



This Client Case Study report is intended to provide testimony to the capabilities and results that InitiativeOne has been able to achieve. Confidentiality is important to all our clients. While this study details specific experiences, we have made an earnest effort to provide our client with anonymity.

FOCUS: Health Care Industry Hospital System

Results

- ***Reversal of financial performance***
Company moved from a loss of fifteen million to a projected profit of six million within a nine-month period. The CEO and Board Chairman publicly acknowledged our culture change process as the key catalyst for its corporate turnaround.
- ***Improved morale and empowerment***
A comparison of pre-test and post-test results showed an organization that had moved from “organizational depression” to one in which employees felt enthusiasm for the system's future. Test results indicated greater ownership of corporate goals and financial health. Testing one year later indicated sustained measurable improvement in these areas.
- ***More effective decision-making***
By creating a clear decision frame for the entire organization, cycle time was reduced in addressing problems and making corporate decisions. The CEO said “Had the decision-making process been in place three years earlier when the organization considered a merger, the decision process would have been reduced from 36 months to six weeks. This cost the organization a loss of focus while asking key leaders to focus on merger issues.”

BACKGROUND

This Health System is regarded as one of the leading health care systems in the western U.S. Known nationally for its centers of excellence in cardiac care, cancer research and treatment, and women's health issues, the organization attracts some of the brightest medical minds in the country. A not-for-profit, community based system consisting of multiple hospitals and specialty centers, the Health System employs over 5000 staff, supporting 1400 physicians, generating annual revenues exceeding one billion dollars.

NEED

The Health System was experiencing an extreme financial crisis. Managed care had significantly reduced reimbursement rates requiring greater efficiency and improved cost management. Obscured by a mistaken belief that its reputation would shield it from resulting financial difficulties faced by other healthcare providers, senior leadership had not prepared the organization for change. The hospital was forced to reduce its workforce for the first time in history. Morale was at an all-time low while turnover of skilled nurses and staff was at an unparalleled high.

For five years consecutively, the system had experienced strong earnings. Followed by three years of declining earnings, the Health System projected negative earnings for the first time in its history. Rumors throughout the community of internal problems had begun to affect donor support of capital improvement projects. A culture of blame, a reluctance to accept change, and an environment void of accountability hindered problem solving activity at all levels of the organization.

SOLUTION

A climate survey was conducted and interviews were completed which included all senior executives, a cross section of directors, supervisors, and frontline employees. Emerging themes became guide points for our process design.

Senior executives met as one team while their direct reports were divided into two groups. Processes and procedures were used to develop a safe team environment. This was essential for three reasons: surfacing of “organizational sacred cows,” building of trust, and modeling the establishment of healthy team environments.

These group processes enabled real behaviors to surface and identified specific issues that were hindering individual and corporate success. Leaders were able to discover and address their personal “sabotage methods” that were undermining their leadership effectiveness, both personally and professionally.

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Results (continued)

- **Creation of a culture of accountability**

Ineffective leaders could not hide within a healthy culture that had “raised the bar.”

Passive/aggressive leaders undermining corporate goals were exposed and lost their influence.

Fifteen of seventeen leaders who consistently failed to meet goals left of their own volition. The improved performance in these seventeen areas was the key to the system's financial health.

Solution (continued)

These forums also provided a “practice arena” for modeling the giving and receiving of healthy accountability, for conflict resolution, and for addressing actual real time issues emerging between sessions.

In this non-threatening environment individuals were able to observe their own behaviors, as well as others' actions, and understand how they contributed to the current culture and the present state of the organization. Blame began to dissipate and was replaced with a greater commitment to personal responsibility and accountability.

Specific processes were introduced for building an empowered environment in which individuals would assume greater responsibility for organizational results. Transferable problem solving systems were introduced to create a collaborative culture where individuals were expected to solve problems and produce results without intervention from senior leaders. Leaders were shown how to move from a micromanagement pattern to a measurement based leadership style.

All teams were given the same information and processes. With increased understanding of healthy leadership behavior, all persons were expected to hold each other accountable without exceptions, when fellow leaders exhibited less than stellar behavior outside of corporate values. This further cemented a corporate culture of positive accountability. This process was then repeated with all managers and supervisors throughout the system to drive the new culture to all levels of the organization to assure consistency and to develop additional layers of accountability.



Who we are ...

InitiativeOne is a team of professionals working together to facilitate accelerated change in the cultures of businesses, organizations and institutions - helping them win, both personally and professionally.

Headquartered in Scottsdale, Arizona, we work with companies on a national basis and are structured to provide consistent and timely responses to all our clients. Our clients range in size from startups to Fortune 100 companies.

To learn more, visit our website at www.initiative-one.com or call us at 602-374-8990

Services for facilitating accelerated change in the world of business

Leadership Development • Strategic Planning • On-Call Business Consulting

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