



# Methods for Recruiting, Retaining, and Motivating our Workforce



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## Introduction

In the current climate of health care, employee recruitment, retention, and motivation can be absolutely essential to the individual success of a health care organization. The question is, how can health care professionals effectively recruit, retain, and motivate individuals from the workforce? This course will answer that very question, while providing relevant recommendations to help optimize employee recruitment, retention, and motivation.

## Section 1: Employee Recruitment

A health care organization is experiencing difficulty recruiting, retaining, and motivating employees. As a result, the health care organization tasks a team of health care professionals and health care managers to develop a strategy to recruit, retain, and motivate individuals from the workforce. During the team's first meeting, the following question is posed: how can health care professionals effectively recruit, retain, and motivate individuals from the workforce? The team of health care professionals considers the aforementioned question.

In today's health care climate, the previous question, posed by the team of health care professionals, is becoming increasingly relevant. Fortunately, there is a simple, straightforward answer. Health care professionals can effectively recruit, retain, and motivate individuals from the workforce by obtaining insight into employee recruitment, incorporating the essential elements of employee retention into the cultural, executive, and directional structure of their health care organization, and by following employee motivation recommendations. With that in mind, this section of the course will provide insight into employee recruitment. The information found within this section was derived from materials provided by the U.S. government unless, otherwise, specified (U.S. Department of Labor, 2021; U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2021).

### What is employee recruitment?

Employee recruitment may refer to the process of identifying, attracting, interviewing, selecting, hiring, and onboarding new employees (note: the term onboarding may refer to any actions used to integrate a new employee into an organization).

## What are the essential elements of employee recruitment?

The essential elements of employee recruitment include the following: assessing needs, developing a job description, developing an application process, promoting the open position(s), the application review process, the initial screening process, the interview process, extending an offer, and onboarding new employees. Specific information regarding each of the aforementioned essential elements of employee recruitment may be found below.

- Assess needs - first and foremost, health care organizations should assess their employment needs. Health care organizations should determine if they need to fill part-time, full-time, or contract positions. Health care organizations should also determine if they need to fill short-term or long-term positions. Health care professionals should note that working to assess employment needs can help focus and streamline the recruiting process.
- Develop a job description - job descriptions can be paramount to the application process (note: a job description may refer to an outline or an accounting of the general tasks, duties, and responsibilities of a specific position). Essentially, job descriptions attract an applicant to a specific position. If the job description is not well organized or written, then a potential applicant may not apply for the available position. Therefore, health care professionals should take the appropriate time to develop a well organized job description that is written in a concise, direct style and includes the following key points or sections: job title, job purpose, job duties and responsibilities, educational qualifications, required qualifications, preferred qualifications, experience, and working conditions. Specific information regarding the key sections of a job description may be found below.
  - Job title - the job title should be a brief description of the available position that reflects the purpose, and scope of the position. Health care professionals should note that the job title should be about one to five words.
  - Job purpose - the job purpose should be a focused overview of the position, and scope of related responsibilities. Health care professionals should note that the job purpose should be a concise summary of the position, consisting of about three to four sentences.

- Job duties and responsibilities - the job duties and responsibilities section of the job description should contain a description of the duties and responsibilities (i.e., essential functions) related to the available position. Health care professionals should note that the job duties and responsibilities section should address supervisory responsibilities, when applicable.
- Educational qualifications - the educational qualifications section should highlight the educational qualifications that a potential employee must possess to perform the duties and responsibilities associated with the available position. Health care professionals should note that specific degrees or certifications required for the available position should be listed in the educational qualifications section.
- Required qualifications - the required qualifications section should include the experience, knowledge, skills, and abilities required for the available position. Health care professionals should note that the information included in the required qualifications section should focus on the minimum level of qualifications for a specific position.
- Preferred qualifications - the preferred qualifications section should include additional qualifications for the available position. Health care professionals should note that information included in the preferred qualifications section should focus on ideal qualifications for a specific position.
- Experience - the experience section should include the type of experience, in terms of years, job titles, and/or type of experience, required for the available position. Health care professionals should note that the type of experience, required for the open position, should be clarified, when applicable (e.g., internships; residencies).
- Working conditions - finally, the working conditions section should include the working conditions and physical demands that relate directly to the essential job duties and responsibilities of the available position. Health care professionals should note that the working conditions sections should indicate emergency designations and travel requirements, when applicable.

- Develop an application process - when developing an application process for a specific position, health care professionals should make the application process as simple and as straightforward as possible. Applying for a position within a health care organization should be a simple, straightforward process for an applicant. A potential applicant should be able to identify a position, within a health care organization, understand the position description, determine the qualifications for the position, and then apply. Health care professionals should note that applicants are more likely to apply for positions with a simple and straightforward application process.
- Promote the open position(s) - once an application process is developed, health care professionals and health care organizations can begin promoting the open position or positions. Open positions may be promoted through external means (e.g., employment websites), internally via employee notification platforms, and/or simply on the health care organization's website. Health care professionals should note the following: promoting an open position or positions through various means can attract a large and diverse talent pool; a large and diverse talent pool can be useful in identifying candidates for current and future open positions.
- Application review process - before employee recruitment begins, health care professionals should have an application review process in place to review potential candidates for available positions. The application review process should include mechanisms for collecting applications, identifying if applicants meet the minimum qualifications for the open position or positions, and a means to deliver applications to those individuals conducting the initial screenings and/or interviews. Health care professionals should note that the application review process should be conducted in a timely manner, and it should begin as soon as applications arrive from potential candidates.
- Initial screening process - once the application process identifies potential candidates for a position, the initial screening process should begin. Typically, the initial screening process consists of phone interviews that are used to determine if an applicant possesses the necessary qualifications to fill a position, and is interested in interviewing for the position, when deemed appropriate. Health care professionals should note that an efficient initial screening process can help health care professionals save valuable time, and help health care professionals narrow down the list of candidates for interviews.



- Interview process - it has been argued that the interview process is one of the most important elements of employee recruitment. Essentially, the interview process provides a means for employers, existing staff, and potential managers to meet potential candidates to determine if they are indeed truly qualified for the available position, if they can meet the responsibilities of the available position, and if they are capable of integrating themselves into the culture of the organization. Due to the importance of the interview process, many different types of interviews may be used during the interview process to differentiate and select potential candidates for the open position or positions. Specific information regarding the types of interviews that may be used during the interview process may be found below.
  - Phone interview - phone interviews are often the first type of interview used in the interview process. Phone interviews may be used to initiate further contact with a candidate, or to narrow down the list of candidates for other types of interviews. Health care professionals should note the following: phone interviews may be conducted by various members of the interviewing or hiring team; applicant references may be checked in the initial stages of the interview process.
  - Video interview - video interviews are another type of interview that may be used early on in the interviewing process. Video interviews may refer to interviews that are conducted via teleconference software. (note: teleconference software, within the context of this course, may refer to video conferencing software that enables online communication for audio meetings, video meetings, and distance group meetings). Video interviews may be used to interview candidates off site, who live in remote areas or in different states, and/or are unable to take part in live interviews for various reasons. Health care professionals should note that video interviews may be used in place of phone interviews or in-person interviews due to certain circumstances, such as a pandemic (note: the term pandemic may refer to a global or worldwide outbreak of disease; outbreak of disease over a large area).
  - First in-person interview - the first in-person interview is often conducted after a phone interview or video interview, when applicable. Typically, during the first in-person interview the hiring manager will meet the candidate one-on-one for the first time. Often, during the first in-person

interview the hiring manager will ask the candidate questions regarding his or her education, qualifications, previous work experience, and skill set. Health care professionals should note that the first in-person interview may provide insight into the candidate's ability to integrate himself or herself into the culture of the organization.

- Second in-person interview - if a candidate impresses the hiring manager during the first interview, he or she may be asked back for a second in-person interview. Typically, the second in-person interview is more in-depth than the first in-person interview, and can be used as an opportunity for the candidate to meet existing staff. Health care professionals should note that the second in-person interview should be reserved for candidates that are seriously being considered for the open position or positions.
- Third/final in-person interview - the third/final in-person interview should be the last or one of the last types of interviews in the interview process. The third/final in-person interview may be the last time a hiring manager meets with a candidate. Therefore, the hiring manager should be prepared to discuss any remaining relevant points of interest necessary to fill the open position. Health care professionals should note that the third/final in-person interview may be the last opportunity for existing staff to meet the candidate. Health care professionals should also note that an offer of employment may be made during or after a third/final in-person interview.
- Extending an offer - once a decision is made regarding a candidate and a specific position, an offer may be extended to a candidate. The offer made to a candidate should be extended in a timely manner after the interview process is complete or during the third/final in-person interview. Health care professionals should note that offers made to candidates should reflect any terms discussed in the interview process.
- Onboarding new employees - once an offer is accepted by a candidate and the candidate fulfills any and all employment requirements, health care professionals should focus on the onboarding process. As previously mentioned, onboarding may refer to any actions used to integrate a new employee into an organization. Health care professionals should note that the onboarding process may include: employee introductions, an orientation program, organization education programs, initial scheduling, and training.

## How can health care professionals optimize the interview process?

As previously mentioned, the interview process is one of the most important elements of employee recruitment. Therefore, health care professionals should work to optimize the interview process. Health care professionals can optimize the interview process by utilizing the strategies found below.

- Prepare for the interview process - preparing for the interview process can be critical to the success of the interviews, and, ultimately, the hiring process. Health care professionals should note that during the preparation phase health care professionals should focus on the following key aspects of the interview process: scheduling, the types of interviews that will be used, the number of interviews required, who will be conducting the interviews, the duration of the interview process, and the types of questions that will be asked during the interviews.
- Utilize open-ended questions - to optimize the interview process, and to get the most information from a candidate, it is important for health care professionals to consider the types of questions asked by the hiring team during interviews (note: interview questioning should allow members of the hiring team to determine a candidate's ability to successfully fill the open position). With that in mind, health care professionals should consider the use of open-ended questions. Open-ended questions should be utilized during interviews, when members of the hiring team require candidates to provide information and insight into their knowledge, skill set, strengths, limitations, and experience. Health care professionals should note that how, what, where, and why questions are, typically, open-ended questions. Health care professionals should also note the following examples of open-ended questions: why do you want to work for this health care organization; what are your professional goals; what are your strengths; what can you bring to this health care organization that sets you apart from other candidates?
- Utilize closed-ended questions - in addition to open-ended questions, health care professionals should also utilize closed-ended questions during interviews. Closed-ended questions should be utilized when members of the hiring team require specific answers or information. Health care professionals should note that questions that only require a yes or no response may be considered closed-ended questions. Health care professionals should also note the following examples of closed-ended questions: do you have experience working with older adult patients; do you have managerial experience; can you start the position on the first of next month?

- Know what questions to avoid during interviews - just as important as it is to know what types of questions to ask during an interview, it is equally important to know what types of questions to avoid during an interview. Essentially, in order to maintain the professional nature of an interview, and for legal reasons, health care professionals should avoid asking specific types of questions. Health care professionals should note the following examples of questions to avoid during an interview: are you disabled in any way; do you have HIV; are you gay; what ethnicity are you?
- Engage in active listening - to obtain the most information from a candidate during an interview, health care professionals should engage in active listening. Active listening may refer to the process of gathering information with the intent to obtain meaning and achieve a common understanding. The key elements of active listening may be found below.
  - Focus - the first key element of active listening is focus. Health care professionals should give candidates their full focus and attention when communicating. Unfortunately, often, when individuals engage in conversation, one individual speaks while the other individual simply waits for his or her turn to talk. Words are being heard, however individuals are not focused on what is being said. Instead, they are often thinking about what they want to say next. The previous style of listening can be referred to as passive listening. Often when passive listening is employed, two people are engaged in conversation, however neither one of them is focused on what the other person is saying. There is little to no intent to obtain meaning when two individuals are engaged in passive listening. Therefore, the first key element of active listening is to focus and concentrate on what the other individual is saying. Making a concerted effort to focus on what another individual is saying, when engaged in a conversation, can increase the ability for both parties to reach a common understanding. It can also help both individuals improve their recall of the conversation. If an individual is focused on what another individual is saying, he or she is more likely to remember what is said.
  - Eye contact - the second key element of active listening is eye contact. Eye contact can let individuals know they are being listened to. Eye contact can also foster trust and encourage individuals to open up and fully articulate

what they want to say. Health care professionals should always attempt to make eye contact when communicating during an interview.

- Limit interruptions - the third key element of active listening is to limit interruptions and provide individuals with the opportunity to say what they would like to express. Health care professionals should note the following: limiting interruptions when other individuals are speaking and allowing for periods of silence can further open up the conversation to allow for a greater expression of ideas.
- Respond - the fourth key element of active listening is to respond to what is being said. From time to time during a communication exchange, health care professionals should respond to what the candidate is saying. Repeating what another individual says or paraphrasing individuals' words can reinforce that they are truly being heard and listened to, which can make them more likely to further engage in communication.
- Clarify - the fifth key element of active listening is to clarify, when needed. Health care professionals should not be afraid to clarify what is said during an interview. Health care professionals should note the following: slowing down a conversation and/or asking relevant questions can help individuals conducting an interview clarify what is said during a conversation; clarifying messages and information transmitted during an interview can be advantageous to both the candidate and members of the hiring team.
- Provide words of encouragement - the sixth key element of active listening is to provide words of encouragement. Health care professionals should note that using words of encouragement such as "good answer" or "great job so far" can go a long way to motivate candidates to express themselves, and provide in-depth information regarding their knowledge, skill set, strengths, limitations, and experience.
- Avoid redirection when communicating during an interview - redirection, within the context of communication, may refer to the process or action of changing/ altering the intended purpose of a conversation or communication exchange between individuals or parties. Redirection, typically, occurs when an individual or party changes the topic of a communication exchange. Health care professionals should note that redirection can prevent effective communication from taking place as well as limit opportunities to obtain meaning, relevant

information, and a common understanding when engaging with a candidate during an interview.

