

Discussion guide: Gathering feedback



VHMA's Candid Confessions Survey results underscore the need to solicit feedback from team members. To get started, review the following meeting preparation advice. Then put the ideas to practice with meeting exercises. You may use some of all of these activities, depending on whether you're just beginning to share details of your practice's finances or your team simply needs a refresher.

Meeting preparation:

Perceptions about change may be tied to an employee's level of responsibility.

The survey results suggest that those in upper-level positions seem to be more positive about how well change is received in the practice. Employees with less responsibility seem to have a more negative view of the culture of change. Don't assume that all employees share similar opinions about proposed change. When change is on the agenda, be sensitive to how reactions to it may vary throughout the organization.

Meeting exercise:

It's important to continually take feedback concerning where problems lie as well as solutions for correcting them. The team should understand that change is a given. Recommend reading the book, "Who Moved My Cheese?"

Sample script:

You say: As we move forward, we have to develop and understand what the "new normal" is for ourselves and for our clients. What used to work may not work any longer. This is an exciting, new time to develop new protocols and new methods or tweak existing ones. We can look forward to these challenging times rather than dreading them. We will all work together and help each other through the changes that lie ahead.

Meeting preparation:

Strive to receive input from all employees when identifying the issues that you must confront in a practice.

Eliciting feedback from a professionally diverse group is an effective strategy for piecing together a thorough understanding of prevailing attitudes, beliefs and impressions among your team members.

Meeting exercise:

To elicit feedback, use a variety of approaches at your next meeting. For example, you might start by asking, "What type of changes do we need to make?"

Remember, great ideas deserve rewards. So ask your team what they think a great reward would be for developing a money-saving or money-making idea. Then remind them that you'll ask them to help implement ideas, which may include explaining their ideas to the hospital owner and to coworkers.

Meeting preparation:

Make a point to acknowledge concerns about how the external world impacts the practice.