

QUALITY HEALTH STRATEGIES

Moderator: Keaonia Shaw
October 8, 2013
3:30 pm CT

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for standing by.

Welcome to the Del Marva Foundation - Hiring the Right People conference call.

During the presentation all participants will be in a listen only mode. Afterwards we will conduct a question and answer session. At that time if you have a question, please press star then the number one on your telephone keypad. If you would like to withdraw your question, press the pound key.

As a reminder, this conference is being recording Tuesday, October 8, 2013.

I would now like to turn the conference over to Ms. Shaw. You may begin.

Keaonia Shaw: Thank you (Tasha), and welcome all of you to this webinar today. My name is Keaonia Shaw, Project Coordinator here at Del Marva Foundation, your QIO for Maryland and the District of Columbia.

We are pleased to be able to offer you this webinar addressing strategies to help stabilize your staff. Today's recordings and PowerPoint presentations will be posted on our Del Marva Web site which can be found at www.dcqio.org and www.mdqio.org so you can share with your staff at your convenience.

Phone lines will be muted during the call, and we will have a Q&A at the end at which time the operator will instruct on how to pose a question.

(Ryan Willis) is the Director of Organizational Development for EMA Retirement Communities in Maryland. He has been with EMA for six years and has spent more than ten years in the healthcare industry, and has since developed a passion for designing best in class programs and practices that align with industry and organizational strategies and goals.

(Ryan) holds a Master's degree in Human Resources Development, and is also a faculty member at McDaniel College where he teaches a Human Resources Development graduate program.

On that note let's begin our presentation. (Ryan) it's all yours.

(Ryan Willis): Thank you Ms. Shaw and thank you to everybody on the call. I am talking about hiring the right people today and sharing some of EMA's stories with you, where we're coming from and where we're going.

And hopefully something strikes your interest or inspires you or maybe you just learn our story. I'm here today because this is what I do, and I do it because I like it and I'm passionate about it. And hopefully that comes through in our presentation today.

Just so you have a face with the name - I'm not going to talk a whole lot about myself, but that's me, and now you know what the voice looks like. And then more importantly our company as it is. And Ms. Shaw introduced us as EMA Communities, and that consists of four communities in the State of Maryland.

Buckingham's Choice is a CCRC in Frederick County, and Fairhaven and Copper Ridge are both in Carol County in Sykesville/Eldersburg area if anyone is familiar. And (Winnfer) Manor is in an eastern shore town called Vista.

Buckingham's Choice, Fairhaven and (Winnifer) Manor are all of the CCRC model. Copper Ridge is more of a skilled nursing facility if you will. And they specialize in care to our Alzheimer's and dementia care, or dementia impaired residents.

You'll see at the top there also our mission. We're an organization graced by the talents, passion and commitment of our people. And together we are creating community. And our vision of course is to ignite in all people the passion for meaningful living.

And I share that to introduce you to our company, but also much of our discussion today will talk about how we align hiring practice with our strategic goals and most importantly our mission. So I guess keep that in mind as we continue to talk about strategic hiring today.

So this presentation originally by default because I'm coming from a long term care organization - is long term care specific. And my assumption, though I could be wrong, is that most of the audience is from the long term care industry. But if you're from a broader term than just healthcare in general, this would apply also.

But as you know, the long term care industry is changing. And when I introduced, or was introduced to the care model years ago, it was - I guess I was welcomed into an industry that was very care driven, task driven, and focused on a medical model.

And really what I've come to see and observe, and I think everybody would agree, is that this task driven care model is being transformed into a social model if you will. And not even a social model, but more of a person centered or resident centered modeled care.

And the industry I think is relatively young and kind of in its infancy as far as culture or transformation in the industry. But we've seen a lot of changes already with models like the Eden Alternative or the Green House Models. And I think that as an industry we're - like I said we're early in our journey towards a complete and universal transformation.

The culture, but I think our societal perception of the aging services industry is changing also. And whether you're on the call today as a culture change expert or just beginning to think about it or somewhere in between, I think what's particularly interesting and unique about the profession today is this correlation between HR practices, particularly hiring to increase retention, and how they might support this industry paradigm shift.

Before we begin talking about strategic hiring and recruitment and retention, I think it's important for us as an industry to identify who it is exactly that we're serving and what do we mean by the people you serve, and this idea that the new generation of elders. So when you think of the term - when someone says, "who is it that you serve", think about some things that you might say.