- Avoid negative body language when communicating during an interview - negative body language may refer to any body language that expresses an emotion or feeling associated with negative connotations such as anger, disdain, irritation, nervousness, and/or boredom. Examples of negative body language include: crossed arms, limited to no eye contact, body shifting from left to right, hand tapping, foot tapping, and neck rolling. Essentially, negative body language can send the "wrong message" to a candidate during an interview, and/or simply prevent effective communication. Health care professionals should note the following: health care professionals should make an extra effort to avoid negative body language when working to obtain relevant information from a candidate during an interview; negative body language can put individuals on edge as well as increase their agitation and/or anxiety levels, which in turn could impact effective communication and the interview itself.
- Work to avoid miscommunication during an interview - when miscommunication occurs between individuals, intended meaning may be lost. Thus, health care professionals should work to prevent miscommunication during an interview. Health care professionals may prevent miscommunication by: removing physical barriers when communicating with other individuals, maintaining eye contact, allowing for a free flow of information between individuals, engaging in active listening, clarifying points of confusion, asking questions, maintaining emotional stability, allowing others to speak, and by limiting interruptions and distractions. Health care professionals should note that miscommunication can negatively impact effective communication, and may negatively impact the interview itself.
- Discuss employment expectations - at some point during the interview process (e.g., third/final interview), health care professionals should discuss employment expectations (i.e., what is expected from the employee once he or she begins working for the health care organization) with the candidate to fully determine if he or she is able, capable, and/or willing to meet any and all expectations. Health care professionals should note the following methods to discuss employment expectations: review relevant health care organization policies and procedures, review relevant health care organization standards, review relevant scopes of practice, and/or review relevant standards of practice (note: the term scope of practice may refer to a description of services qualified health care professionals

are deemed competent to perform and permitted to undertake under the terms of their professional license; the term standards of practice may refer a statement of duties or specific guidelines for a health care professional).

- **Remain professional** - finally, and perhaps most importantly, health care professionals should remain professional during the interview process. No matter what occurs during an interview with a candidate, a health care professional should remain professional at all times to preserve the integrity of the interview process, and to obtain the most information from a candidate. Health care professionals should note the following examples of how a health care professional can remain professional during an interview: remain calm, especially in the face of a challenge or adversity; follow directions; listen to others; refrain from using excessive profanity and/or crude language; engage in active listening; remain polite; respect other individual's privacy; follow relevant health care organizational standards regarding interviewing.

## **What are the most relevant cultural trends impacting employee recruitment?**

Employee recruitment can be impacted by various cultural trends. Therefore, health care professionals should possess insight into the most relevant cultural trends impacting employee recruitment to optimize the recruitment process. Specific information regarding the most relevant cultural trends impacting employee recruitment may be found below.

- **Social media** - one of the biggest cultural trends impacting current employee recruitment is the use of social media. The term social media may refer to any electronically driven application that enables individuals to create and share content for the purposes of virtual communication. Since its initial inception, social media has impacted the greater cultural constructs it has been a part of, and, in more recent years, the use of social media has impacted employee recruitment. In order to optimize employee recruitment, health care professionals should utilize social media in the recruitment process. Health care professionals can utilize social media to post organizational openings, provide existing employees with information regarding organizational openings, discover potential employee candidates, increase organizational awareness among potential employee candidates, save time in the recruiting process, and attract a

diverse candidate pool. Health care professionals should note that social media may be one of the most powerful employee recruitment tools of the modern age.

- Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) - another one of the biggest cultural trends impacting current employee recruitment is the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic (note: COVID-19 may refer to a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person that is caused by a virus known as the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 [SARS-CoV-2]). COVID-19 has radically impacted the current health care system, and is causing major changes regarding health care staffing, organizational needs, employee needs, and patient needs. In order to optimize employee recruitment, health care professionals should be aware of how COVID-19 has impacted their health care organization, and will continue to impact their health care organization in future. Analyzing COVID-19-related needs can help health care organizations target specific employee candidates that will help fill important roles created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Health care professionals should note the following: COVID-19 may impact the employee recruitment process itself; due to COVID-19, health care professionals may have to conduct more phone interviews, and/or interviews via teleconference software.
- The implementation of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended infection prevention and control measures - the implementation of the CDC recommended infection prevention and control measures is another cultural trend impacting current employee recruitment (note: health care organizations have implemented the CDC recommended infection prevention and control measures to help prevent the transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19). The CDC recommended infection prevention and control measures have altered traditional employee recruitment, especially when it comes to the interview process. Employee candidates may be required to adhere to infection prevention and control measures when entering a health care facility during the employee recruitment process. Employee candidates should be notified of such infection prevention and control measure requirements before arriving at a health care facility. Potentially relevant infection prevention and control measures may be found below. The information found below was derived from materials provided by the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2021).



- Health care professionals should instruct employee candidates to call ahead of their arrival to a health care facility if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
- Health care professionals should reschedule employee candidates' appointments, when applicable, if a candidate reports that he or she is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
- Health care professionals should advise individuals to put on their own mask before entering a health care facility.
- Health care professionals should screen and triage everyone entering a health care facility for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 (note: the signs/symptoms of COVID-19 may include: fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, aches and pain, fatigue, headaches, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea).
- Health care professionals should establish a process to ensure that everyone (e.g., patients, health care professionals, and visitors) entering a health care facility is assessed for COVID-19 signs/symptoms, such as a fever (note: fever can be either a measured temperature  $\geq 100.0^{\circ}\text{F}$  or a subjective fever [e.g., patient reported fever]; individuals might not notice symptoms of a fever at the lower temperature threshold that is used for those entering a health care facility; individuals should be encouraged to actively take their temperature at home or have their temperature taken upon arrival).
- Health care professionals should take steps to ensure that everyone adheres to source control measures and hand hygiene practices while in a health care facility (e.g., post signs at the entrance and in strategic places).
- Health care organizations should provide education to health care professionals, patients, and visitors about the importance of performing hand hygiene immediately before and after any contact with their facemask or cloth mask.
- Health care organizations should arrange seating in waiting rooms to allow individuals to sit at least six feet apart.
- Health care organizations should provide supplies for respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette, including alcohol-based hand sanitizers, tissues, and

no-touch receptacles for disposal, at health care facility entrances, waiting rooms, and patient check-ins (note: patients should be encouraged to use such supplies).

- Health care professionals should properly manage anyone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 virus infection or who has had contact with someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 virus infection.

## **What are the U.S. laws and regulations that apply to employee recruitment?**

### **Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**

Some of the first laws/regulations that may come to mind when considering employee recruitment are those included in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 may refer to a group of laws that prohibits discrimination in virtually every employment circumstance on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, pregnancy, or national origin. Specific information regarding Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 may be found below.

- Under Title VII, it shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.
- Under Title VII, it shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer to limit, segregate, or classify his employees or applicants for employment in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his status as an employee, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.
- Under Title VII, it shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employment agency to fail or refuse to refer for employment, or otherwise to discriminate against, any individual because of his race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, or to classify or refer for employment any individual on the basis of his race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

- Under Title VII, it shall be an unlawful employment practice for a labor organization to exclude or to expel from its membership, or otherwise to discriminate against, any individual because of his race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.
- Under Title VII, it shall be an unlawful employment practice for a labor organization to limit, segregate, or classify its membership or applicants for membership, or to classify or fail or refuse to refer for employment any individual, in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities, or would limit such employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his or her status as an employee or as an applicant for employment, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.
- Under Title VII, it shall be an unlawful employment practice for any employer, labor organization, or joint labor-management committee controlling apprenticeship or other training or retraining, including on-the-job training programs to discriminate against any individual because of his race, color, religion, sex, or national origin in admission to, or employment in, any program established to provide apprenticeship or other training.
- Under Title VII, it shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer to adjust the scores of, use different cutoff scores for, or otherwise alter the results of, employment related tests on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.
- Health care professionals should note that an unlawful employment practice is established when the complaining party demonstrates that race, color, religion, sex, or national origin was a motivating factor for any employment practice, even though other factors also motivated the practice.
- Under Title VII, it shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer to discriminate against any of his employees or applicants for employment, for an employment agency, or joint labor-management committee controlling apprenticeship or other training or retraining, including on-the-job training programs, to discriminate against any individual, or for a labor organization to discriminate against any member thereof or applicant for membership, because he or she has opposed any practice made an unlawful employment practice by

this subchapter, or because he or she has made a charge, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing.

- Under Title VII, it shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer, labor organization, employment agency, or joint labor-management committee controlling apprenticeship or other training or retraining, including on-the-job training programs, to print or publish or cause to be printed or published any notice or advertisement relating to employment by such an employer or membership in or any classification or referral for employment by such a labor organization, or relating to any classification or referral for employment by such an employment agency, or relating to admission to, or employment in, any program established to provide apprenticeship or other training by such a joint labor-management committee, indicating any preference, limitation, specification, or discrimination, based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, except that such a notice or advertisement may indicate a preference, limitation, specification, or discrimination based on religion, sex, or national origin when religion, sex, or national origin is a bona fide occupational qualification for employment.
- A charge related to Title VII shall be filed within one hundred and eighty days after the alleged unlawful employment practice occurred and notice of the charge (including the date, place and circumstances of the alleged unlawful employment practice) shall be served upon the person against whom such charge is made within ten days thereafter, except that in a case of an unlawful employment practice with respect to which the person aggrieved has initially instituted proceedings with a State or local agency with authority to grant or seek relief from such practice or to institute criminal proceedings with respect thereto upon receiving notice thereof, such charge shall be filed by or on behalf of the person aggrieved within three hundred days after the alleged unlawful employment practice occurred, or within thirty days after receiving notice that the State or local agency has terminated the proceedings under the State or local law, whichever is earlier, and a copy of such charge shall be filed by the Commission with the State or local agency.
- Health care professionals should note the following: a designated representative, investigating a charge related to Title VII shall, at all reasonable times, have access to, for the purposes of examination, and the right to copy any evidence of any person being investigated or proceeded against that relates to unlawful

employment practices covered by Title VII and is relevant to the charge under investigation.

- The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission shall have the responsibility for developing and implementing agreements, policies and practices designed to maximize effort, promote efficiency, and eliminate conflict, competition, duplication and inconsistency among the operations, functions and jurisdictions of the various departments, agencies and branches of the Federal Government responsible for the implementation and enforcement of equal employment opportunity legislation, orders, and policies.

### **The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013**

Along with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 may also initially come to mind when considering employee recruitment. The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 may refer to a group of laws that prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity by employers, employment agencies, labor organizations, and joint labor-management committees. Specific information regarding the Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 may be found below.

- The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 prohibits covered entities (employers, employment agencies, labor organizations, or joint labor-management committees) from engaging in employment discrimination on the basis of an individual's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.
- The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 declares that it shall be unlawful for an employer, because of an individual's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, to: fail or refuse to hire, to discharge, or to otherwise discriminate with respect to the compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment of such individual; or limit, segregate, or classify employees or applicants in any way that would deprive any individual of employment or adversely affect an individual's status as an employee. The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 also prohibits employment agencies, labor organizations, and training programs from engaging in similar practices that would adversely affect individuals based on such actual or perceived orientation or identity.

- The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 specifies that such unlawful employment practices include actions based on the actual or perceived orientation or identity of a person with whom the individual associates.
- The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 prohibits certain employment actions from being considered unlawful with respect to volunteers who receive no compensation.
- The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 prohibits a covered entity from granting preferential treatment or implementing quotas on the basis of such actual or perceived orientation or identity.
- The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 limits the claims authorized to be brought under this Act to disparate treatment claims (thereby specifying that disparate impact claims are not provided for under this Act).
- The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 places the burden of proof on the complaining party to establish such an unlawful employment practice by demonstrating that sexual orientation or gender identity was a motivating factor for any employment practice, even though other factors also motivated the practice.
- The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 prohibits a covered entity from discriminating against an individual who: opposed such an unlawful employment practice; or made a charge, testified, assisted, or participated in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under the Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013.
- The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 prohibits this Act from being construed to: prohibit an employer from requiring an employee to adhere to reasonable dress or grooming standards, or require the construction of new or additional facilities.
- The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 prohibits the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the Secretary of Labor from compelling collection or requiring production of statistics from covered entities on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity pursuant to this Act.
- The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 provides for the administration and enforcement of this Act, including by giving the EEOC, Librarian of Congress, Attorney General (DOJ), and U.S. courts the same enforcement powers as they have under specified provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Government

Employee Rights Act of 1991, Congressional Accountability Act of 1995, and other laws granting rights and protections to certain applicants and employees.

- The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 prohibits an individual who files claims alleging an unlawful employment practice under this Act in addition to alleging an unlawful employment practice because of sex under the Civil Rights Act of 1964 from receiving double recovery under both Acts.
- The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 permits a decision maker (other than the Attorney General) in an action or administrative proceeding under this Act to allow the prevailing party (other than the EEOC or the United States) a reasonable attorney's fee (including expert fees) as part of the costs, to the same extent as is permitted under specified civil and employee rights laws; requires the EEOC and the United States to be liable for costs to the same extent as a private person.
- The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 provides authority for amended employee notices to be posted in employee areas for purposes of this Act, but does not require the posting of a separate notice.
- The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 prohibits the invalidating or limiting of remedies, or procedures available to an individual claiming discrimination prohibited under any other federal, state, or political subdivision laws.

### **The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)**

Another group of laws/regulations that may initially come to mind when considering employee recruitment are those included in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) may refer to a group of laws that prohibit discrimination based on disability. Specific information regarding the ADA may be found below.

- Under the ADA, an individual has a disability if he or she: has a physical or mental condition that substantially limits a major life activity (e.g., walking, talking, seeing, hearing, learning, or operation of a major bodily function); has a history of a disability (e.g., cancer that is in remission).
- Disability discrimination occurs when an employer treats a qualified individual who is an employee or applicant unfavorably because he or she has a disability.

