’ll make people feel at home when they wish they were.
3. **Can-do.** I’ll take responsibility. I’ll do what needs to be done.
4. **Confidence.** I’ll inspire confidence. I’ll help patients and families feel that they’re in good hands.
5. **Calm.** I’ll anticipate, prevent and relieve the anxiety of patients and families. I’ll help people feel calm, not nervous or stressed.
6. **Collaboration.** I’ll do my part and help others do theirs. Because others depend on me, I’ll make sure they can.





	DO	DON'T
1. Concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Focus on the person with undivided attention ✓ Notice details ✓ Watch for signs of anxiety and concern ✓ Show you're listening and understanding by communicating with empathy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Act distracted ✗ Hold side conversations ✗ Ignore patients and others waiting for your attention ✗ Interrupt coworkers who are focused on patients and families
2. Comfort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Greet people with warmth and a smile ✓ Introduce yourself and your role ✓ Wear your nametag ✓ Call patients and family members by their last name until invited to do otherwise ✓ Tell people what to expect ✓ Provide creature comforts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Talk about patients, families or coworkers in public ✗ Barge in unannounced ✗ Talk down to patients
3. Can-do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Step in and help or find someone who can— before people have to ask ✓ Say "I can and I will" ✓ Find solutions ✓ Pick up trash ✓ Listen to complaints and respond without being defensive ✓ Do whatever is possible to make things right 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Say "Sorry that's not my job/shift/ department/ patient" ✗ Complain without helping to solve the problem ✗ Give people the run-around ✗ Pass the buck
4. Confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Dress and act in a professional manner ✓ Tell people exactly what you're doing and why ✓ Say positive things about the organization and coworkers ✓ Take complete messages and deliver them quickly ✓ Do what you say you'll do when you say you'll do it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Give "we're short-staffed" as an excuse ✗ Make people wonder what's happening ✗ Badmouth the organization or coworkers ✗ Say "I'll take care of it" if you can't or won't
5. Calm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Respond quickly ✓ Apologize for delays, before people complain ✓ Welcome questions and concerns ✓ Make it easy to speak up ✓ Protect privacy and confidentiality ✓ Help people find their way ✓ Keep the noise down ✓ Communicate quickly if you can't keep a promise ✓ Treat (adult) patients as adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Keep patients waiting when they push the 'call' button ✗ Hold back information ✗ Make people wonder ✗ Yell down the hall ✗ Talk loudly at night
6. Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Engage patients and families as partners in decision-making ✓ Keep colleagues informed ✓ Treat each other with respect, regardless of title ✓ Listen ✓ Respect each other's time ✓ Value diverse opinions ✓ Pitch in ✓ Give constructive feedback ✓ Confront directly ✓ Give genuine thanks ✓ Learn from each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Think your priorities are all that matter ✗ Engage in back-biting ✗ Engage in finger-pointing ✗ Be defensive when you get feedback



“We can also be more alert to avoiding the behaviors that reduce our effectiveness.”

Delving Deeper—Team Activities to Promote Improvement

Try these two simple ways to refresh these behaviors within your team:

1. Using the “DO” and “DON’T” lists, complete a quick self-audit. How many of the positive behaviors have you succeeded in making your regular habit? How many of the negative ones have you eliminated? Ask others on your team to rate their consistency in displaying each DO behavior and avoiding the DON’Ts.
2. Use this [Team Exercise Worksheet](#) to engage your team in taking these behaviors even further. Working in pairs or small groups:
 - Identify two additional DO’s and DON’Ts specific to their jobs, for each of the Six C’s.
 - Identify two behaviors (their additions or from the whole list) which they consider strengths and two behaviors on which they could improve, for each of the Six C’s.
 - Have them share these and commit!

Albert Einstein said, “Excellence is in the details.” By calling attention to the multitude of behaviors that demonstrate our competence, empathy and caring, we can be more intentional about engaging in behaviors key to a great patient and family experience. We can also be more alert to avoiding the behaviors that reduce our effectiveness.



Reduce Burnout through the Practice of Presence

- Brainstorm rituals or one-liners people can use to remind themselves to be present, such as taking a deep breath, saying “Be here now” or “Focus!”
- In pairs, discuss a time you succeeded in staying present and mindful with a patient or coworker despite potential disruptions (interruptions, tech devices, patients in the waiting room)
- Give each other a pat-on-the-back for practicing mindfulness and presence



Let’s connect in New York!

Jill Golde, Language of Caring Partner & SVP, Market Development, joins Rachel Biblow, MSW, LCSW, Sr. Director of Patient and Family Services and Amy Kratchman, BA, Family Consultant from **Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia** to present the session “Building Partnerships between Family Consultants and Leaders for Culture Change” at **IPFCC’s 7th Annual International Conference on Patient and Family-Centered Care!** New York Marriott Marquis on Tuesday, July 26 starting at 11:15 am. To schedule a conversation with Jill about Language of Caring, send her an email: jgolde@languageofcaring.com.



 **NEWSBYTES**
(continued)

• **New: Center for Innovation**

In June, the Children’s Hospital Colorado announced a new Center for Innovation, which will provide their team members with training, physical space, and other support to develop innovations to improve the patient experience.

• **Want to present at next year’s Beryl Conference?**

The Beryl Institute is now inviting practitioners, researchers and patient and family advisors to submit proposals for presentations or poster sessions at next year’s Patient Experience Conference to be held March 20-22, 2017 at the Hyatt Regency Denver in Denver, Colorado. Submissions are due by July 29, 2016 and should emphasize case studies and proven practices related to patient experience initiatives and successes. For guidelines and to submit a proposal, [click here](#).

• **HealthStream’s Healthcare Improvement Forum in San Diego August 9-10**

Please join us at HealthStream’s upcoming conference! Language of Caring Partner & SVP, Client Services, Dorothy Sisneros will be presenting the session **Using Language of Caring to Elevate Performance** on August 10 from 11:15 am - 12:30 pm PDT. [Click here](#) to sign up for the August Forum. If you’d like to schedule a time to meet with Dorothy, just contact her at dsisneros@languageofcaring.com or (602)615-1192.


STRESSBUSTER

Do one action mindfully each day

Pick one action you do every day—sipping coffee, putting on your shoes, feeding the cat—it doesn’t matter what. Every day for a week, make an effort to do that one action mindfully, to be fully present while doing it. Focus on all your senses during that one action.


QUOTEWORTHY

- “There is no greater gift you can give or receive than to honor your calling. It’s why you were born.”

Oprah Winfrey

- “My life is my message.”

Mahatma Gandhi



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Jill Golde, MS, Dorothy Sisneros, MS, MBA and Wendy Leebov, EdD—partners at Language of Caring.

Spread the Resources

- Forward this month's Heartbeat email to others.
- Share and tweet the following link:
Word Matters or Words Matter

<http://languageofcaring.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/refreshing-commitment-to-impressive-service.pdf>

Join our LinkedIn Group **“Quality Patient Experience and HCAHPS Improvement”** and add to the rich discussions.

PLEASE FOLLOW US!



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