And as we begin to think about the culture change affecting the LTC or the long term care industry, it is important for us to identify our customers and our clients, consumers or residents. Those are all terms that our industry uses to define who it is that we serve.

The term to serve to me is an interest word. It suggests to me a one way deliver of goods or services, which is how this industry is generally operated since its introduction, right? Our well respected and deserving residents, those who can afford to live in a long term care community are “served”.

They’re waited on. They’re catered to. They’re taken care of. They’re a benefactor of a task. So those interested in what our industry has to offer are far more than just clients or people that we “serve”. They do have an inherent interest and a desire to contribute. They want to learn and they want to teach. They want to continue to enjoy those experiences of life, and we aim to continue to provide them.

They’re not just residents that live in our community. They become the families, the friends, the community at large or partnerships. In essence it’s every single relationship that we form around creating that community.

And in addition to the changing interests of those we develop relationships with, I think it’s equally important to note that as the aging population increases, the trend to age in place will grow stronger. I think that we’ve probably seen a lot of this already. And there’s going to be less and less of our aging people moving into communities. And they’d rather going to be requesting services being delivered to them in their home as they age in place.

So I mention this not because it has an effect on hiring, but because it adds an interesting dynamic to the service delivery team of our organizations. And it

also relates to our discussion in the sense of, you will ultimately be needing to hire folks that are - as your organizations grow to meet that need of the aging population. How is it that we're accommodating that, and also allowing our organization to enhance its growth pattern?

So as far as the EMA's concerns, we discussed our mission and our culture and into a little bit of our strategic plan. And for us as we looked at what we could do to best align our practices, our HR practices specifically with our mission and our culture, we did conduct an assessment, particularly a SWAT assessment - one that will identify the strengths and the weaknesses, and the opportunities in those (unintelligible).

So from that we were hoping to identify some opportunities that might exist for us for a better alignment with our mission and our vision. And we were looking for two particularly easy targets. One would be low hanging fruit - a term that we use to identify something that is generally easily attainable. It's either a quick fix or it's something that we can easily reach up and grasp our hands around. It's a quick win.

And the other important piece to that equation is the significant impact. So we don't want to spend a whole lot of time on a quick win if it's not really going to have a quick boost and a significant impact for us to drive that change home.

So what we found through our assessment and our SWAT analysis was recruitment and selection being both a low hanging fruit and significant. It was something that was in motion. It wasn't deep rooted. It was easy to change. We'll see that here in a little bit. And it was also something that we could very easily fix and change and also have that significant impact that we were looking for.

So before we started looking at the interview process and restructuring our recruitment models and how it is that we actually interviewed, it's important to understand where we're coming from. So what did our process look like? What did the interview process look like before we said this needs to change?

So what we found was that we had a very unstructured interview process. Keep in mind that we have four communities. Each of those communities manages their own recruitment process with the intent of being consistent and aligned with whatever corporate model was in place at the time.

So it was an unstructured model. Which basically means out of ten interviews - could be the same position, could be different positions - didn't matter. The questions were not the same. They were not empirical or numerical or able to be validated or justified.

And quite frankly the questions were probably biased, and they took on more of a conversation if you will. An initial handshake, a meet and greet, maybe a very brief clarification and justification that the person minimally met the position. And then it took on the form of a conversation.

And that's where we made those decisions that we all know as gut decisions or intuition. And we weren't really ever able to objectively justify that we were making a good decision.

So that was problem one. Problem two was that we were backfilling open positions that repeatedly turned over. For me when I say that, I think of a GNA. It might be a different position in your organization, but for pre-consistently across all four communities, a GNA is one for us that typically turned over repeatedly and pretty quickly.

And what I mean by backfilling is that we had a very reactionary approach to positions that became open. If we had a GNA put in their requisition, that would start the process between the hiring manager which could be the RN Supervisor or the DON or a DON or Unit Manager - whomever would be hiring for that position with HR, and it was very reactionary.

The process wouldn't start until we knew the person was officially leaving. And you'll see why that was a problem here once we get a couple of slides deeper. But you'll see the model goes from reactionary to proactive recruiting.

