Employee Recruitment, Retention, and Satisfaction

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Internal Operations Leadership Project

Background:
- Employee turnover and staffing shortages, especially in the long-term care industry, have been a persistent and costly issue.
- Labor cost in a long-term care facility is estimated to account for a total of about 50 – 60 percent of expenses.
- Losing employees negatively impacts long-term care health organizations in numerous ways including:
  - Increased staffing costs
  - Increased accident and absenteeism rates
  - Decreased quality of care
  - Loss of residents/patients

Importance of issue and goal:
- Identifying the root causes associated with high turnover and overall employee dissatisfaction will be crucial in being able to improve employee recruitment, retention, and satisfaction.
- The goal of this project is to create a comprehensive program which encourages exploitation of current employee relation issues while creating solutions which lead to an increase in staff recruitment, retention, and satisfaction.

Methods:
- Initial Survey to Establish Benchmark
  - Survey questions are utilized to measure current employee satisfaction prior to employee relation interventions. Inquiries used to identify areas to concentrate efforts.
- Establish a Committee to Ensure Continuous Improvement
  - The purpose of the committee is focused on hearing from employees and obtaining ways for Oakwood Villa to continually improve employee relations from participants’ input.
- Implement Creative Interventions
  - Monthly employee newsletter
  - Complementary beverage station
  - Foundation for revival of employee recognition
  - Shift replacement point system – including incentives
- Follow-Up Survey to Analyze Interventions
  - Employees responded to the same survey questions from five months prior to measure success of employee relation interventions.

Results:
- Figure 1 and Figure 2 display the comparative results of overall employee satisfaction and the average employee ratings of current working conditions, respectively. As seen in Figure 1, there is an increase in “Satisfied” responses and in Figure 2, all working conditions are rated either the same or improved in the identified areas of “Staffing”, “Enjoyment of Coming to Work”, “Pay”, and “Stress Level.”
- Figure 3 – 6 display the comparative results of several prompts which employees answered with either a “Yes” or “No.” Figure 3 – 6 all show increases in “Yes” responses after employee relation interventions were implemented.
- Figure 7 models every issue of the Oakwood Villa employee newsletter, the “Voice of the Villa.” The inaugural issue was sent via mail to all Oakwood Villa employees in November and monthly thereafter. As determined by employee input, the newsletter includes the following: community events, employee birthdays, a monthly recipe, interesting health care facts, inspirational quotes, and the introduction of new employees.
- Figure 8 depicts the turnover percentage from the four months prior to employee relation efforts (July 2015 – October 2015) and its comparison to the most recent four months since the employee relations efforts began (November 2015 – February 2016). Over both time periods, the average turnover percentages were identical.

Conclusions:
- In a short time period there are measurable data points which suggest an improvement in employee relations.
- Obtaining and retaining good employees are core principles which can lead to beneficial outcomes including reduced training costs, ingrained facility missions/goals, and a continuum in quality of care.
- Employee relation efforts were primarily driven toward improving current satisfaction and retention, which in turn provides a foundation for employee recruitment efforts going forward.
- Every employee has their own ideas, aspirations, and driving forces; most will share these when asked or included in discussion.

Recommendation:
- Successful employee relation efforts take time. Dedication to these efforts must be a valued commitment in order to enlist employee buy-in and trust.

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