3 Components to High-Performing Healthcare Facilities:
Data, Communication & Engagement
As healthcare leaders seek new ways to do, earn and serve more, they often overlook three surefire sources of savings, efficiencies, and competitive advantage, particularly when combined: **employee engagement, communications and data**.

For starters, “to win customers and a bigger share of the marketplace, organizations must first win the hearts and minds of their employees,” say Gallup researchers.

You know this, instinctively. But perhaps you don’t fully understand what your healthcare facility is losing to disengagement today, or how to cultivate strong internal relationships in a practical, sustainable sense.

It’s a challenge you shouldn’t ignore. Only 22% of U.S. employees are engaged and thriving, reports Gallup. Even more disturbing, service employees rank the lowest of any occupation Gallup has measured, declining year after year. The costs of this disengagement can be catastrophic.

“*When organizations successfully engage their customers and employees, they experience a 240% boost in performance-related business outcomes.*”

GALLUP, STATE OF THE AMERICAN WORKPLACE REPORT
At the same time, many facilities management teams struggle to sway internal audiences, demonstrate value, and be perceived as strategic partners, lacking clout in the organization.

On the surface, these may seem like separate issues — swaying internal audiences, showing value, and engaging employees. In this resource, we’ll help you understand how one fuels another, with data and communications helping you bridge the gap to build relationships that are fruitful and profitable for everyone involved.

What You’ll Learn

► The impact of shifting the mindset and perceptions of the facilities department from break-fix to value-driver.

► How to develop an employee engagement plan that increases productivity & efficiencies.

► How to build value and relationships with internal audiences through effective communications relevant to each audience.

► The right data and tools to engage internal and external audiences.
The Break-Fix Mentality is Breaking Your Value

Before we dive into employee and customer dynamics, a reality check: At many hospitals, the facilities management (FM) department is stuck in a break-fix cycle, where technicians and laborers wait for something to break, then react to it.

In our experience working with hospitals across the U.S., a department that waits for things to malfunction and someone to tell them about it isn’t a stable department. Rather, it’s a high-risk department, plagued by inefficiencies, complaints from internal customers, low morale, and lack of respect within the organization. Not only that, it is breaking the value of your FM department.

That may be of no fault of your technicians, who may be dedicated, skilled workers. Maybe they’re short-staffed and struggling to keep up. Maybe processes aren’t clear, consistent, or existent. Maybe they’re doing the best they can with the tools and information available to them today.

This cycle can be broken and it starts with leadership development and transitioning that to the mindset of the technicians. By defining department goals, setting expectations and training your FM leaders to manage a proactive team, this will start to shift the technician’s mindsets to a more engaged, efficient and proactive team.
The good news is that small adjustments to team communications and daily routines — like proactive rounding, planning for the work ahead, and collecting data on work orders — can make a world of difference in increasing the FM department's value, morale and standing in the organization.

Before we get there, let’s consider what it means to deliver value as a FM team.

It’s not unusual, for instance, to promote a facilities technician to a leadership position just because they’ve been there for a while, despite no training, mentoring or leadership ability. The offshoot? High turnover, loss of institutional knowledge, and a growing reliance on external service contracts that will cost you far more than growing in-house capabilities.
The Value Formula: 3 Components

**Data**
- Thorough, clear, reliable data for all components touching your facilities operations.
- Interpretation and clear communication of that data in terms of how it impacts organizational goals.
- Takes emotion and biases out of decisions.
- Faster decision-making. Less waste, fewer errors.

**Employee Engagement**
- Enabling employees to have a say in department decisions, routines, and their own career path.
- Investing in their professional growth.
- Clear expectations, frequent communications.
- Leader development
- Defined goals
- Recognition process

**Communication**
- Knowing your audiences, from employees to vendors to executive leadership: what drives them, what hinders them.
- Adequate tools and messaging for each audience.
Data, Tools & Standardization

Data makes everyone’s jobs easier. But often, strategies, tools and tactics employed in facility operations hinge largely on personal experience, preferences and hunches. While there’s much value in personal perspective, basing decisions on shifting values and information invariably leaves blind spots and gaping holes where resources slip through. The result? Duplicate, inefficient or needless expenses galore.

Pairing activity reports and recommendations with data not only makes your information more precise and error-resistant, but also helps to remove emotion and biases out of discussions — particularly those with potential for controversy. Clearly, data also provides evidence so you can make better decisions and more accurate predictions, avoiding costly mistakes.

The data and standardization of that data will also be a key component in gaining that needed leadership buy-in, which we will cover in the next section.
Pinpointing your Destination with Data

Like mapping a route to a place you’ve never been before, your first step is to get crystal-clear on your destination, as well as where you stand right now.

➢ Evaluate the current state of your FM department (current workflow, staff and resources).

➢ Set achievable goals for your team to work towards that align with the organization’s goals.

➢ Establish milestones and reporting processes to show progress.
Examine current workflow, staff and resources.

Current State of your Department

Identify 30 – 60 – 90 day goals along with long-term department goals that align with organizational goals.