The next bullet point that you see on this screen before we restructured the interview is a minimal job description review. So when those positions become open and when you actually have the opportunity to recruit, you're going to hire somebody.

This is one of the very few times that you can objectively assess your operational needs and also look at the job descriptions and make sure that once you identify the position you need that the job description clearly articulates what it is operationally and organizationally that you need.

The worst thing - one of the worst things you can do is very quickly and rapidly try to fill a position just because it's open. And then later determine that you filled the position by title but not what you needed organizationally. An example of this is maybe you had a GNA - a full time GNA leave and you very quickly and rapidly backfilled a full time GNA position. And then later down the line determined that well maybe you really only needed a part time GNA and would have liked to have a part time Medicine Aid or a Medication Technician or even a part time LPN or something completely different.

But you could have took that one FCE or those full time wage hours and split that based on operational need. The other thing that we could have done to seize that opportunity is taking the opportunity to read the job description document, making sure that it meets our operational needs. And then it also aligns with current practice and meets our regulatory obligations and also aligns with our mission and culture.

And then finally we have hiring decisions made without objective measurements. Going back up to the first bullet point you see unstructured interviewing. It's difficult to measure. It's also difficult to justify objectively and say we made a good decision and here's why.

A lot of times it was we identified a really good person and we really get along with them and we think they're going to get along great with you. Why don't you interview them and let's decide to bring this person on because everybody seems to get along. Yet objectively we can't say why. So you'll see all of this begin to transform and change as we go through the slides.

So we knew that we needed to change. We didn't really have an idea of how exactly we were going to change. And just the word change - we knew that it was going to be hard only because in any change that you make we know that there's going to be resistance and it's going to be met with some fear.

So to ensure that we were going to be able to successfully implement the change whatever that looked like, it was important for us to identify cheerleaders if you will to get that (unintelligible) support from those who were going to be affected the most and/or by those managers who held the most influence if you will within the management teams in each of our communities.

So we pulled in some cheerleaders. And some of those that we were going to be relying on to kind of help us and support us in delivering the change, but also be a support or a go to person for managers who will be soon at some point be hearing a new process for the first time in the future as an informal go to person.

And not feeling as though they have to do it, but feeling as though they were included in the decision to make the change and also be able to provide that two way feedback both to the entire management team and also back to us to let us know what's working, what's not working, what have we done well and what do we need to change going forward.

So then we begin to talk about this idea of strategic recruitment. And with strategic recruitment we're meaning no more trigger response to backfill open positions. Just because you have a full time GNA position open up does not mean that you immediately need to fill a full time GNA position.

It means that we're taking that opportunity to compare their position against the budget as well as the operational need. You may identify that it's a very long tenured GNA position and that you may be able to think that just longer tenured employees may be hire in the pay scale which may mean that you actually have more wage dollars to distribute or wage savings - wage dollar savings if you hired somebody according to your current scale.

But also, what is your operational need? Do you need a full time GNA or do you need something else? What is your - what are some of your departmental goals and your strategic goals, and what does your budget say? Does your budget say that you're over your FTE budget or you're under it? And is it even relative? So making sure that you're not just backfilling the position, that you're hiring a position that is relevant to your success.

And then proactively creating an interest and an inspiration for all - and by all I mean the greater community at large - to work at, to want to work at, work for, in or with us. So this is different. Because instead of ultimately reacting to an open position, we spend a great deal today and a lot of effort and energy - and well invested I would say. But we spend a lot of time and money and energy in proactively recruiting and proactively creating an interest in the larger community or in and around our communities to let people know here's who we are. Here's what we do. But most importantly, here's why.

We don't do it to make a buck. We do it because we're changing people's lives. We do it because we're inspired to do it, and we want to work with people who like us are inspired to want to do this. They crave this. They don't come to work for the paycheck. They come to work because it means something to them. And it touches them on the inside and it's truly something that they're passionate about.

So it's a subjective measurement. But the last thing you'll see on the slide there is how long is the line of people waiting to work for you? And that's ultimately how you measure how successful your proactive recruitment has been.

If you have a line that wraps around your building of people that are wanting to work for you, and they call you every so many weeks to say hey I'm just letting you know I'm still interested in working with you guys. Remember I'm the IT guy or I'm the RN with - that used to work across the street and I really want to work with you. Those are the people that are inspired and passionate to want - they believe in what you believe in. Those are the people that you want to work with and those are the people that you want working for you. They have that commitment and sense of loyalty.

