Employee satisfaction - or lack of it - hinges on a productive, fulfilling relationship between staff and management; indeed, the success of any hospital depends on nurses who enjoy their jobs and feel rewarded by their efforts. Ultimately, of all the people in the marketplace, healthcare consumers may suffer the most when this vital success factor is lacking.

Satisfied nurses shine. They’re the ones who are attentive to every patient’s need, and “go the extra mile” to be helpful. When nurses are unhappy, watch out! A pervasive atmosphere of hostility and ill will can cause a “staff infection” throughout the workplace; visitors feel its sting, and everything suffers. Sadly, these nurses may unknowingly direct their unhappiness to patients. Subsequently, this could result in situations where for example, unhappy dialysis patients fail to keep appointments for treatments or will find another dialysis unit to help them. Patients will do anything to avoid yet another negative influence in their lives.

The costs associated with low nurse morale can be calculated by looking at the expenses associated with decreased productivity, unresolved conflict, nurse turnover, and unproductive time spent gossiping and complaining to co-workers.

Is it possible to create an environment where nurses are motivated to do their jobs to the best of their abilities - and communicate satisfaction to everyone around them? The answer is yes; when management takes the time to learn what motivates their staff to do their best work, and what contributes to a sense of well being and satisfaction.

1. Morale Starts at the Top
Nurses take emotional and attitudinal cues and clues from the unit managers and the staffing managers. Hospital leadership must make conscious, continual efforts to play a constructive role in addressing staff needs and cultivating cooperation.

2. Prioritize Communications
Good communication and clear expectations are essential for high morale. Show your nurses that you trust and respect their need to know about issues affecting the hospital, and in turn, their livelihoods. Nurses feel competent, tend to perform better and are more productive when they know what is expected of them.

3. Praise More than Criticize
Nurses want to feel appreciated. Often, the little “thank yous” make a big difference. When offering praise, make sure it is TRUE (timely, responsive, unconditional, enthusiastic).

4. Encourage Involvement
Every nurse wants to feel involved and important to the success of the hospital.

5. Create a Friendly Experience
Intensive care units are high-pressure environments for example. Often patients are in pain and fearful of their diagnosis. Small things can make a big difference. To turn a poor experience into a positive one and alleviate patient disappointment, try the “ACT” acronym: Apologize, Correct the service, and Take action to make amends.

6. Work Hard, Play Hard
Everyone likes to have fun—and happy people have high morale. Take time out of the work schedule for nurses to interact and have fun on a regular basis.

7. Be Aware of Morale Factor
Morale changes, sometimes daily. Stay in touch with day-to-day events and watch for changes in morale.

The hospital with the right approach will be the one to reap the rewards of success. A healthcare organization's goals include providing quality service to patients. Too often, the importance of attracting and keeping quality employees in order to achieve that goal is overlooked. Creating an environment where employees who are “real jewels”, are admired, polished, and appreciated will result in a fruitful organization.

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HERE'S HOW TO MAKE YOURSELF A LITTLE POCKET VERSION

FOLDING INSTRUCTIONS

Note: All folds should be to the lines printed on the paper, and not to the actual edges of the page.

Before you start, cut out the booklet by following along the dotted lines.

Make sure & use your safety scissors to prevent any ouchies!

1. Start with the front page/cover at top left.
2. Fold in halves.
3. Cut at dotted line in center.
4. Fold to opposite ends.
5. Fold half vertically.
6. Fold in half horizontally
7. Enjoy!
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These steps may be just what you need to resuscitate morale in your hospital or take it to the next level.

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**WARNING SIGNS OF LOW MORALE:**
- Lack of attention to details concerning patient care
- Negative attitude toward patients
- Resentment toward physicians and other coworkers
- Talking about people rather than with people
- Keeping secrets or withholding information
- Missed deadlines
- Low productivity

**THE BENEFITS OF HIGH MORALE**
A hospital will benefit on three fronts: improved nurse productivity, improved patient care and better patient compliance. A hospital that recognizes that its nurses are valuable gems that need the proper setting and occasional stroking (or buffing) to shine will reap the numerous benefits. If not, your hospital may have gone to the considerable expense of shaping and training a nurse only to have him or her move on to shine in some other organization’s setting.

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To learn more about how you can give your hospital & staff relief, visit: MedicalSolutions.com/clients