- Disability discrimination also occurs when a covered employer or other entity treats an applicant or employee less favorably because he or she has a history of a disability (such as a past major depressive episode) or because he or she is believed to have a physical or mental impairment that is not transitory (lasting or expected to last six months or less) and minor (even if he or she does not have such an impairment).
- The ADA protects individuals from discrimination based on their relationship with a person with a disability (even if they do not themselves have a disability).
- The ADA forbids discrimination when it comes to any aspect of employment, including hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, layoff, training, fringe benefits, and any other term or condition of employment.
- The ADA stipulates that it is illegal to harass an applicant or employee because he or she has a disability, had a disability in the past, or is believed to have a physical or mental impairment that is not transitory (lasting or expected to last six months or less) and minor (even if he or she does not have such an impairment) (note: harassment can include offensive remarks about a person's disability).
- The ADA requires an employer to provide reasonable accommodations to employees and job applicants with a disability, unless doing so would cause significant difficulty or expense for the employer. A reasonable accommodation may refer to any change in the work environment (or in the way things are usually done) to help a person with a disability apply for a job, perform the duties of a job, or enjoy the benefits and privileges of employment (e.g., making the workplace accessible for wheelchair users or providing a reader or interpreter for someone who is blind or hearing impaired).
- Health care professionals should note the following: an employer doesn't have to provide an accommodation if doing so would cause undue hardship to the employer; undue hardship means that the accommodation would be too difficult or too expensive to provide, in light of the employer's size, financial resources, and the needs of the business; an employer may not refuse to provide an accommodation just because it involves some cost; an employer does not have to provide the exact accommodation the employee or job applicant wants; if more than one accommodation works, the employer may choose which one to provide.
- The ADA places limits on employers when it comes to asking any job applicants to answer disability-related questions, take a medical exam, or identify a disability



(e.g., an employer may not ask a job applicant to answer disability-related questions or take a medical exam before extending a job offer; an employer also may not ask job applicants if they have a disability or about the nature of an obvious disability); an employer may ask job applicants whether they can perform the job and how they would perform the job, with or without a reasonable accommodation.

- The ADA allows an employer to condition the job offer on the applicant answering certain disability-related questions or successfully passing a medical exam, but only if all new employees in the same type of job have to answer the questions or take the exam.
- Health care professionals should note the following: once any employee is hired and has started work, an employer generally can only ask disability-related questions or require a medical exam if the employer needs medical documentation to support an employee's request for an accommodation or if the employer believes that an employee is not able to perform a job successfully or safely because of a medical condition.
- The ADA requires that employers keep all medical records and information confidential and in separate medical files.

### **The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA)**

Another group of laws/regulations that apply to employee recruitment are those included in the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA). The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) may refer to labor laws that forbid employment discrimination against anyone at least 40 years of age in the U. S. Specific information regarding the ADEA may be found below.

- Age discrimination laws and regulations included in the ADEA prohibit discrimination in any aspect of employment, including hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, layoffs, training, benefits, and any other term or condition of employment.
- The ADEA specifies that it is unlawful to harass a person because of his or her age.
- Harassment can include offensive or derogatory remarks about a person's age.

- Harassment is illegal when it is so frequent or severe that it creates a hostile or offensive work environment or when it results in an adverse employment decision (e.g., the victim is fired or demoted).
- An employment policy or practice that applies to everyone, regardless of age, can be illegal if it has a negative impact on applicants or employees age 40 or older and is not based on a reasonable factor other than age (note: the ADEA protects applicants and employees who are 40 years of age or older from employment discrimination based on age).
- The ADEA stipulates the following: it shall be unlawful for an employer to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual or otherwise discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's age; it shall be unlawful for an employer to limit, segregate, or classify employees in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his or her status as an employee, because of such individual's age; it shall be unlawful for an employer to reduce the wage rate of any employee based on age.
- The ADEA specifies the following: it shall be unlawful for an employment agency to fail or refuse to refer for employment, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual because of such individual's age, or to classify or refer for employment to any individual on the basis of such individual's age.
- The ADEA specifies the following: it shall be unlawful for a labor organization to exclude or to expel from its membership, or otherwise to discriminate against, any individual because of his age; it shall be unlawful for a labor organization to limit, segregate, or classify its membership, or to classify or fail or refuse to refer for employment any individual, in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities, or would limit such employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his or her status as an employee or as an applicant for employment, because of such individual's age; it shall be unlawful for a labor organization to cause or attempt to cause an employer to discriminate against an individual in violation of related regulations/laws.
- The ADEA specifies the following: it shall be unlawful for an employer, labor organization, or employment agency to print or publish, or cause to be printed or

published, any notice or advertisement relating to employment by such an employer or membership in or any classification or referral for employment by such a labor organization, or relating to any classification or referral for employment by such an employment agency, indicating any preference, limitation, specification, or discrimination, based on age.

- The ADEA specifies the following: it is also unlawful to retaliate against an individual for opposing employment practices that discriminate based on age or for filing an age discrimination charge, testifying, or participating in any way in an investigation, proceeding, or litigation under the ADEA.
- The Older Workers Benefit Protection Act of 1990 (OWBPA) amended the ADEA to specifically prohibit employers from denying benefits to older employees.
- The ADEA sets specific requirements that permit waivers of claims or rights in certain circumstances. Waivers are common in settling discrimination claims or in connection with exit incentive or other employment termination programs. To be valid, the waiver must meet minimum standards to be considered knowing and voluntary. Among other requirements, a valid ADEA waiver must: be in writing and be understandable; specifically refer to ADEA rights or claims; not waive rights or claims that may arise in the future; be in exchange for valuable consideration in addition to anything of value to which the individual already is entitled; advise the individual in writing to consult an attorney before signing the waiver; and provide the individual with a certain amount of time to consider the agreement before signing.

### **The Equal Pay Act of 1963 (EPA)**

The Equal Pay Act of 1963 (EPA) may refer to labor laws that amend the Fair Labor Standards Act and protect individuals against wage discrimination based on sex. Specific information regarding the EPA may be found below.

- The EPA protects both men and women.
- The EPA requires that men and women be given equal pay for equal work in the same establishment. The jobs need not be identical, but they must be substantially equal. It is job content, not job titles, that determines whether jobs are substantially equal. Specifically, the EPA provides that employers may not pay unequal wages to men and women who perform jobs that require substantially

equal skill, effort and responsibility, and that are performed under similar working conditions within the same establishment.

- The EPA specifies that skill should be measured by factors such as the experience, ability, education, and training required to perform the job; the issue is what skills are required for the job, not what skills the individual employees may have.
- The EPA specifies that effort should be determined by the amount of physical or mental exertion needed to perform the job.
- The EPA specifies that responsibility is the degree of accountability required to perform the job.
- The EPA specifies that working conditions encompass the following two factors: physical surroundings like temperature, fumes, and ventilation; and hazards.
- The prohibition against compensation discrimination under the EPA applies only to jobs within an establishment. An establishment is a distinct physical place of business rather than an entire business or enterprise consisting of several places of business. In some circumstances, physically separate places of business may be treated as one establishment.
- "Equal" work does not mean identical jobs; rather, they must be "substantially equal" in overall job content, even if the position titles are different. In order to be considered substantially equal, the job duties must be "closely related" or "very much alike." Thus, minor differences in the job duties, or the skill, effort, or responsibility required for the jobs will not render the work unequal. An agency may have a defense if compensation is based on a seniority system, merit system, systems which measure earnings by quantity or quality of production, or any factor other than sex.
- The EPA laws against compensation discrimination include all payments made to or on behalf of employees as remuneration for employment; all forms of compensation are covered, including salary, overtime pay, bonuses, stock options, profit sharing and bonus plans, life insurance, vacation and holiday pay, cleaning or gasoline allowances, hotel accommodations, reimbursement for travel expenses, and benefits.
- If there is an inequality in wages between men and women who perform substantially equal jobs, employers must raise wages to equalize pay but may not reduce the wages of other individuals.

- Any individual who files an equal pay claim, or assists an individual in filing an equal pay claim is protected against unlawful retaliation by their employer. This protection extends to unlawful retaliation by an employer against an individual for opposing employment practices that allegedly discriminate based on compensation or for filing a discrimination complaint, testifying, or participating in any way in an investigation, proceeding, or litigation under the EPA. Unlawful retaliation is defined as an adverse employment action by the employer, such as demotion or termination, which is harmful to the point that it could discourage or dissuade a reasonable worker from making or supporting a complaint of discrimination.
- To bring a claim under the EPA, an employee must show that a female employee and a male employee are receiving different wages for performing substantially equal work in the same establishment and under similar working conditions. Substantially equal work does not require identical job titles; rather it is interpreted as work requiring substantially equal levels of skill, effort, and responsibility. The EPA imposes strict liability on the employer, so whether or not the employer intended to engage in wage discrimination on the basis of gender does not matter. To avoid liability, the employer must prove that wages are set pursuant to one of the four statutory defenses allowed under the EPA - a seniority system, a merit system, a system that measures earnings by quantity or quality of production, or on a factor other than sex.
- An employee filing an EPA claim may go directly to court and is not required to file a charge beforehand. The time limit for filing an EPA charge is within two years of the alleged unlawful compensation practice or, in the case of a willful violation, within three years.

### **The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 (PDA)**

The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 (PDA) may refer to a group of laws that protect individuals from discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Specific information regarding the PDA may be found below.

- Pregnancy discrimination involves treating a woman (an applicant or employee) unfavorably because of pregnancy, childbirth, or a medical condition related to pregnancy or childbirth.
- The PDA forbids discrimination based on pregnancy when it comes to any aspect of employment, including hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, layoff,

training, fringe benefits, such as leave and health insurance, and any other term or condition of employment.

- If a woman is temporarily unable to perform her job due to a medical condition related to pregnancy or childbirth, the employer or other covered entity must treat her in the same way as it treats any other temporarily disabled employee (e.g., the employer may have to provide light duty, alternative assignments, disability leave, or unpaid leave to pregnant employees if it does so for other temporarily disabled employees).
- Impairments resulting from pregnancy (e.g., gestational diabetes or preeclampsia) may be disabilities under the ADA. An employer may have to provide a reasonable accommodation (e.g., leave or modifications that enable an employee to perform her job) for a disability related to pregnancy, absent undue hardship (i.e., significant difficulty or expense).
- It is unlawful to harass a woman because of pregnancy, childbirth, or a medical condition related to pregnancy or childbirth. Harassment is illegal when it is so frequent or severe that it creates a hostile or offensive work environment or when it results in an adverse employment decision (e.g., the victim being fired or demoted). The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker, or someone who is not an employee of the employer, such as a client or customer.
- Under the PDA, an employer that allows temporarily disabled employees to take disability leave or leave without pay, must allow an employee who is temporarily disabled due to pregnancy to do the same.
- Under the PDA, an employer may not single out pregnancy-related conditions for special procedures to determine an employee's ability to work. However, if an employer requires its employees to submit a doctor's statement concerning their ability to work before granting leave or paying sick benefits, the employer may require employees affected by pregnancy-related conditions to submit such statements.
- Health care professionals should note the following: under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993, a new parent (including foster and adoptive parents) may be eligible for 12 weeks of leave (unpaid or paid if the employee has earned or accrued it) that may be used for care of the new child; to be eligible,

the employee must have worked for the employer for 12 months prior to taking the leave and the employer must have a specified number of employees.

- Health care professionals should note the following: pregnant employees may have additional rights under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which is enforced by the U.S. Department of Labor; nursing mothers may also have the right to express milk in the workplace under a provision of the Fair Labor Standards Act enforced by the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division.

### **The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008**

The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 may refer to a group of laws that prohibit some types of genetic discrimination. Specific information regarding the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 may be found below.

- The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 recognizes the following: deciphering the sequence of the human genome and other advances in genetics open major new opportunities for medical progress; new knowledge about the genetic basis of illness will allow for earlier detection of illnesses, often before symptoms have begun; genetic testing can allow individuals to take steps to reduce the likelihood that they will contract a particular disorder; new knowledge about genetics may allow for the development of better therapies that are more effective against disease or have fewer side effects than current treatments; these advances give rise to the potential misuse of genetic information to discriminate in health insurance and employment.
- The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 specifies that it shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer to fail or refuse to hire, or to discharge, any employee, or otherwise to discriminate against any employee with respect to the compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment of the employee, because of genetic information with respect to the employee.
- The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 specifies that it shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer to limit, segregate, or classify the employees of the employer in any way that would deprive or tend to deprive any employee of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect the status of the employee as an employee, because of genetic information with respect to the employee.

- The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 prohibits, as an unlawful employment practice, an employer, employment agency, labor organization, or joint labor-management committee from discriminating against an employee, individual, or member because of genetic information, including: for an employer, by failing to hire or discharging an employee or otherwise discriminating against an employee with respect to the compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment; for an employment agency, by failing or refusing to refer an individual for employment; for a labor organization, by excluding or expelling a member from the organization; for an employment agency, labor organization, or joint labor-management committee, by causing or attempting to cause an employer to discriminate against a member in violation of this Act; or for an employer, labor organization, or joint labor-management committee, by discriminating against an individual in admission to, or employment in, any program established to provide apprenticeships or other training or retraining.
- The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 prohibits, as an unlawful employment practice, an employer, employment agency, labor organization, or joint labor-management committee from limiting, segregating, or classifying employees, individuals, or members because of genetic information in any way that would deprive or tend to deprive such individuals of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect their status as employees.
- The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 prohibits, as an unlawful employment practice, an employer, employment agency, labor organization, or joint labor-management committee from requesting, requiring, or purchasing an employee's genetic information, except for certain purposes, which include where: such information is requested or required to comply with certification requirements of family and medical leave laws; the information involved is to be used for genetic monitoring of the biological effects of toxic substances in the workplace; and the employer conducts DNA analysis for law enforcement purposes as a forensic laboratory or for purposes of human remains identification.
- The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 requires an employer, employment agency, labor organization, or joint labor-management committee that possesses any genetic information about an employee or member to maintain such information in separate files and treat such information as a confidential medical record.