So as we continue to talk about the hiring process, it's important to remember that hiring - most of the hiring happens outside of the HR Department. The HR Department really is - they're there to screen for you. They're there to pull out the weeds for you. They also get into this idea of behavioral based interviewing and the idea of making sure that the behaviors this person exhibits is going to be able to align with your culture and your strategy.

But the Hiring Manager plays a very significant role. The Hiring Manager is the person who's ultimately accountable for this new person's success or failure, and ultimately the success or failure of that department that they're hiring for.

So we have the three ideas on the screen, and the first idea is benchmarking. Excuse me. And with the idea of benchmarking, we're talking a complete full cycle learning structure where if you have - let's use EMA as an example, and you have four communities which means you have four Directors of Nursing. You have anywhere between six to eight Unit Managers, depending on how many are employed at each community, maybe a few assistant DONs.

So you have, you know, ten to 15 managers there that we just rattled off that might be hiring RN or other nursing positions at any given time. And from a benchmarking model what we're able to do is we're able to pull these clinical leaders together and identify what are you doing. Are you asking certain questions that you feel produce a better result or yield one particular answer that helps you determine a good hire versus a bad hire?

What have you identified and what have you experienced that you would like to warn the group to avoid? So it's full cycle. We learn from the mistakes and

we continue to invest in those actions and events and experiences that produce a positive result for us.

The second accountability with regard to Hiring Managers is to empower. It's important that your organization allows the Hiring Manager who ultimately needs to be successful for that decision to make that decision. You can - we can still consult with them. Your HR Department and your Administrators and your CEOs and your DONs, etc. - we can still partner and consult with the Hiring Manager, but make sure they have the ability to make the decision, and that they believe in the decision that they're making. Because if they don't believe in it and they feel like they didn't have a say in who they're hiring, immediately from that point forward they will be less invested in that person's success going forward.

And the final accountability with regard to Hiring Managers is partner. And partnerships are very important and they extend beyond the idea of a partnership with a Hiring Manager and a HR partner. Consider - I'll share an example with you. One of our communities had a night shift new hire. And we experienced a lot of new hire turnover repeatedly in this particular position that we kept having to hire and hire and hire for on the night shift.

So we assessed it. We identified the reason why was because the night shift employees who ultimately were our longer tenured, stable staff felt as though they did not have an opportunity to provide feedback into the hiring decision. Whether or not they agreed the employee was a good one or a bad one, there is this resentment towards not having an opportunity to provide feedback into that hiring decision.

So looking at it from their perspective, we have a day shift HR guy who might be saying hey this is a good person. Consider them for hire. We have an

interview that happens on the nursing unit from the DON, maybe Unit Manager or day shift RN Supervisor - everybody agrees this person is an all-star - let's bring them on.

Then they come on and they might train for a week, week and a half, maybe two weeks on the floor during the day shift when everybody is awake and that's when people are available to provide training. And then after that initial orientation training period we push them on to the night shift. And that's the very first time that the new employee and the existing employees meet each other. And the existing employees are told that they're now held accountable to make sure this person is successful. And they don't even know them.

So I think that we were able to create a partnership between the nursing management, the clinical management teams, as well as the night shift staffing positions to allow them to have some more input into this decision. And that has had a dramatic impact on new hire retention.

So don't let me offend anybody with this statement. I know that this is - an RN is an RN is an RN. And I know that all of the RNs that just heard me say that probably disagree with me greatly. And I'm saying that strictly from a job description perspective.

So when we write an RN there are specific key performance indicators that tell us this is what an RN is made of. We have specific education that's required. We have certain licenses and certifications - an RN license for instance - maybe a CPR certification or first aid AED certification, and a particular ability to perform basic RN tasks.

So from a tasks perspective and a job description, an RN is an RN. But I want everyone to think about either a particular RN or any position title for that

matter. This statement would be true if I replaced RN with any other title in the world. I would say the same exact thing.

So just think of an employee. It could be a coworker or perhaps think of a time that you were a patient yourself receiving care. And there's that one person that stands out from the rest of them as just being extraordinary, superb - just on a level above everybody else.

