

The Patient Experience Post

Healthcare's Resource for
Service Excellence
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Since the mid-1990s, Baird has helped healthcare organizations nationwide improve the patient experience and enhance organizational culture. Baird's culture assessment and diagnosis include experience mapping, medical mystery shopping, and focus groups to reveal the real customer experiences within your organization. Using your patients' experiences, Baird and her team prescribe critical next steps for improving patient satisfaction and HCAHPS scores.

Good Read: The 5 Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace: Empowering Organizations by Encouraging People

Book by: Gary Chapman and Paul White

Review by: Angela Fielor, MPA, CMQ/OE, Senior Consultant

In their book, *The 5 Languages of Appreciation in the Work Place*, Gary Chapman and Paul White do a wonderful job of describing the differences and interactions between recognition and appreciation. But they don't stop there. This book is chock full of research and statistics related to the return on investment in appreciation, specifically. The authors also provide great examples and explanations for how and why recognition programs often go awry. Given the amount of money organizations spend on recognition programs, the book could be worth its weight in gold if you focus only on that. At the end of each chapter, you'll find a clear and thorough summary as well as activities and exercises to put the information to use immediately, in your own department.

The book is clearly designed to be a feeder mechanism to other products and services that the authors provide such as training people in your organization to facilitate workshops around the languages of appreciation and selling access codes for entire organizations to take the inventory that has fueled much of the research in the book. That being said, I think it's important to make two points. First, the book does include an access code to a complimentary inventory that readers are encouraged to complete in order to understand their own primary and secondary languages of appreciation which I found very helpful. If you are familiar with the 5 Love languages, you will see that while the languages are essentially the same, the report you receive is enlightening in terms of how those languages affect your relationships at, and with, your work. Second, the authors make a concerted effort to convey to the reader that the book itself provides enough information to be a valuable stand-alone tool at the individual leadership level. Chapman and White also provide anecdotal evidence that when individual leaders in an organization start to improve their expressions of appreciation, there is a spill-over effect that begins to benefit the organization as a whole.

Here at Baird Group, when doing culture assessments, we often identify two related, but separate, themes in healthcare organizations. The first theme is a lack of clearly defined behaviors associated with great service and mechanisms to reinforce those behaviors. The second is that employees don't feel valued. These findings often spotlight the need to create effective recognition systems which is often more challenging than it sounds.

As many of you already know, not everyone wants to be recognized in the same way. It is often easy to spot those who respond to public accolades and those who shy away from such displays. What is not always as easy to recognize is those circumstances where recognition actually takes away from a person's sense of value not just to the organization but as a person. As a consultant, I've had times where I've scratched my head when working with an organization that has relatively clear service behaviors and effective reinforcement mechanisms, and yet, in focus groups and in employee surveys results, I see or hear that employees do not feel valued.

If you are interested in personal leadership development, consider this book. It's easy to read and easy to act on immediately. If you are interested in understanding the degree to which your employees feel appreciated and how your current recognition system is working for, or against, leaders' expressions of appreciation, consider discussing a Culture Assessment with the Baird Group team.

To learn more about the [Baird Model for Service Excellence](#), employee engagement or leadership development workshops, or to sign up for her FREE newsletter, write to info@baird-group.com.