- The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 prohibits an employer, employment agency, labor organization, or joint labor-management committee from disclosing such genetic information, except: to the employee or member upon request; to an occupational or other health researcher; in response to a court order; to a government official investigating compliance with this Act if the information is relevant to the investigation; in connection with the employee's compliance with the certification provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 or such requirements under state family and medical leave laws; or to a public health agency.
- Health care professionals should note the following: an employer, employment agency, labor organization, or joint labor-management committee shall not be considered to be in violation of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 based on the use, acquisition, or disclosure of medical information that is not genetic information about a manifested disease, disorder, or pathological condition of an employee or member, including a manifested disease, disorder, or pathological condition that has or may have a genetic basis.

## Section 1 Summary

Employee recruitment may refer to the process of identifying, attracting, interviewing, selecting, hiring, and onboarding new employees. The essential elements of employee recruitment include the following: assessing needs, developing a job description, developing an application process, promoting the open position(s), the application review process, the initial screening process, the interview process, extending an offer, and onboarding new employees. Health care professionals can optimize the interview process by utilizing the following strategies: preparing for the interview process; utilizing open-ended questions; utilizing closed-ended questions; knowing what questions to avoid during interviews; engaging in active listening; avoiding redirection when communicating during an interview; avoiding negative body language when communicating during an interview; working to avoid miscommunication during an interview; discussing employment expectations; and remaining professional. In addition to understanding how to optimize the interview process, health care professionals should note and make adjustments to account for some of the most relevant cultural trends impacting employee recruitment, which include the following: the use of social media, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the implementation of the CDC's, recommended, infection prevention and control measures. Finally, to optimize employee recruitment,

health care professionals should note and adhere to the following U.S. laws and regulations that apply to employee recruitment: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978, and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008.

## Section 1 Key Concepts

- The essential elements of employee recruitment include the following: assessing needs, developing a job description, developing an application process, promoting the open position(s), the application review process, the initial screening process, the interview process, extending an offer, and onboarding new employees.
- The interview process is one of the most important elements of employee recruitment.
- Health care professionals can optimize the interview process by utilizing the following strategies: preparing for the interview process; utilizing open-ended questions; utilizing closed-ended questions; knowing what questions to avoid during interviews; engaging in active listening; avoiding redirection when communicating during an interview; avoiding negative body language when communicating during an interview; working to avoid miscommunication during an interview; discussing employment expectations; remaining professional.
- The most relevant cultural trends impacting employee recruitment include the following: the use of social media, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the implementation of the CDC's, recommended, infection prevention and control measures.
- The U.S. laws and regulations that apply to employee recruitment include: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978, and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008.

## Section 1 Key Terms

Employee recruitment - the process of identifying, attracting, interviewing, selecting, hiring, and onboarding new employees

Onboarding - any actions used to integrate a new employee into an organization

Job description - an outline or an accounting of the general tasks, duties, and responsibilities of a specific position

Video interviews - interviews that are conducted via teleconference software

Teleconference software (within the context of this course) - video conferencing software that enables online communication for audio meetings, video meetings, and distance group meetings

Pandemic - a global or worldwide outbreak of disease; outbreak of disease over a large area

Active listening - the process of gathering information with the intent to obtain meaning and achieve a common understanding

Redirection (within the context of communication) - the process or action of changing/altering the intended purpose of a conversation or communication exchange between individuals or parties

Negative body language - any body language that expresses an emotion or feeling associated with negative connotations such as anger, disdain, irritation, nervousness, and/or boredom

Scope of practice - a description of services qualified health care professionals are deemed competent to perform and permitted to undertake under the terms of their professional license

Standards of practice - a statement of duties or specific guidelines for a health care professional

Social media - any electronically driven application that enables individuals to create and share content for the purposes of virtual communication

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) - a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person, which is caused by a virus known as the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2)

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 - a group of laws that prohibits discrimination in virtually every employment circumstance on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, pregnancy, or national origin

Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 - a group of laws that prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity by employers, employment agencies, labor organizations, and joint labor-management committees

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) - a group of laws that prohibit discrimination based on disability

Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) - labor laws that forbid employment discrimination against anyone at least 40 years of age in the U. S.

Equal Pay Act of 1963 (EPA) - labor laws that amend the Fair Labor Standards Act and protect individuals against wage discrimination based on sex

Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 (PDA) - a group of laws that protect individuals from discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions

Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 - a group of laws that prohibit some types of genetic discrimination

## **Section 1 Personal Reflection Question**

How can health care professionals optimize employee recruitment?

## **Section 2: Employee Retention**

Consistently losing employees can be extremely costly for a health care organization. Therefore, health care professionals should work to retain employees. Health care professionals can work to retain employees by incorporating the essential elements of employee retention into the cultural, executive, and directional structure of their health care organization. The essential elements of employee retention include the following:

effective communication, effective employee grievance resolution, effective employee staffing, reducing employee stress, and employee safety. This section of the course will review the aforementioned essential elements of employee retention, while providing recommendations for their implementation.

## **Effective Communication**

It has been argued that effective communication is absolutely essential to employee retention. Therefore, health care professionals should work to establish effective communication within their health care organization. Specific information regarding effective communication may be found below. The information found below was derived from materials provided by the Harvard Public Health Review, unless, otherwise, specified (Ratna, 2019).

### **What is communication?**

- Communication may refer to the process of transmitting information and messages from one individual or party to another individual or party in order to obtain meaning and a common understanding.
- Effective communication occurs when information and messages are adequately transmitted, received, and understood.
- Health care professionals should note that communication may be verbal or nonverbal. Verbal communication may refer to the use of sounds and/or words to transmit information/messages (e.g., one individual says "hello" to another individual; one individual says "yes" or "no" to another individual). Nonverbal communication may refer to the use of gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, body language, posture, and/or other means that do not involve sounds and/or words to transmit information/messages (e.g., one individual gives another individual the "thumbs up" to indicate satisfaction and/or approval). Health care professionals should also note that exchanges between individuals or parties may include both verbal and nonverbal communication.

### **What is the communication process?**

The communication process may refer to the exchange of information and messages from a sender, through a selected channel, to a receiver.

## What are the key elements of the communication process?

As previously alluded to, the key elements of the communication process include the following: sender, channel, and receiver. Additional elements of the communication process include: encoding, decoding, and feedback. Specific information regarding the aforementioned key elements of the communication process may be found below.

- Sender - the sender, in the context of the communication process, may refer to the individual or party who initiates communication by using sounds, words, gestures, facial expressions, tones of voice, eye contact, body language, posture, and/or other means to transmit a message (i.e., the source that originates a message).
- Channel - the channel, in the context of the communication process, may refer to the medium which is used to carry communication (e.g., verbal messages, nonverbal cues, written words, numbers, and symbols).
- Receiver - the receiver, in the context of the communication process, may refer to the individual or party to whom a message is sent (i.e., the audience).
- Encode - the process of selecting sounds, words, gestures, facial expressions, tones of voice, eye contact methods, body language, postures, and/or other means to generate a message.
- Decode - the process of receiving, interpreting, and attempting to understand an encoded message in order to obtain meaningful information.
- Feedback - a receiver's response to a sender's message (i.e., a receiver sends a message to a sender).

## What are the essential steps involved in the communication process?

The essential steps involved in the communication process include the following:

1. A sender has a desire to convey an idea or concept via a message
2. A sender encodes an idea or concept into a message
3. A sender transmits a message via a channel
4. A receiver takes in the message sent by the sender
5. The receiver decodes the message

## 6. The receiver provides feedback to the sender

Health care professionals should note that noise may interfere with the previously highlighted steps and, ultimately, with the communication process. Noise, in the context of communication, may refer to anything that distorts or disrupts a message and/or the communication process. Health care professionals should also note that noise can act as a barrier to effective communication. Specific types of noise include the following: physical noise, physiological noise, psychological noise, and semantic noise. Specific information regarding the aforementioned types of noise may be found below.

- Physical noise - physical noise may refer to external or environmental stimulus that acts as a distraction (e.g., excessive talking, screaming, and loud music).
- Physiological noise - physiological noise may refer to a distraction related to physiological functions (e.g., hunger, thirst, and fatigue).
- Psychological noise - psychological noise may refer to preconceived notions (e.g., reputations, biases, and assumptions) that interfere with the encoding and decoding process.
- Semantic noise - semantic noise may refer to a disturbance that occurs in the transmission of a message that interferes with the interpretation of a message due to the ambiguity of chosen sounds, words, gestures, facial expressions, tones of voice, eye contact methods, body language, postures, and/or other means of communication.

### **What is interpersonal communication?**

Interpersonal communication may refer to an exchange of information and messages between two or more individuals or parties.

Health care professionals should note that interpersonal communication may occur in both personal and professional settings.

### **How may communication flow during interpersonal communication?**

During interpersonal communication, communication typically flows in one direction or in two directions. Specific information regarding the possible directions of communication may be found below.

- One-way communication - one-way communication occurs when information/a message is sent in only one direction, from sender to receiver. Health care

professionals should note that, typically, one-way communication is used to inform, persuade, or command.

- **Two-way communication** - two-way communication occurs when information is transmitted and flows freely among individuals and parties (i.e., information is sent in a back and forth manner between individuals or parties). Health care professionals should note that two-way communication is essential to establishing a shared understanding among individuals or parties.

### **What is organizational communication?**

Organizational communication, in the context of this course, may refer to the process of sending and receiving information/messages among interrelated individuals within a given organization, such as a health care facility.

Examples of organizational communication within a health care facility may include the following: a health care manager gives instructions to a health care professional; two health care professionals discuss a patient's medications; a health care professional provides education to a group of health care professionals; a health care professional writes another health care professional a note regarding a patient; health care professionals exchange emails regarding specific interventions.

### **How does communication typically move or flow within an organization?**

Communication typically moves or flows, within an organization, in a vertical and/or a horizontal manner.

- **Vertical communication** - vertical communication, within the context of organizational communication, may refer to the flow of communication between individuals associated with the same organization who are on different levels of the organization's hierarchy. Health care professionals should note that vertical communication may flow in a downwards or upwards manner. Downward communication occurs when organizational leaders or managers share information with lower-level employees (e.g., a nurse manager gives a nurse instructions). Upward communication occurs when lower-level employees share information with organizational leaders or managers (e.g., a health care professional informs a health care manager of a safety hazard). Health care professionals should also note that vertical communication is essential to creating and maintaining a shared understanding between organizational leaders, managers, and employees.



- Horizontal communication - horizontal communication, within the context of organizational communication, may refer to the flow of communication between individuals and/or departments that are on the same level of a given organization (e.g., a health care manager provides information to another health care manager; an intensive care nurse provides another intensive care nurse with relevant patient information). Health care professionals should note that horizontal communication may be an essential element to effective teamwork within a given health care facility.

Health care professionals should note that communication may also flow into and out of an organization. For example, during a health care emergency, such as a pandemic, information may flow into a health care facility from government officials, while information about health care may flow out of a health care facility to specific government officials.

### **Why is effective communication important to employee retention and, ultimately, health care?**

Effective communication is important to employee retention and, ultimately, health care for a variety of different reasons including the following: promotes safe and effective health care; promotes and fosters medical error prevention; creates the potential to optimize patient care; and promotes effective teamwork. Specific information on the aforementioned reasons why effective communication is important to employee retention and, ultimately, health care may be found below. The information found below was derived from materials provided by the Joint Commission (Joint Commission, 2021).

- Promotes safe and effective health care - first and foremost, effective communication can help health care professionals administer safe and effective health care. Essentially, effective communication can help health care professionals transmit and receive vital patient information essential to health care such as the following: patient vital signs, patient lab results, patient medication information, patient symptoms, and patient disease states. Health care professionals should note the following: health care professionals are more likely to work or continue to work for a health care organization that promotes safe and effective health care.
- Medical error prevention - the term medical error may refer to a preventable adverse effect of care that may or may not be evident or causes harm to a patient. In an ideal health care climate, medical errors would not occur - however,

the simple truth of the matter is that they often do occur. That being the case, health care professionals should note that effective communication can help prevent medical errors from occurring. For example, proper medication labeling, adequate alarm systems, and patient education can be methods to communicate key information that can help prevent medical errors from occurring. Health care professionals should note the following: the prevention of medical errors can help prevent situations that may lead to the loss of an employee (e.g., a health care professional chooses to resign from a health care organization where medical errors are prevalent and are contributing to increasing patient mortality and morbidity rates).

- Creates the potential to optimize patient care - by helping to promote safe and effective health care and by reducing medical errors from occurring, effective communication can, ultimately, create the potential to optimize patient care. Health care professionals should note that working to optimize patient care may contribute to employee satisfaction, and thus, employee retention.
- Promotes effective teamwork - communication is an essential element of effective teamwork. Within the team setting, communication can be used to allow individuals to understand their roles, set goals, transmit and receive points of interest, provide status reports, share knowledge, make adjustments, and, ultimately, achieve desired results. In essence, in a health care setting, effective communication can help health care professionals work as a cohesive unit to ensure patients receive the care they need. Health care professionals should note that effective teamwork can help health care professionals create bonds that may impact employee satisfaction, and thus, employee retention.
- Health care professional employee satisfaction - to build on the previous point of interest, effective communication between fellow health care professionals can lead to the formation of personal and professional relationships that have the potential to bring health care professionals satisfaction regarding their health care organization. Health care professionals should note that employee satisfaction can promote employee retention.