What makes that person so much better than everybody else? And it's not the education they received. It's not the certification nor the letters behind their name. It's this idea of intrinsic motivation. It's an idea of what that person's passion is, what that person believes their purpose to be, and how well they can align their passion and their purpose with the culture and the mission of the organization.

That's what made that person such a superb person to be around and an extraordinary employee, because they're not just doing it for a paycheck. They're not just doing it because they have the certification that allows them to do it. They do it because it means something to them. They are fulfilling their purpose when they are providing that care.

So that becomes then this additional layer of screening. It's very new yet very significant element in a cultural fit. And it becomes this opportunity for strategic partnership with your HR team.

HR as well as any Hiring Manager on this call have a very real opportunity to assess candidates on how well their behavioral competencies, their passions, their purpose. All of those things, A what are they? And B, how well are they going to align with your organization's mission and culture?

So this new responsibility then is to assess on how one - not just how well one can complete a test, but how the employee will be passionate about it. Will they be able to recognize their contribution and both provide and receive inspiration in doing so?

So we see now that it's completely necessary for any culture change initiative to be sustainable to identify this new level of screening above and beyond the task of the position.

So before restructuring your interview process, I would encourage you or challenge you to think about who is it that you really need to hire. It's not just about experience and technical skill. It's not whether or not the person has three years versus one year experience.

I would take a brand new grad who is extremely passionate about nursing and take the time to teach them, compared to a twenty year nurse who is doing it because of the pay - hands down, no questions asked. You know experience and technical skills are important, but passion and purpose is really what will make them a great employee.

I would say get away from the task based interviewing. If you have ten questions and they are consistent, that's great. But if they're all related to task based - if you're asking medicine related questions and how to transform, you know, a medicine related equation or how to perform a particular task, I would say those all allow you to identify whether that purpose can do the job or not but not if they're going to do it well or recognize the meaning or the purpose behind what it is that they're doing for themselves, for your patients and for your organization. And that allows you then to begin to align the energy process with your organization's culture.

The one bullet on this page that I did skip over is the very first one that says there is an importance of an online application process. This is something that we introduced to the organization not too long ago. And I'll tell you that it's not just important that your people apply one line.

But what it then does is creates a ton of opportunity for your organization and opens a lot of doors into the world of technical advancements if you will. As far as assessments that we deliver on line, we do deliver a number of different assessments during the application process that go right to the person's online account or their email account that allow us to assess their behaviors and then correlate them to our culture and strategy.

And that's just one example. But most of our screening process - background checks, drug tests, reference checks - all of that happens electronically. And what that means is that the time and wage dollars for our HR people is better spent.

They're not on the phone asking other companies if they would rehire this person. Because realistically we have a third party manage it through online applications. But our HR person can focus more on making good hiring decisions and then beginning to invest in our new hires so that they have this very high level of commitment and loyalty well before their first day of employment. They can focus on those things that matter the most.

So it's about selecting better people for your culture. We want to look for passion not perfection. And I think that that is important. I think that as business leaders oftentimes we'll wear programs both through personal experience and through academics to seek, expect and demand perfection.

And what we find however is that when you provide a person with an opportunity to do something that they're passionate about, something that they're naturally committed to, the return for that person, the return for us, and most importantly the return for those people that we serve has increased exponentially.

So it's not always about finding that perfect person on paper - the person that has all of the perfect certifications and experiences, but find that person who is going to be passionate - passionate for themselves and passionate for us.

For any HR professionals on the call - I'm not sure if we have any - or anybody who just generally likes to learn business management concepts and is interesting in looking into the thing like this further, I'd encourage you to look at - there's a theory, there's a philosophy and a management theory call Ouchi's Theory. That's spelled O-U-C-H-I-S Theory. So most people are familiar with Theory X and Theory Y.

Theory X is this idea that managers need to keep a pretty close eye on their employees. We know that as micro managing in the industry. And hopefully that's not happening very often. Hopefully you don't have to do it. But Theory X is basically saying if you don't take them to the water and push their head down, they're never going to drink it. It's a micro-managing concept.

And Theory Y is a little different and says that when you have employees and you empower them and you encourage them to be accountable and give them some autonomy in the decision making progress that they do a better job because they take some ownership of the outcome.

