



2 Tactics for Making Your Promise Visible

Your organization's mission statement is your promise to your customers. It tells them why your organization exists and what you promise to do every day in every encounter. Making it visible isn't about putting it in large print on a wall; it is about bringing it to life through specific actions throughout your organization.

1. Promise to Your Staff

You expect your frontline employees to embody your mission in every encounter, but do they know just how to accomplish that? More importantly, do they truly believe that the organization stands behind the mission? If you are promising to deliver quality healthcare, does the staff have adequate training and support to carry out that promise? Do they have a clear picture of how customers gauge quality and what role they play in delivering on that promise? Are staff prepared to deliver on the promise—not only to their external customers but—to their internal customers (each other)?

Before expecting frontline staff to deliver on a promise that may have been developed in a board room decades ago, take some time to walk a mile in their shoes. Senior leader rounding is among the best ways to make the promise visible to the internal customer. Rounding helps leaders find out what resources are needed and what processes might need revising in order for staff to feel supported and truly equipped to carry out the mission.

Taking the time to check in with staff in this way reinforces their leadership's commitment to the mission and commitment to their success. It will further motivate staff to live up to the mission's promise in their interactions with each other and their customers.

2. Use Words That Reinforce the Promise

Your customers are often aware of your mission statement and its promise well before they walk into

your doors; they may have read it on your website or have seen it in your advertising. They may not have it memorized, but chances are they understand the gist of it and will screen their experience through that expectation.

The healthcare environment can be confusing for customers. Staff should be adept at using key words in their interactions with customers in order to deliver on the promise. Those key words should reinforce the mission's promise and help customers navigate the healthcare experience. What are some of the key words in your mission? Dignity? Respect? Quality? Compassion? Excellence?

Staff members can develop key phrases that incorporate these key words into their common interactions....

"Our mission is to deliver excellent care. What are two or three things that we can do for you during your stay that will make it excellent?"

"Out of respect for you and your privacy, I'm going to close the door."

"How would you prefer to be addressed, Mr. Smith?"

"Is there anything else I can do for you to make this a good experience?"

Involve staff in preparing key words and key phrases. They'll be much more invested in making the mission come to life when they are involved.