## **Effective Employee Grievance Resolution**

A grievance, as it pertains to a professional setting, may refer to a matter of concern regarding a potential violation of work-related rights, which is formally submitted,

without fear of retaliation, and requires a formal response. With that said, unresolved grievances may lead to employee dissatisfaction, law suits, government intervention, and, ultimately, to the loss of an employee(s). Therefore, health care professionals should work to effectively resolve grievances, within a health care organization, in order to retain employees. Health care professionals can work to effectively resolve grievances, within a health care organization, by adopting a grievance resolution process. An example of a grievance resolution process may be found below. Health care professionals may use the example found below or a similar, organizational specific grievance resolution process to help resolve grievances with their health care organization.

### **Example Grievance Resolution Process**

- **Step 1:** Encourage employees to share concerns and to seek grievance resolution - health care professionals should ensure that all health care facility staff and management encourage employees to share their concerns and to seek grievance resolution (note: the first step towards resolving employee grievances begins well before a formal employee grievance is even submitted). In essence, the first step to resolving employee grievances is to make sure existing employee grievance policies and procedures help establish a professional culture where the voicing of employee concerns and grievances is welcomed by the health care organization and resolved quickly to avoid grievance escalation.
- **Step 2:** Designate an employee(s) to head or manage the grievance resolution process - every health care organization should have a designated employee(s) to head/manage the process of resolving formal employee grievances. Typically, the designated employee heads/manages the grievance resolution process from beginning to end (i.e., the designated employee handles the grievance resolution process from the time a formal employee grievance is submitted until the time the formal employee grievance is officially resolved). The designated employee may also serve as a contact individual for the employee who submitted the formal employee grievance. Establishing a contact individual for employees during the grievance resolution process can help foster effective communication, which is often essential to the grievance resolution process.
- **Step 3:** Acknowledge the receipt of a formal employee grievance - if a formal employee grievance is submitted, the health care organization should acknowledge, in some fashion, that the formal employee grievance was received. Doing so can inform the employee, who submitted the formal employee

grievance, that the formal employee grievance resolution process has been initiated. Additionally, it can indirectly or directly inform the employee that his or her formal employee grievance, in some way, has been heard. The simple truth of the matter is, that when individuals have a concern or grievance, they want to be heard by those in a position to resolve or elevate the concern or grievance. By letting the employee know his or her formal employee grievance was received, it can let the employee know he or she is being heard by those who can work to resolve the grievance. Furthermore, acknowledging the receipt of a formal employee grievance can potentially help avoid or prevent grievance escalation. Often, when individuals feel like their concerns or grievances are not listened to or heard, they escalate the process of voicing their concerns or grievances until they are heard. When individuals escalate the process of voicing their concerns or grievances until they are heard, negative results can occur such as: additional grievances, disruptions, disturbances, and intense arguments, all of which should be avoided in the health care setting due to their potential to negatively impact patient care. Thus, by acknowledging the receipt of a formal employee grievance, health care organizations can let their employees know they are being heard and potentially avoid grievance escalation.

- **Step 4:** Gather information - once the receipt of a formal employee grievance is acknowledged, those responsible for managing the employee grievance resolution process should begin gathering relevant information. Information regarding a grievance may come from many different sources including: the employees involved in the grievance, other employees not directly involved in the grievance, additional witnesses, organizations' policies, as well as state and federal laws. With that said, health care professionals should note that objectivity is necessary when gathering information.
- **Step 5:** Document the process of employee grievance resolution - the employee grievance resolution process should be documented (i.e., the formal grievance, any employee statements, any information relating to grievance resolution or the grievance decision/the health care organization's formal decision regarding a submitted grievance should be officially documented). Documentation can provide information to employees regarding the grievance resolution process and the health care organization's formal decision. Documentation can also prove to be valuable if any state, federal, or attorney intervention, regarding a grievance, occurs.

- **Step 6:** Formulate a decision - once all relevant information has been gathered and documented, a formal decision regarding an employee grievance must, eventually, be made. Health care professionals should note that formal decisions regarding an employee grievance must be made within the designated time line specified in their organization's employee grievance policies and procedures (e.g., if an organization's employee grievance policies and procedures specify that an official decision regarding an employee grievance must be reached 15 - 30 days after the formal submission of the employee grievance then the decision should be reached within the aforementioned time period).
- **Step 7:** Follow up with the employee(s) involved in a grievance - once an organization reaches an official decision regarding a grievance, the organization should formally follow up with the employee who submitted the grievance and any employees involved in the grievance (i.e., an organization should provide the employee(s) involved in a grievance with documentation).

## Effective Employee Staffing

Effective employee staffing can be vital to employee retention, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic (note: effective employee staffing, in the modern health care system, occurs when all required schedules and open shifts are filled with consideration for employee satisfaction; employee satisfaction may refer to an employee's perceived level of contentment related to his or her place of employment). That said, there are a variety of different strategies or models that may be used to effectively staff employees. One model, in particular, that is currently standing out among other staffing models as an effective means to staff employees and promote employee retention is known as the collaborative staffing model. Specific information regarding the collaborative staffing model may be found below. The information found below was derived from materials provided by the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (American Association of Critical-Care Nurses, 2018).

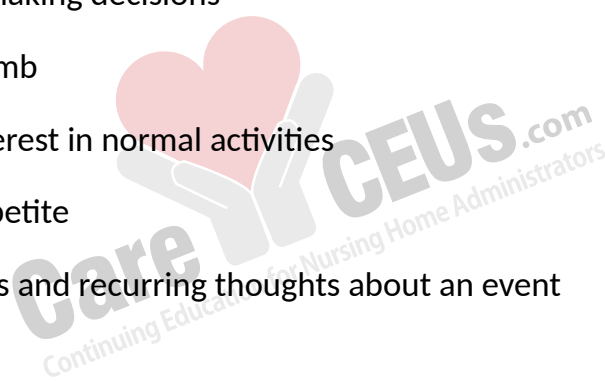
- The collaborative staffing model may refer to an employee staffing model that encourages and allows health care managers and health care professionals to work together to create schedules and/or fill required open shifts across a health care organization.

- The collaborative staffing model helps remove the traditional hierarchical structure of a health care organization that may not be relevant in the modern era of health care.
- In order for the collaborative staffing model to be effective, health care organizations must have a means for health care professionals to view and fill schedules/open shifts.
- In order for the collaborative staffing model to be effective, health care organizations must have a means for health care professionals to communicate information regarding schedules/open shifts.
- In order for the collaborative staffing model to be effective, health care organizations must establish channels for effective horizontal communication.
- The collaborative staffing model can help reduce some of the scheduling burden for health care managers, while providing them additional time to focus on other vital issues or concerns.
- The collaborative staffing model can help health care organizations fill schedules/open shifts to help meet the demands of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The collaborative staffing model can help foster professional teamwork, which in turn could help health care professionals create professional bonds that may impact employee retention.
- The collaborative staffing model can help increase employee satisfaction. Health care professionals should note the following: some of the most cited reasons why health care professionals leave health care organizations are centered around scheduling issues and low employee satisfaction; the collaborative staffing model can help health care organizations address the aforementioned reasons why health care professionals leave health care organizations.

## **Reducing Employee Stress**

In order to help reduce employee stress, health care professionals must possess insight into stress. Specific information regarding stress and the effects of stress may be found below. The information found below was derived from materials provided by the CDC unless, otherwise, specified (CDC, 2020).

- Stress may refer to a factor that causes emotional, physical, or psychological tension.
- Stress can be related to a "negative" event such as an accident, as well as a "positive" event such as a promotion.
- Stress may also arise from a significant life event such as: divorce, moving, school graduation, and new employment (note: a significant life event may refer to any major shift in an individual's life).
- Signs/symptoms of stress include the following:
  - Disbelief and shock
  - Tension and irritability
  - Fear and anxiety about the future
  - Difficulty making decisions
  - Feeling numb
  - Loss of interest in normal activities
  - Loss of appetite
  - Nightmares and recurring thoughts about an event
  - Anger
  - Increased use of alcohol and drugs
  - Sadness and other symptoms of depression
  - Feeling powerless
  - Crying
  - Sleep problems
  - Headaches
  - Back pains
  - Stomach problems



- Trouble concentrating
- Stress can play a role in the development of the following: headaches, high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, skin conditions, asthma, arthritis, depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and burn-out.
- Stress is related to burn-out.
- Burn-out may refer to a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed (World Health Organization [WHO], 2019). Health care professionals should note that burn-out is characterized by the following three dimensions: feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion; increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job; and reduced professional efficacy (WHO, 2019). Health care professionals should also note that burn-out should be avoided because it can lead to suboptimal patient care, employee turnover, and workplace violence (WHO, 2019).
- Health care professionals can help prevent/limit stress and related burn-out by the following means: taking designated breaks, developing schedules that allow for consecutive days off, limiting work hours (when applicable), taking vacation time, engaging in exercise, yoga, tai chi, and/or meditation, connecting socially, and taking part in support groups.

## Employee Safety

Lastly, and perhaps most important to employee retention is employee safety. Quite simply put, if a health care professional does not feel safe while working in his or her health care facility, then the health care professional will not continue to work in his or her health care facility. Thus, health care organizations should ensure their health care facility is safe for all employees. To ensure a health care facility is safe for all employees, health care professionals and health care organizations should consider the laws included in the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (OSH Act). The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (OSH Act) may refer to the group of labor laws that govern the federal law of occupational health and safety in the private sector and federal government in the U. S. Specific information regarding the OSH Act may be found below. The information found below was derived from materials provided by the United States Department of Labor (United States Department of Labor, 2021).



- The OSH Act was passed to prevent workers from being killed or otherwise harmed at work.
- The OSH Act requires employers to provide their employees with working conditions that are free of known dangers.
- The OSH Act created the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), which sets and enforces protective workplace safety and health standards.
- The OSH Act gives workers the right to safe and healthful working conditions. It is the duty of employers to provide workplaces that are free of known dangers that could harm their employees. This law also gives workers important rights to participate in activities to ensure their protection from job hazards.
- The OSH Act states that employers have the responsibility to provide a safe workplace. Employers must provide their employees with a workplace that does not have serious hazards and must follow all OSHA safety and health standards.
- The OSH Act states that employers must inform workers about hazards through training, labels, alarms, color-coded systems, chemical information sheets, and other methods.
- The OSH Act states that employers must train workers in a language and vocabulary they can understand.
- The OSH Act states that employers must keep accurate records of work-related injuries and illnesses.
- The OSH Act states that employers must perform tests in the workplace, such as air sampling, required by some OSHA standards.
- The OSH Act states that employers must provide hearing exams or other medical tests required by OSHA standards.
- The OSH Act states that employers must post OSHA citations and injury and illness data where workers can see them.
- The OSH Act states that employers must notify OSHA within eight hours of a workplace fatality or within 24 hours of any work-related inpatient hospitalization, amputation, or loss of an eye.

- The OSH Act states that employers must not retaliate against workers for using their rights under the law, including their right to report a work-related injury or illness.
- The OSH Act states that employers must comply with the General Duty Clause of the OSH Act. This clause requires employers to keep their workplaces free of serious recognized hazards and is generally cited when no specific OSHA standard applies to the hazard.
- The OSH Act states that employers must provide most protective equipment free of charge. Employers are responsible for knowing when protective equipment is needed. Examples of protective equipment include: respirators, goggles, and gloves.
- OSHA gives workers and their representatives the right to see information that employers collect on hazards in the workplace. Workers have the right to know what hazards are present in the workplace and how to protect themselves. Additionally, the Hazard Communication standard, known as the “right-to-know” standard, requires employers to inform and train workers about hazardous chemicals and substances in the workplace.
- Many OSHA standards require employers to run tests of the workplace environment to find out if their workers are being exposed to harmful levels of hazardous substances such as lead or asbestos, or high levels of noise or radiation. These types of tests are called exposure monitoring. OSHA gives workers the right to get the results of these tests.
- OSHA conducts on-site inspections of worksites to enforce the OSHA law that protects workers and their rights. On-site inspections can be triggered by a worker complaint of a potential workplace hazard or violation.
- Workers and their representatives have the right to ask for an inspection without OSHA telling their employer who filed the complaint. It is a violation of the OSH Act for an employer to fire, demote, transfer or retaliate in any way against a worker for filing a complaint or using other OSHA rights.
- When the OSHA area director determines that there has been a violation of OSHA standards, regulations, or other requirements, the area director issues a citation and notification of proposed penalty to an employer (typically following an inspection).

- A citation includes a description of the violation and the date by when the corrective actions must be taken. Depending on the situation, OSHA can classify a violation as serious, willful, or repeat. The employer can also be cited for failing to correct a violation for which it has already been cited. Employers must post a copy of a citation in the workplace where employees will see it.
- Workers and employers can contest citations once they are issued to the employer. Workers may only contest the amount of time the employer is given to correct the hazard. Workers or their representatives must file a notice of contest with the OSHA area office within 15 days of the issuance of a citation.
- Employers have the right to challenge whether there is a violation, how the violation is classified, the amount of any penalty, what the employer must do to correct the violation and how long they have to fix it. Workers or their representatives may participate in this appeals process by electing “party status.” This is done by filing a written notice with the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission (OSHRC).
- The OSHRC hears appeals of OSHA citations. They are an independent agency separate from the Department of Labor.
- The OSHA area director evaluates complaints from employees or their representatives according to the procedures defined in the OSHA Field Operations Manual. If the area director decides not to inspect the workplace, he or she will send a letter to the complainant explaining the decision and the reasons for it.
- OSHA will inform complainants that they have the right to request a review of the decision by the OSHA regional administrator. Similarly, in the event that OSHA decides not to issue a citation after an inspection, employees have a right to further clarification from the area director and an informal review by the regional administrator.
- The OSH Act prohibits employers from retaliating against their employees for using their rights under the OSH Act. These rights include filing an OSHA complaint, participating in an inspection or talking to the inspector, seeking access to employer exposure and injury records, raising a safety or health issue with the employer, or any other workers’ rights described above. Protection from retaliation means that an employer cannot punish workers by taking “adverse action,” such as firing or laying off.

