



# Tactical Tune-Up

July 2009

## Mission Critical: E+E = Service<sup>+</sup>

The importance of superior customer service in carrying out your organizational mission should be clear to all employees. However, sometimes the employees who work most closely with the greatest number of customers can lose sight of that essential connection in their daily work. To foster that critical connection, employ a simple formula in which E (ducation) plus E(ngagement) adds up to a successful mission.

### Education

Employees know that having customers is critical to the success of their organization. Increasingly, customers have a choice, or at least a voice, in how and where their health care is provided. Thanks to HCAHPS, they have the ability to compare different health systems online in an “apples to apples” comparison. They also have an opportunity to voice their opinions on the health care providers and share their opinions with others.

Do your employees know what your customers are saying about you? Educate employees on what the customers are saying. Give them access to your patient satisfaction survey results and openly address any areas of concern. Employees can help generate ideas to address these areas of concern and break out of the [blame game that sometimes happens when confronted with this data](#).

The more employees know about how their organization (and their individual department or unit) is perceived, the more closely they will be able to understand that their actions influence customer opinions. And that those valuable opinions influence other customers' health care choices.

### Engagement

Once employees are confronted with patient survey data, they will begin to connect the dots between their daily work and the overall organizational mission. It's one thing to understand this information, but another thing entirely for employees to actively engage in advancing the mission in their daily work. Mayo Clinic is a great example of an organization that successfully connects the dots so that its employees live its brand promise. You can learn more about lessons from Mayo [here](#).

Help engage employees by soliciting their thoughts on survey results. Where do they think customers need more communication? How smoothly do different processes work from the employee's point of view? What could be improved in order to more efficiently carry out the mission? If they were the patient, what would they expect from their health care organization? Actively engaging employees and making them responsible for their service behaviors effectively connects them to the organizational mission.

And in today's health care environment, consistently carrying out that mission is critical to your survival.



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CONSULTING, INC.

www.baird-consulting.com | 866.686.7672