So Ouchi's Theory Z is a little fresher. And it's this idea that if you put somebody in a position that 100% aligns with their passion, they're going to

do it to the best of their ability and probably better than and exceed expectations because it's something that means something to them. They take complete ownership and accountability of it. They would do it whether you're their manager or not because it means something to them.

Those are the people that you want in your organization who make that connection with you. These are the people that would continue to come to work after they won the \$400 million Powerball because it means something to them. Sure they're rich now but they're still doing something that's passionate for them.

So we talked a lot about hiring and incorporating behavioral based interviewing into the selection process. We spent a lot of time investing our time, money and energy goes into making the best decision - the person that you want to hire for your organization. Please don't do a paper signing marathon of an orientation if you want them to stay.

We need to show them that we are committed and invested in them. And the least effective way to do that is through an orientation where we sit them down maybe for four hours and give them lunch or maybe an eight hour one day type of program where we generally talk about all of our regulatory compliance measures, you know, HIPPA, infection control, back safety - lift with your knees not your back. Don't bend over, but squat. But fill out all of these papers because basically you have to fill them out if you want to work here.

All of that stuff should be done before day one. All of that stuff is pretty basic and fundamental, and it does nothing for the employee in regard of creating a intrinsic connection or motivation to your organization. It's all the same everywhere you go.

Begin to think about an on-boarding program. An on-boarding program lasts way more than a day, and it extends well beyond the first week, well beyond the first month. I think on-boarding is a completely separate topic and issue that we could probably talk about hours for - for hours.

But I can share with you that our program here is an 18 month program. On-boarding is very heavy in the first month and even into the first quarter. And then it has touch points over the first year. And then once they hit that 18 month mark they will begin to graduate kind of from the new hire phase and the on-boarding phase and be invited to share their experiences to new hires coming in. And then they become ultimately the mentors to new hires and train the workforce, which seems to have helped us in our recruitment and our - not our recruitment, but more so our retention metrics.

Just a quick snapshot of what our guiding behaviors and guiding principals look like. This is EMA's - this is what would take place with our value system. So we value behaviors and we have principals that support them. And you can see there at the bottom - on the bottom half below that orange line, the supporting behaviors that we expect all of our employees to demonstrate. And with the idea and the philosophy that if all of these behaviors are demonstrated, that we have truly designed a community in the truest sense of the term.

So the sooner that these are behaviors that we expect to be demonstrated, these then become the questions, our behavioral based questions. Even though they're in sentence structure now, it's very easy for me to pull out in addition to the assessments that we use, but it's easy for me to pull out this chart and pick any one of these boxes and rephrase it in a question format.

Tell me a time that you made decisions (unintelligible) or answered departmentally. Or tell me a time when you shared a story, a personal experience and it had a ripple effect and a positive outcome in the workplace.

These are all behaviors. And then we can ask them questions that allow them to demonstrate how well they are able to demonstrate these behaviors.

So I would suggest that identify those behaviors in your own organizations that you feel would best support your organization. And develop a behavior based model that supports that.

Today I think that our turnover has experienced a significant decrease. Our retention is better than it was and ever improving. What I can say is that we particularly experienced a very high new hire turnover. And our on-boarding program is aimed at reducing that and I think that it's still working and it's ever changing. We're always assessing and creating assessments of our programs to make sure that they are doing what we say they're doing. And there's always new problems that crop up to.

So never have the mindset that any one program that you design and put into place today is going to be relevant and effective a month from now or a year from now and continue to assess them and intervene when appropriate.

Also interesting for us is the decline in worker's compensation claims, I think probably correlated to the focus on commitment that our new employees are bringing to the workforce and to the community. And I think just by default we have more ethical decisions being made. We have more ethical behaviors being displayed.

And we'll soon be measuring, and I know we're all excited to see our employee and resident satisfaction surveys, and hopefully - and of course we anticipate and hope that those scores too will be higher than usual.

So I know I talked a lot about some broad topics and some of it specific to our organization. But I hope that it was useful and hopefully I inspired some questions or strike some interest. And at this time we'll probably open up for any questions you might have.

Keaonia Shaw: Operator we are now open for questions.

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen, as a reminder to register for a question, please press star then the number one on your telephone keypad. We'll pause for just a moment to compile the Q&A roster.

Again in order to ask a question, please press star one on your telephone keypad.

And your first question comes from the line of (Marquis Brown). Mr. Brown, your line is open.