- If an employee has been retaliated against for using their rights, they must file a complaint with OSHA within 30 calendar days from the date the retaliatory decision has been both made and communicated to the employee (the worker). Following a complaint, OSHA will contact the complainant and conduct an interview to determine whether an investigation is necessary.
- If the evidence shows that the employee has been retaliated against for exercising safety and health rights, OSHA will ask the employer to restore that worker's job, earnings, and benefits. If the employer refuses, OSHA may take the employer to court.
- Employees may file a complaint with OSHA concerning a hazardous working condition at any time. However, an employee should not leave the worksite merely because he or she has filed a complaint. If the condition clearly presents a risk of death or serious physical harm, there is not sufficient time for OSHA to inspect, and, where possible, an employee has brought the condition to the attention of his or her employer, an employee may have a legal right to refuse to work in a situation in which you would be exposed to the hazard.
- If a worker, with no reasonable alternative, refuses in good faith to expose himself or herself to a dangerous condition, he or she would be protected from subsequent retaliation. The condition must be of such a nature that a reasonable person would conclude that there is a real danger of death or serious harm and that there is not enough time to contact OSHA and for OSHA to inspect. Where possible, the employee must have also sought from his employer, and been unable to obtain, a correction of the condition.
- Since passage of the OSH Act in 1970, Congress has expanded OSHA's whistleblower protection authority to protect workers from retaliation under federal law. These laws protect employees who report violations of various workplace safety, airline, commercial motor carrier, consumer product, environmental, financial reform, health care reform, nuclear, pipeline, public transportation agency, railroad, maritime and securities laws. Complaints must be reported to OSHA within set timeframes following the retaliatory action, as prescribed by each law.
- Health care professionals should note the following: OSHA offers cooperative programs under which businesses, labor groups and other organizations can work cooperatively with OSHA; the OSHA Strategic Partnerships (OSP) provide the

opportunity for OSHA to partner with employers, workers, professional or trade associations, labor organizations, and/or other interested stakeholders; through the Alliance Program, OSHA works with groups to develop compliance assistance tools and resources to share with workers and employers, and educate workers and employers about their rights and responsibilities.

## Section 2 Summary

Health care professionals should work to retain employees. Health care professionals can work to retain employees by incorporating the essential elements of employee retention into the cultural, executive, and directional structure of their health care organization. The essential elements of employee retention include the following: effective communication, effective employee grievance resolution, effective employee staffing, reducing employee stress, and employee safety.

## Section 2 Key Concepts

- The essential elements of employee retention include the following: effective communication, effective employee grievance resolution, effective employee staffing, reducing employee stress, and employee safety.
- Effective communication occurs when information and messages are adequately transmitted, received, and understood.
- Health care professionals can work to effectively resolve grievances, within a health care organization, by adopting a grievance resolution process.
- Effective employee staffing, in the modern health care system, occurs when all required schedules and open shifts are filled with consideration for employee satisfaction.
- The collaborative staffing model can be an effective means to staff employees and promote employee retention.
- In order to help reduce employee stress, health care professionals must possess insight into stress; the signs/symptoms of stress include the following: disbelief and shock; tension and irritability; fear and anxiety about the future; difficulty making decisions; feeling numb; loss of interest in normal activities; loss of appetite; nightmares and recurring thoughts about an event; anger; increased use

of alcohol and drugs; sadness and other symptoms of depression; feeling powerless; crying; sleep problems; headaches; back pains; stomach problems; trouble concentrating.

- Stress is related to burn-out.
- To ensure a health care facility is safe for all employees, health care professionals and health care organizations should consider the laws included in the OSH Act.

## Section 2 Key Terms

Communication - the process of transmitting information and messages from one individual or party to another individual or party in order to obtain meaning and a common understanding

Verbal communication - the use of sounds and/or words to transmit information/messages

Nonverbal communication - the use of gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, body language, posture, and/or other means that do not involve sounds and/or words to transmit information/messages

Communication process - the exchange of information and messages from a sender, through a selected channel, to a receiver

Sender (within the context of the communication process) - the individual or party who initiates communication by using sounds, words, gestures, facial expressions, tones of voice, eye contact, body language, posture, or other means to transmit a message; the source that originates a message

Channel (within the context of the communication process) - the medium which is used to carry communication

Receiver (within the context of the communication process) - the individual or party to whom a message is sent; the audience

Encode - the process of selecting sounds, words, gestures, facial expressions, tones of voice, eye contact methods, body language, postures, and/or other means to generate a message

Decode - the process of receiving, interpreting, and attempting to understand an encoded message in order to obtain meaningful information

Feedback - a receiver's response to a sender's message

Noise (within the context of communication) - anything that distorts or disrupts a message and/or the communication process

Physical noise - external or environmental stimulus that acts as a distraction

Physiological noise - a distraction related to physiological function(s)

Psychological noise - preconceived notions

Semantic noise - a disturbance that occurs in the transmission of a message that interferes with the interpretation of a message due to the ambiguity of chosen sounds, words, gestures, facial expressions, tones of voice, eye contact methods, body language, postures, and/or other means of communication

Interpersonal communication - an exchange of information and messages between two or more individuals or parties

Organizational communication (within the context of this course) - the process of sending and receiving information/messages among interrelated individuals within a given organization such as a health care facility

Vertical communication (within the context of organizational communication) - the flow of communication between individuals associated with the same organization who are on different levels of the organization's hierarchy

Horizontal communication (within the context of organizational communication) - the flow of communication between individuals and/or departments that are on the same level of a given organization

Medical error - a preventable adverse effect of care that may or may not be evident or causes harm to a patient

Grievance (as it pertains to a professional setting) - a matter of concern regarding a potential violation of work-related rights, which is formally submitted, without fear of retaliation, and requires a formal response

Employee satisfaction - an employee's perceived level of contentment related to his or her place of employment

Collaborative staffing model - an employee staffing model that encourages and allows health care managers and health care professionals to work together to create schedules and/or fill required open shifts across a health care organization

Stress - a factor that causes emotional, physical, or psychological tension

Significant life event - any major shift in an individual's life

Burn-out - a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed (WHO, 2019)

Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (OSH Act) - the group of labor laws that govern the federal law of occupational health and safety in the private sector and federal government in the U. S.

## Section 2 Personal Reflection Question

How can health care professionals effectively incorporate the essential elements of employee retention into the cultural, executive, and directional structure of their health care organization?

## Section 3: Employee Motivation Recommendations

Health care professionals should work to motivate individuals from the workforce in order to maximize their efforts to safely and effectively administer care to patients in need. This section of the course will review employee motivation recommendations.

### Employee Motivation Recommendations

- Treat employees like individuals - first and foremost, health care professionals should treat an employee like he or she is an individual. Treating an employee like he or she is an individual can help health care professionals identify the specific influences, characteristics, benefits, limitations, and ultimately, motivations of each employee. Health care professionals should note that treating an employee like he or she is an individual can help maximize the workforce motivation process, and the professional impact of each individual.



- Embrace integrity - integrity may refer to the consistent inclusion of honesty, morals, and values into daily actions and behavior. Integrity can be vital to the process of understanding, leading, and motivating other individuals from the workforce. Essentially, integrity can help build trust and respect, which in turn can help health care professionals effectively understand, lead, and motivate individuals from the workforce. Examples of how health care professionals can incorporate and display integrity in the workplace may be found below.
  - Embrace honesty - honesty is often the foundation of integrity. Thus, when one is attempting to act with integrity, one first has to be honest with him or herself and others.
  - Embrace shared morals and values - much like with honesty, when one is attempting to act with integrity, one has to embrace shared morals and values.
  - Embrace transparency - transparency, within the context of health care, may refer to an open and honest method of transmitting information regarding operating practices and patient care. Within a health care organization transparency can foster trust, honesty, effective communication, teamwork, responsibility, accountability, and, subsequently, motivation. Health care professionals can embrace transparency in health care organizations by the following means: utilize direct and honest communication; establish open door policies for health care managers; provide individuals from the workforce with organizational updates.
  - Consistently showing up to work on time - consistently showing up to work on time may not be an action that comes to mind when considering integrity. However, consistently showing up to work on time can be a very simple and straightforward way to incorporate/display integrity in the workplace. Essentially, consistently showing up to work on time sends the message that one respects other individuals' time, while consistently showing up late to work sends the message that one does not respect other individuals' time. Sending the message that one does not respect other individuals' time can undermine a health care professional's ability to effectively understand, lead, and motivate other individuals. Thus, health care professionals should make every effort to show up to work on time.

- Do not waste other individuals' time - to build on the previous recommendation, health care professionals should not waste other individuals' time. Much like with the previous integrity recommendation, wasting other individuals' time sends the message that one does not respect other individuals' time; sending the message that one does not respect other individuals' time can undermine a health care professional's ability to effectively understand, lead, and motivate other individuals. Health care professionals should note the following examples of how one can waste other individuals' time: excessive talking about personal matters that may be irrelevant to health care, making personal calls, sending personal text messages, engaging in personal social media interactions, taking excessively long breaks (e.g., taking a break which exceeds the allotted time), causing distractions, causing disorganization, running disorganized meetings, deliberately moving in a slow manner, failing to engage in relevant training, and refusing to follow specific instructions.
- Follow health care organization policies and procedures - following related health care organization policies and procedures can show others that one is attempting to follow directions, pursue education, and create commonality among peers and colleagues. Attempting to follow directions, pursue education, and create commonality among peers and colleagues can help health care professionals effectively understand, lead, and motivate individuals from the workforce.
- Be professional - lastly, acting in a professional manner can go a long way when attempting to incorporate/display integrity in the workplace. Examples of how a health care professional can act in a professional manner include the following: remain calm, especially in the face of a challenge or adversity; follow directions; listen to others; refrain from using excessive profanity and/or crude language; remain educated and up to date on relevant health care-related information; respect other individual's privacy; do not inject unnecessary personal information or "drama" into professional dynamics; refrain from injecting oneself into other individuals' personal "drama" or personal social dynamics; do not engage in personal social media interactions that may lead to conflict in the workplace; work to efficiently and effectively resolve workplace grievances; follow health care-related laws and guidelines (e.g., the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 [HIPAA]); follow related scopes of practice;

adhere to relevant standards of practice (note: the term scope of practice may refer to a description of services qualified health care professionals are deemed competent to perform and permitted to undertake under the terms of their professional license; the term standards of practice may refer a statement of duties or specific guidelines for a health care professional). Health care professionals should note that acting in a professional manner can help health care professionals "lead by example."

- Allow for flexible job options - flexible job options (e.g., flexible schedules) can allow employees to find a professional option that best suits their needs, which in turn can promote a positive, comfortable work environment, which in turn can increase morale, foster effective communication, and maximize productivity and the professional impact of each individual. Health care professionals should note that job rigidity and a lack of flexible job options can have the opposite effect (e.g., decreased opportunities to effectively understand, lead, and motivate individuals from the workforce).
- Allow for and encourage professional autonomy - professional autonomy may refer to any allowance that enables an employee to complete a task with little to no interruption or interference. Professional autonomy is another example of a powerful tool that can motivate and ignite individuals' desire to self-start, work independently, take on responsibilities and tasks, complete tasks, accept accountability, communicate effectively, maximize efforts, and optimize patient care. When allowing for professional autonomy, health care professionals should consider the following elements of professional autonomy: give individuals space and freedom, professional trust, professional independence, professional accountability, the authority to make decisions, effective communication, organization, support, and avoid micromanagement. Specific information regarding the aforementioned elements of professional autonomy may be found below.
  - Give individuals space and freedom - giving individuals space and freedom is absolutely essential to professional autonomy. It has been argued, that without giving individuals space and freedom there can truly be no professional autonomy. Therefore, health care professionals should allow individuals from the workforce the space and freedom to work independently, at times, to complete tasks, collaborate with peers, and work to optimize patient care. Health care professionals should note the

following: giving individuals space and freedom often means allowing individuals to work with little to no interruption or interference from other individuals that may disrupt an individual's ability to complete a task or required duty.

- Professional trust - professional trust is also absolutely essential to professional autonomy. Health care organizational leaders and health care managers must trust in their employees' abilities to complete tasks and required duties. Without professional trust there can be no professional autonomy. Health care professionals should note the following: health care professionals should work to establish trust with health care organizational leaders and health care managers. Health care professionals should also note the following methods to effectively establish trust with health care organizational leaders and health care managers: complete tasks when they are assigned, meet deadlines, consistently show up to work on time, assist peers and colleges, remain honest, follow health care organization policies and procedures, work to improve patient safety, work to improve patient care, and act professionally.
- Professional independence - professional independence may refer to the ability of an individual to work safely and effectively on his or her own with little to no direct supervision or management. Health care professionals should cultivate their professional independence if they would like to or prefer to work autonomously. Health care professionals should note the following: health care organizational leaders and health care managers are more likely to extend professional autonomy to health care professionals who exhibit professional independence.
- Professional accountability - professional accountability may refer to the act of taking responsibility for the failure or success of an action, project, or task taken or completed in a professional setting. If a health care professional would like to work autonomously then he or she should take professional accountability for his or her actions. Health care professionals should note the following: professional accountability often requires commitment to professional oaths, codes, scopes of practice, and/or standards of practice.
- The authority to make decisions - often, the success of professional autonomy rests on an individual's authority to make his or her own

decisions. If an individual is truly given professional autonomy he or she should possess, at least some, authority to make decisions. Health care professionals should note the following: authority to make decisions can empower individuals to take on more responsibility, and grant them the professional confidence to accept and complete difficult professional challenges.