Set Achievable Goals

Using data to report progress and successes to hospital leadership.

Establish Milestones

Evidence you can make better decisions & more accurate predictions.

Reliable Data

Securing Leadership Buy-In

Demonstrating value

Pinpointing Your Destination with Data
Securing Leadership Buy-In and Involvement

How do you demonstrate value and show leadership within your organization that everyone wins when you collaborate and invest in facilities management?

Walker suggests a three-pronged approach:

1. **Earn your leaders’ support by showing evidence of the impact and value of facilities management efforts through data and standardization.**

2. **Share what to expect. Present your plan for driving improvements, with regular progress reports.**

3. **Clarify your leaders’ role. What do you need from them to be successful?**

Note that your fastest route to make an impact, particularly when working with new groups, is to secure early wins. Find a problem you can solve quickly to earn credibility and positive word-of-mouth as you engage new audiences or partners.
I know what is expected of me at work.

I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right.

At work, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.

In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.

My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person.

There is someone at work who encourages my development.

At work, my opinions seem to count.

The mission or purpose of my company makes me feel my job is important.

My associates or fellow employees are committed to doing quality work.

I have a best friend at work.

In the last six months, someone at work has talked to me about my progress.

This last year, I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow.
Meaningful Goals & Engagement

How would your employees respond? Which gaps or opportunities rise to the surface? Asking employees how they want to grow will help guide the conversation and allow you to show your commitment to helping them grow in their career, resulting in a higher engagement.
Compelling Communications

The number-one rule of winsome communications: Know your audience. What are their needs? Pains? Drivers? Fears? Those answers will differ, of course, depending on whom you’re addressing.

Let’s tackle four key audiences that must buy into your FM program before it can be successful:

- **Employees**
  - Want to be heard in an open, non-judgmental way.
  - Want a say in their daily routines and department decisions.
  - Want growth and advancement opportunities.
  - Want to sharpen and expand their skills.
  - Want to be recognized for good work.
  - Want respect and a sense of purpose.

- **Direct Customers** *(unit leaders, clinicians, etc.)*
  - Want work orders fulfilled quickly and accurately.
  - Want positive, friendly interactions with FM staff.
  - Want work orders acknowledged, and notification when complete.
  - Want FM staff to spot and fix problems before they do.

- **Executive Leaders**
  - Want to stay informed of issues, threats and opportunities impacting facilities operations — their implications, costs, risks.
  - Want evidence for your claims and recommendations.
  - Want objective, data-based reasoning for your requests — especially funding requests.

- **Vendors/Trade Groups**
  - Want to leverage knowledge and abilities.
  - Want to exchange actionable know-how, best practices.
  - Want to feel like partners.

The idea is simple: If you want to be persuasive, speak to issues your audience cares about, and back it up with data whenever possible.
In a successful partnership, both parties have skin in the game, both participate in solutions, and both reap the benefits.

Earlier, we touched on understanding what drives each of the audiences you communicate with. That understanding is also crucial in cultivating strong partnerships.

For our client facilities, customer feedback data reveals three primary drivers:

- **Understanding how the FM department will help them meet their goals.**
- **Quality and accuracy of FM services.**
- **Quality of FM leadership at each site.**

Sharing facts and information with each of your audiences is a great start. Excellent reporting, however, also explains how the information benefits them and helps them advance their interests.
Ensuring Results

In its “Driving Results” report focused on customer engagement, Walker Information suggested five questions to ensure results. These questions also provide us with a picture of what a solid FM program looks like:

**Do we have the right culture?**
“There should be a clear alignment between how the company prioritizes customer [and employee] needs with the overall corporate objectives.”

**Do we have a good strategy in place?**
“Includes specific goals, a leader with influence, a committed team, a roadmap, and the authority to make it all happen.”

**How strong is our customer intelligence?**
“This means making the most of available customer information to do more than just listen to customers. Instead you need to predict their next move and anticipate future needs.”

**Do we take action?**
“Develop an infrastructure for action that delivers timely customer insights, educates users of its value, and encourages them to make use of it.”

**How well do we implement change?**
“To generate results, real change has to occur... Ensure the change is implemented effectively, measured carefully, and constantly modified to optimize its impact.”

To get there, you’ll need to define a clear destination, route, hazards and accelerators: your goals and metrics, a plan to get there, potential issues identification, processes and tools that will accelerate your path to results.
Closing Thoughts

We have covered a lot of information in this whitepaper that just begins to scratch the surface of three large topics that your healthcare organization should focus on. Because they are such impactful areas, it may be difficult to know where to start. That is why our intention is that this information will serve as a starting point for you to be able to develop your own plans and a path to showing greater departmental value within your healthcare organization.

Your employees are likely already doing great things – now it’s time to empower them, use the most meaningful data and the right communication methods to make others realize just how much value your teams brings to the overall organization.

Should you need further guidance, resources or clarification on anything covered in this document, don’t hesitate to ask:

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We’ll be happy to share insights gleaned from working with hundreds of your peers and helping them overcome similar challenges to ream dramatic savings and efficiencies.