(Marquis Brown): Yes, yes. Thank you. My question is simply, I wanted to know if you have implemented any incentives for current employees. And if so, which ones have been more effective? Like maybe celebrating employees that last for five years or something like that.

(Ryan Willis): So the answer is two-fold. The answer is yes and the answer is no. We have some long standing programs where we recognize and honor tenure. So we, you know, every year we have an anniversary dinner for each of our communities and we'll call out - we'll invite them and give them a gift. But

we do it in five year increments so the five year employees get a gift and they get recognized. And last, you know, the last one that I went to we were recognizing people who'd been here for 30 years, right?

So we do have programs like that. I can tell you that we are completely revamping and remodeling our rewards and recognition program. So I think a program like that is important. How you do it and how you make it meaningful and align it to your strategy is important. So you don't want a program that's going to break the budget.

But you also want to be able to recognize and reward them so that they do feel it's not just about the gift they get, but it's more so about the recognition that they're getting. And when they come to work and they do a good job, and then they have - then they're recognized for it and rewarded for it, that's what keep - that's what make people tick. It's not so much the gift itself - the tangible thing that they take home, but the recognition.

Because we're renovating it now, a lot of times some of our best managers come up with the least expensive ideas. I've got a manager in one of my communities that I was working with, and we were brainstorming on ways that we could recognize somebody who has had perfect attendance for I think it was like over two years - never missed a day, perfect attendance. And we really wanted to highlight this person and hopefully inspire the same type of behavior amongst the workforce.

So we did a poster. We did like an old school like newspaper print ad with the person's picture, and it basically ended up to be a poster. And we highlighted or we put her picture up there and highlighted what she did and what it meant and that everybody was grateful for her and that we were very grateful for her service.

And then I think we gave her like - I don't know, \$50 or \$100 gift card to one of her favorite restaurants. And what that also does is shows that we took the time to learn what it is that she values. We didn't just give her a Wal-Mart gift card. We figured out what is it that she likes. And it was a place that her husband and her always go to on their anniversary and we gave her a gift card to that same place.

So it was meaningful to her. The other staff saw that we took the time to learn about her. And then people want to be in that spotlight. People want to be like the people who are recognized.

So it doesn't have to go above and beyond and it doesn't have to cost a whole lot of money. So to answer your question, yes we certainly put a focus on that. But keep in mind it doesn't have to break the budget either. I don't know if that answers your question.

(Marquis Brown): It did. Thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of (Pamela Kay).

(Pamela Kay): Yes. And you're talking about changing the interview process to not be so biased and be more scored or numerical. Did you create your own questions and numbers and scoring system? Or were you using something more standardized?

(Ryan Willis): Again the answer is yes and no. We have two models. We partner with a company, a third party company to provide us both with the behavioral assessments. Those behavioral assessments also provide standard questions

that are related to the behaviors that are assessed. So in the sense of designing our own, we don't design those types of questions.

But we also design standard questions related to our own particular culture and to the particular position that we're recruiting for. And what I share with my HR folks in each of the communities that what my expectation is is that if I pull five random employees that were hired in the last month that I should be able to very clearly look at their records and be able to demonstrate that all of them - if they were all in the same position, if they all were hired for the same position and same title, that they were all asked the same exact question. They were assessed fairly and consistently. And that there was an objective measurement to justify that they were the best hire compared to their counter applicants.

So it's a combination. We do partner with the company to deliver the assessments which also as a byproduct deliver some structured interview questions related to those assessments. But anything related specific to the position on a task based level and/or to our culture which is on a behavioral based and a relationship based level, we design those in-house.

(Pamela Kay): Okay, thanks.

Operator: Again if you would like to ask a question, please press star one.

At this time there are no further questions. I will now turn the call back to you. Please continue with your presentation or your closing remarks.

Keaonia Shaw: Thank you again. (Ryan), thank you so much for that wealth of information. I am sure that our participants are able to go back to their facility and implement and share this knowledge right away.

As we close, for those of you on the Webx portion of the call, we want to remind you to please complete the brief evaluation that should have popped up on your screen by now, as we do value your feedback and use this to plan future Webinars. Once again thank you all for attending Hiring the Right People. And have a wonderful day.

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen that does conclude the conference call for today. We thank you for your participation and ask that you please disconnect your line.

END