- Effective communication - effective communication is often the foundation for professional autonomy. Individuals from every level of a health care organization must be able to effectively communicate in order for professional autonomy to be effective. Health care organizational leaders and health care managers must be able to communicate vital health care-related information to health care professional employees, and health care professional employees must be able to effectively communicate vital health care-related information to health care organizational leaders/health care managers. Health care professionals should note the following: in order for communication to be effective, within the context of professional autonomy, health care organizational leaders/health care managers and health care professional employees must remain approachable, open, and receptive to communication.
- Organization - for the individual health care professional granted professional autonomy, he or she must be organized. Essentially, the individual health care professional given professional autonomy should be organized enough to efficiently and effectively complete assigned tasks, duties, and responsibilities within the given time frame. Health care professionals should note that time management is often essential to organization in a professional setting.
- Support - individual health care professionals granted professional autonomy may require support, at times, to efficiently and effectively complete assigned tasks, duties, and responsibilities. Support should be extended when required. Health care professionals should note that support may come in the form of assistance from other health care professionals, health care-related resources (e.g., meeting space and/or personal computers), and effective intra-organizational communication.
- Avoid micromanagement - finally, micromanagement should be avoided. Micromanagement, within the context of a professional organization, may

refer to a management style that exhibits excessive control over employees and their professional actions. Health care professionals should note the following: professional autonomy can motivate and ignite individuals' desire to self-start, work independently, take on responsibilities and tasks, complete tasks, accept accountability, communicate effectively, maximize efforts, and optimize patient care, while micromanagement can have the opposite effects; micromanagement can professionally suffocate individuals, and potentially decrease individuals' desire to self-start, work independently, take on responsibilities and tasks, complete tasks, accept accountability, communicate effectively, maximize efforts, and optimize patient care; micromanagement often decrease, stifles, suppress, and/or extinguishes motivation.

- Allow for and encourage mentoring programs - a mentoring program may refer to any program that allows/encourages individuals with less work experience to work, interact, and engage with individuals with more work experience. Health care professionals should note the following: allowing/encouraging employees to take part in mentoring programs can help employees effectively communicate, relate to each other, and, ultimately, create opportunities to effectively understand, lead, and motivate individuals from the workforce.
- Allow for and encourage team-building programs - a team-building program may refer to any program designed to encourage cooperative group collaboration with various individuals throughout an organization. Much like with mentoring programs, team-building programs can allow individuals with less work experience to work, interact, and engage with individuals with more work experience. Furthermore, team-building programs can help health care professionals create professional bonds and relationships that can fuel motivation. Health care professionals should note the following examples of team-building programs: education workshops, organizational retreats, and employee shadowing (note: the term employee shadowing, within the context of this course, may refer to any program that allows a health care professional from one department to follow and observe a health care professional from another department in order to gather intra-organizational insight and perspective).
- Allow for and encourage participation in employee functions, retreats, and group talk sessions - health care professionals should engage in and encourage

participation in employee functions, retreats, and group talk sessions (note: within the context of this course, the term group talk session may refer to a small gathering of individuals who possess a common bond, and a willingness to discuss specific topics centered around positive notions, such as peer recognition and gratitude). Employee functions, retreats, and group talk sessions may provide opportunities for health care professionals to congregate and discuss work-related issues. They can also be an opportunity for health care professionals to socialize and recognize each other for their efforts and achievements. Such socialization can perpetuate motivation within a health care organization. Health care professionals should be encouraged to organize employee functions, retreats, and group talk sessions, when applicable. Health care professionals should note that employee functions, retreats, and group talk sessions do not have to be extravagant in nature, they just have to present an opportunity to health care professionals to recognize each other for their self sacrifices, health care service, and dedication to patient care.

- Initiate employee incentive programs - employee incentive programs can be powerful workforce motivational tools. Essentially, employee incentive programs can drive individuals to go above and beyond the minimum necessary effort to complete their employee-related requirements and functions. By providing individuals from the workforce with incentives, health care organizations can maximize the effort of their workforce. Health care professionals should note the following examples of employee incentive programs: financial bonuses, tuition reimbursement, professional development programs, and promotion programs.
- Initiate employee education programs - much like with employee incentive programs, employee education programs can be powerful workforce motivational tools. In essence, employee education programs can provide health care professionals with the necessary insight to increase their knowledge base, skill set, and, ultimately, their ability to optimize patient care, which, for many health care professionals, is the ultimate motivation. Health care professionals should note that employee education programs should focus on the latest, most relevant health care information, as well as any emerging health care trends, such as COVID-19 vaccination and COVID-19 treatment options.
- Make communication a priority - health care professionals should make communication a priority when working to effectively understand, lead, and motivate individuals from the workforce. As previously alluded to, communication

is essential to effectively understanding, leading, and motivating employees. Thus, health care professionals should consistently work towards effective communication when interacting and engaging with other individuals from the workforce. Health care professionals should note that effective communication occurs when information and messages are adequately transmitted, received, and understood.

- Encourage communication - to build on the previous recommendation, health care professionals should encourage communication when working to motivate other individuals from the workforce. This recommendation may seem obvious, however, the simple truth of the matter is that, often, individuals do not encourage communication. With that said, health care professionals can encourage communication by remaining professional, poised, calm, collected, level headed, respectful, receptive, approachable, engaging, objective, and by limiting bias and judgment. Health care professionals should note that effective communication often begins with encouragement and receptiveness.
- Follow up communication exchanges - at times it may be necessary for health care professionals to follow up communication exchanges to ensure meaning and a common understanding was obtained. When following up with fellow health care professionals or other individuals from the workforce, health care professionals should work to ensure effective communication was achieved. To ensure effective communication was achieved, health care professionals should ask questions, answer questions, and/or simply reiterate important points of interest. Health care professionals should note that communication follow-ups may help prevent miscommunication and allow for opportunities to effectively understand, lead, and motivate individuals from the work force.
- Utilize intra-organizational vertical and horizontal communication channels - as previously mentioned, vertical communication, within the context of organizational communication, may refer to the flow of communication between individuals associated with the same organization who are on different levels of the organization's hierarchy, while horizontal communication, within the context of organizational communication, may refer to the flow of communication between individuals and/or departments that are on the same level of a given organization. Health care professionals should utilize intra-organizational vertical and horizontal communication channels to communicate relevant health care information to other health care professionals and health care managers. For



example, if a piece of health care equipment breaks down, health care professionals should utilize intra-organizational vertical and horizontal communication channels to communicate the information to both fellow health care professionals and health care managers. Health care professionals should note that the use of intra-organizational vertical and horizontal communication channels can help health care professionals transmit relevant health care-related information that can motivate individuals from the workforce to maximize their efforts, especially in times of an emergency.

- Provide positive feedback - positive feedback, with the context of communication, may refer to a form of communication that recognizes an individual's success, achievements, and/or hard work. Positive feedback often motivates individuals to do their best. Therefore, health care professionals should provide positive feedback to motivate individuals from the workforce. Health care professionals should note the following examples of positive feedback: "excellent work today;" "you did a great job helping patients today;" "I appreciate all your hard work;" "your effort is really making a difference;" "your effort is helping to improve patient care."
- Utilize positive reinforcement - to build on the previous recommendation, health care professionals should utilize positive reinforcement when attempting to motivate individuals from the workforce. Positive reinforcement, with the context of communication, may refer to a communication exchange or response that encourages a constructive or beneficial action or behavior. In essence, positive reinforcement can be used by health care professionals to inspire or motivate individuals to repeat constructive, beneficial, and/or productive behavior. For example, if a health care professional goes above and beyond the minimum effort to improve upon patient care, positive reinforcement can be used to motivate the health care professional to continue to go above and beyond the minimum effort to improve upon patient care. Health care professionals should note the following examples of positive reinforcement: simply saying thank you to an individual from the workforce, verbal praise, and recommending a peer or colleague for an intra-organizational employee recognition award.
- Express gratitude - as previously alluded to, gratitude can be a powerful motivational tool. Therefore, health care professionals should express gratitude, when applicable. Specific information regarding gratitude may be found below.

The information found below was derived from materials provided by Positive Psychology unless, otherwise, specified (Chowdhury, 2021).

- Gratitude may refer to a state of thankfulness or appreciation for receiving what is meaningful to oneself; the act of showing appreciation.
- The following is an example of gratitude that may be observed in health care settings: Health Care Professional A has questions regarding a medication; Health Care Professional A asks Health Care Professional B about the medication in question; Health care professional B provides Health Care Professional A with important information about the medication in question; Health Care Professional A is thankful for the information. Health care professional A says "Thank you" to Health care Professional B. In return, Health Care Professional B replies, "You're welcome" to Health care professional A.
- The following is an example of gratitude that may be observed in health care settings: over the past four weeks Health Care Professional C has been working extra hours and filling in for other health care professionals who have been unable to work due to illness. Health Care Professional C's manager recognizes Health Care Professional C for the extra effort. Health Care Professional C appreciates the recognition.
- Research indicates that gratitude is associated with happiness, well-being, and motivation. Essentially, gratitude can impact optimism, empathy, and self-esteem, all of which can affect happiness, well-being, and motivation (i.e., improved optimism, empathy, and self-esteem can lead to happiness, well-being, and, ultimately, to increased motivation).
- Optimism may refer to hopefulness and/or confidence regarding future endeavors and/or outcomes. Often gratitude can improve optimism by increasing an individual's positivity, vigor, energy, and interest in working diligently to achieve desired outcomes.
- Empathy may refer to the ability to understand another individual's feelings and/or emotions. Expressing gratitude can open up an individual's emotional expression, perception, and ability to view situations from other individuals' perspectives. Once an individual is capable of emotional expression, perception, and possesses the ability to view situations from

other individuals' perspectives, he or she is more likely to experience empathy.

- Self-esteem may refer to confidence in one's own abilities; self-respect. Expressing gratitude and receiving expressions of gratitude can build and improve self-esteem.
- Evidence suggests that gratitude can impact interpersonal relationships. Essentially, gratitude can help individuals create interpersonal bonds, which in turn can foster individuals' ability to forge and improve upon interpersonal relationships. Health care professionals should note that gratitude's impact on interpersonal relationships can help forge and improve upon personal and professional relationships, which in turn could impact motivation.
- Gratitude can promote effective communication, which in turn could impact motivation (note: effective communication occurs when information and messages are adequately transmitted, received, and understood).
- Gratitude can potentially limit and prevent stress. Gratitude's impact on stress is related to its effects on optimism, empathy, and self-esteem. As previously mentioned, gratitude can improve optimism, empathy, and self-esteem, which in turn can reduce and prevent stress (i.e., when individuals have increased levels of optimism, empathy, and self-esteem they experience less stress). Health care professionals should note that stress can prevent motivation. Health care professionals should also note that individuals are more likely to become motivated when they are not stressed.
- Due to gratitude's impact on stress, gratitude can help prevent/limit burn-out (note: burn-out may refer to a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed) (WHO, 2019).
- Gratitude can potentially improve an individual's mood, which in turn could impact motivation.
- Health care professionals should work to express gratitude on a daily basis, when applicable (e.g., say "thank you" to individuals from the workforce).

- Work to establish and maintain a culture of gratitude within a health care organization - a culture of gratitude can help motivate individuals from the workforce. Therefore, health care professionals should work to establish and maintain a culture of gratitude within a health care organization. A culture of gratitude is one where expressions of gratitude are freely exchanged among individuals (i.e., a culture of gratitude is one where individuals adequately express and receive gratitude). The key to a culture of gratitude is acknowledgement. Acknowledgement, as it relates to establishing and maintaining a culture of gratitude, can include three key elements.

The first element of acknowledgement, as it relates to establishing and maintaining a culture of gratitude, is to recognize other health care professionals who adhere to the four major ethic principles of health care, meet their job requirements, and promote the administration of safe and effective health care. Health care professionals can show their recognition to other health care professionals who adhere to the four major ethic principles of health care, meet their job requirements, and promote the administration of safe and effective health care by simply saying, "Thank you" to another health care professional after he or she completes a task, and/or by pointing out something positive another health care professional did and then thanking them for it (e.g., you did a good job making that patient feel comfortable, thank you; you did a great job administering medications to patients today, thank you).

The second element of acknowledgement, as it relates to establishing and maintaining a culture of gratitude, is to recognize other health care professionals who go above and beyond their duties and responsibilities as health care professionals (e.g., a health care professional works extra hours to cover shifts for other health care professionals unable to work; a health care professional continues to work past the completion of his or her shift to help a fellow health care professional complete a task; a health care professional continues to work past the completion of his or her shift to help out a patient). Health care professionals can show their appreciation to other health care professionals who go above and beyond their duties and responsibilities as health care professionals by simply saying, "Thank you" to another health care professional after he or she goes above and beyond their duties and responsibilities, and/or by pointing out what another health care professionals did to go above and beyond their duties and responsibilities and then thanking them for it (e.g., I noticed you stayed late yesterday to speak to patients about their medications, thank you). Health care

professionals should note the following: health care administrators and managers can recognize health care professionals who go above and beyond their duties and responsibilities as health care professionals via formal, internal channels that highlight specific individuals and what they did to receive recognition and acknowledgement (e.g., an internal, monthly health care organizational bulletin that highlights employees who positively contributed to the health care organization, made a positive difference in patient care, developed a new innovative policy or procedure that promotes safe, efficient, and effective health care, acted extraordinarily while caring for a patient, and/or, simply, acted in a manner consistent with going above and beyond their duties and responsibilities as a health care professional).

The third, and perhaps the most important, element of acknowledgement, as it relates to establishing and maintaining a culture of gratitude, is to recognize and accept expressions of gratitude when they are offered. This last element of acknowledgement builds on the previous two elements and requires individuals to be cognizant of expressions of gratitude when they are offered and to mentally take in or openly welcome expressions of gratitude from other individuals. Health care professionals can become cognizant of expressions of gratitude when they are offered and mentally take in or openly welcome expressions of gratitude from other individuals by effectively communicating with others, engaging in active listening, and by simply saying, "You're welcome" after someone says "Thank you." With this last element of acknowledgement in mind, health care professionals should note that gratitude can perpetuate gratitude, and thus, firmly establish and maintain a culture of gratitude within a health care organization (i.e., gratitude, especially when it is recognized and accepted, can lead to more gratitude).

- Uphold the ethic principles of health care - when working to motivate other individuals from the workforce, health care professionals should ensure that they uphold the four major ethic principles of health care, which include: patient autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and justice. Working within the ethic parameters of health care can help health care professionals effectively communicate, relate to each other, and, ultimately, create opportunities to effectively understand, lead, and motivate individuals from the workforce. Health care professionals should note the following: patient autonomy may refer to a patient's right to make decisions regarding his or her own personal health care, without the direct influence of a health care professional; beneficence, as it

relates to health care, may refer to the obligation of the health care professional to act in the best interest of the patient; nonmaleficence, as it relates to health care, may refer to the obligation of the health care professional to act in a manner that does not cause harm to the individual patient; do no harm; justice, as it relates to health care, may refer to the fair and equitable distribution of health care resources to patients.

- Set goals - setting goals can be a powerful motivational tool in health care settings. Essentially, goals can give individuals direction, let individuals know what needs to be done, and provide individuals with information on what is required. When setting goals, health care professionals should consider the following elements of goal setting: identify the intent or purpose of the goal; determine if the goal is a short-term or long-term goal; determine the time-line for the goal; develop a plan to meet the goal; inform individuals about the goal and related concepts; ensure individuals have what they require to accomplish the goal; follow up with individuals to assess progress; make required adjustments to the goal, as needed; recognize the goal has been completed; express gratitude to those individuals who helped achieved the goal. Health care professionals should note the following: when individuals from the workforce are working to achieve desired goals, health care professionals should provide positive feedback and positive reinforcement to focus and further motivate individuals to maximize their efforts to accomplish the desired goal.
- Incorporate the essential elements of employee retention - the essential elements of employee retention, which include effective communication, effective employee grievance resolution, effective employee staffing, reducing employee stress, and employee safety, can not only help retain employees they can also help motivate employees. Therefore, health care professionals should work to incorporate the essential elements of employee retention into the cultural, executive, and directional structure of their health care organization. Health care professionals should note that working for a health care organization that works to achieve effective communication, effective employee grievance resolution, effective employee staffing, reduce employee stress, and increase employee safety, often motivates individuals to maximize their efforts.
- Work to achieve employee satisfaction - it has been argued that employee satisfaction is one of the major driving forces behind employee motivation (note: employee satisfaction may refer to an employee's perceived level of contentment

related to their place of employment). Thus, health care professionals should work to achieve employee satisfaction among a health care organization's workforce. Health care professionals can work to achieve employee satisfaction by incorporating many or all of the aforementioned recommendations into the cultural, executive, and directional structure of their health care organization.

### **Section 3 Summary**

Health care professionals should work to motivate individuals from the workforce in order to maximize their efforts to safely and effectively administer care to patients in need. Employee motivation recommendations include the following: treat employees like individuals; embrace integrity; allow for flexible job options; allow for and encourage professional autonomy; allow for and encourage mentoring programs; allow for and encourage team-building programs; allow for and encourage participation in employee functions, retreats, and group talk sessions; initiate employee incentive programs; initiate employee education programs; make communication a priority; encourage communication; follow up communication exchanges; utilize intra-organizational vertical and horizontal communication channels; provide positive feedback; utilize positive reinforcement; express gratitude; work to establish and maintain a culture of gratitude within a health care organization; uphold the ethic principles of health care; set goals; incorporate the essential elements of employee retention; work to achieve employee satisfaction.

### **Section 3 Key Concepts**

- Health care professionals can effectively work to motivate employees by following employee motivation recommendations.

### **Section 3 Key Terms**

Integrity - the consistent inclusion of honesty, morals, and values into daily actions and behavior

Transparency (within the context of health care) - an open and honest method of transmitting information regarding operating practices and patient care

Professional autonomy - any allowance that enables an employee to complete a task with little to no interruption or interference

Professional independence - the ability of an individual to work safely and effectively on his or her own with little to no direct supervision or management

Professional accountability - the act of taking responsibility for the failure or success of an action, project, or task taken or completed in a professional setting

Micromanagement (within the context of a professional organization) - a management style that exhibits excessive control over employees and their professional actions

Mentoring program - any program that allows/encourages individuals with less work experience to work, interact, and engage with individuals with more work experience

Team-building program - any program designed to encourage cooperative group collaboration with various individuals throughout an organization

Employee shadowing (within the context of this course) - any program that allows a health care professional from one department to follow and observe a health care professional from another department in order to gather intra-organizational insight and perspective

Group talk session (within the context of this course) - a small gathering of individuals who possess a common bond, and a willingness to discuss specific topics centered around positive notions, such as peer recognition and gratitude

Positive feedback (with the context of communication) - a form of communication that recognizes an individual's success, achievements, and/or hard work

Positive reinforcement (with the context of communication) - a communication exchange or response that encourages a constructive or beneficial action or behavior

Gratitude - a state of thankfulness or appreciation for receiving what is meaningful to oneself; the act of showing appreciation

Optimism - hopefulness and/or confidence regarding future endeavors and/or outcomes

Empathy - the ability to understand another individual's feelings and/or emotions

Self-esteem - confidence in one's own abilities; self-respect



Patient autonomy - a patient's right to make decisions regarding his or her own personal health care, without the direct influence of a health care professional

Beneficence (as it relates to health care) - the obligation of the health care professional to act in the best interest of the patient

Nonmaleficence (as it relates to health care) - the obligation of the health care professional to act in a manner that does not cause harm to the individual patient; do no harm

Justice (as it relates to health care) - the fair and equitable distribution of health care resources to patients

### **Section 3 Personal Reflection Question**

How can health care professionals use the above recommendations to effectively motivate individuals from the health care workforce?

## **Case Study: Recruiting, Retaining, and Motivating Individuals from the Health Care Workforce**

A case study is presented below to review the concepts found within this course. A case study review will follow the case study. The case study review includes the types of questions health care professionals should ask themselves when considering workforce recruitment, retention, and motivation. Additionally, reflection questions will be posed, within the case study review, to encourage further internal debate and consideration regarding the presented case study and workforce recruitment, retention, and motivation. The information found within the case study and case study review was derived from materials provided by the U.S. government unless, otherwise, specified (U.S. Department of Labor, 2021; U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2021).

### **Case Study**

A team of health care professionals and health care managers is tasked with recruiting new employees for a health care organization. The team meets to discuss the recruiting process. During the meeting, the team assesses the needs of the health care

organization, develops job descriptions, and discusses the interview process. Towards the end of the meeting, a health care manager states the following: "I am not interested in hiring anyone over the age of 45." A health care professional responds to the health care manager's statement by informing the team that it may be unethical and against the law to discriminate against applicants and candidates based on age. The health care manager does not respond to the health care professional's comments.

After the meeting, the health care manager is approached by a health care professional. The health care professional asks the health care manager relevant questions regarding the upcoming schedule. The health care manager responds to the health care professional in the following manner: "The schedule will be done when it is done, don't worry about the schedule - it is none of your concern, you are lucky to have a job, so focus on that." The health care professional does not respond to the health care manager's comments. The health care professional spends the rest of the day looking for a new position.

## Case Study Review

**What case study details may be relevant to recruiting, retaining, and motivating individuals from the health care workforce?**

The following case study details may be relevant to recruiting, retaining, and motivating individuals from the health care workforce: a team of health care professionals and health care managers is tasked with recruiting new employees for a health care organization; the team assesses the needs of the health care organization; the team develops job descriptions; the team discusses the interview process; a health care manager states the following: "I am not interested in hiring anyone over the age of 45;" a health care professional asks the health care manager relevant questions regarding the upcoming schedule; the health care manager responds to the health care professional in the following manner: "The schedule will be done when it is done, don't worry about the schedule - it is none of your concern, you are lucky to have a job, so focus on that;" the health care professional spends the rest of the day looking for a new position.

*Are there any other case study details that may be relevant to recruiting, retaining, and motivating individuals from the health care workforce; if so, what are they?*

**How are each of the aforementioned case study details relevant to recruiting, retaining, and motivating individuals from the health care workforce?**

Each of the previously highlighted case study details may be relevant to recruiting, retaining, and motivating individuals from the health care workforce. The potential relevance of each case study detail may be found below.

A team of health care professionals and health care managers is tasked with recruiting new employees for a health care organization - the previous case study detail is relevant because it provides context for the process of recruiting, retaining, and motivating individuals from the health care workforce. Health care professionals should note that health care organizations may ask specific individuals to assist in the process of recruiting, retaining, and motivating individuals from the health care workforce.

The team assesses the needs of the health care organization - the previous case study detail is relevant because assessing the needs of an organization is an essential element of employee recruitment. Health care professionals should note that the essential elements of employee recruitment include the following: assessing needs, developing a job description, developing an application process, promoting the open position(s), the application review process, the initial screening process, the interview process, extending an offer, and onboarding new employees. Health care professionals should also note the following: when recruiting employees, health care organizations should assess their employment needs; health care organizations should determine if they need to fill part-time, full-time, or contract positions; health care organizations should also determine if they need to fill short-term or long-term positions; working to assess employment needs can help focus the recruiting process.

The team develops job descriptions - the previous case study detail is relevant because the act of developing job descriptions is an essential element of employee recruitment. Health care professionals should note the following: a job description may refer to an outline or an accounting of the general tasks, duties, and responsibilities of a specific position; job descriptions can be paramount to the application process; job descriptions attract an applicant to a specific position; health care professionals should take the appropriate time to develop a well organized job description that is written in a concise, direct style. Health care professionals should also note the following key points or sections of a job description: job title, job purpose, job duties and responsibilities, educational qualifications, required qualifications, preferred qualifications, experience, and working conditions.

The team discusses the interview process - the previous case study detail is relevant because the interview process is an essential element of employee recruitment. Health care professionals should note the following: it has been argued that the interview process is one of the most important elements of employee recruitment; the interview process provides a means for employers, existing staff, and potential managers to meet potential candidates to determine if they are indeed truly qualified for the available position, if they can meet the responsibilities of the available position, and if they are capable of integrating themselves into the culture of the organization. Health care professionals should also note the following types of interviews: phone interview, video interview, first in-person interview, second in-person interview, and third/final in-person interview.

A health care manager states the following: "I am not interested in hiring anyone over the age of 45" - the previous case study detail is relevant because the health care manager's statement may reflect a perspective or attitude that may be detrimental to employee recruitment (i.e., the health care managers statement indicate a perspective/attitude that may be considered bias, closed minded, and dangerous to not only employee recruitment but to the health care organization). Health care professionals should note the following: health care professionals engaging in employee recruitment should remain objective and open minded during the entire employee recruitment process; health care professionals should be familiar with and consider the laws and regulations that apply to employee recruitment, such as the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA). Health care professionals should also note the following: the ADEA prohibits discrimination in any aspect of employment, including hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, layoffs, training, benefits, and any other term or condition of employment; the ADEA stipulates that it shall be unlawful for an employer to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual or otherwise discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's age; it shall be unlawful for an employer to limit, segregate, or classify employees in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his or her status as an employee, because of such individual's age; it shall be unlawful for an employer to reduce the wage rate of any employee based on age.

A health care professional asks the health care manager relevant questions regarding the upcoming schedule - the previous case study detail is relevant because it suggests that there could be some issues surrounding employee scheduling. The previous case study detail is also relevant because it suggests the health care manager is not employing the

collaborative staffing model. Health care professionals should note the following: the collaborative staffing model may refer to an employee staffing model that encourages and allows health care managers and health care professionals to work together to create schedules and/or fill required open shifts across a health care organization; the collaborative staffing model may lead to effective employee staffing, which in turn could lead to employee retention and motivation.

The health care manager responds to the health care professional in the following manner: "The schedule will be done when it is done, don't worry about the schedule it is none of your concern - you are lucky to have a job, so focus on that" - the previous case study detail is relevant because it indicates that the health care manager is not employing the collaborative staffing model. The previous case study detail is also relevant because the health care manager's statement reflects a perspective or attitude that may be detrimental to employee retention and motivation. Health care professionals should note the following: it has been argued, that the "lucky to have a job" perspective/attitude does not have a place in the current health care climate, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic; health care managers and health care professionals should treat individuals from the workforce with patience, respect, and dignity to help increase employee retention and motivation.

The health care professional spends the rest of the day looking for a new position - the previous case study detail is relevant because it suggests that the health care manager's issues with scheduling and "lucky to have a job" perspective/attitude have impacted employee satisfaction, and subsequently, employee retention and motivation. Health care professionals should note the following: employee satisfaction is one of the major driving forces behind employee retention/motivation; health care professionals should work to achieve employee satisfaction among a health care organization's workforce; health care professionals can work to achieve employee satisfaction by incorporating employee motivation recommendations into the cultural, executive, and directional structure of their health care organization.

*What other ways, if any, are the previous case study details relevant to recruiting, retaining, and motivating individuals from the health care workforce?*

### **What could have changed the outcome of the case study?**

The incorporation of the essential elements of employee retention into the cultural, executive, and directional structure of the health care organization, as well as the application of employee motivation recommendations could have changed the outcome

of the case study (i.e., the health care professional spends the rest of the day looking for a new position). Health care professionals should note that individuals are more likely to continue to work for a health care organization that strives towards effective communication, effective employee grievance resolution, effective employee staffing, reduced employee stress, and increased employee safety, while motivating individuals from their workforce.

*How can health care professionals apply the essential elements of employee retention, and the employee motivation recommendations to situations like the one highlighted in the case study presented above?*

## Conclusion

In the current climate of health care, employee recruitment, retention, and motivation can be absolutely essential to the individual success of a health care organization. Health care professionals can effectively recruit, retain, and motivate individuals from the workforce by obtaining insight into employee recruitment, incorporating the essential elements of employee retention into the cultural, executive, and directional structure of their health care organization, and by following employee motivation recommendations.

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