

## *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.

## Don't panic! Here are 5 tips to help you plan and prioritize for a great PX in 2019

by Kristin Baird, RN, BSN, MHA

The CEO just walked into your office and says – “Get these scores up now!” What do you do? How do you react? The CEO and other senior leader [priorities are your priorities](#).

Pressure to improve trickles down from the community, the board, the medical staff, and the C-suite.

You're on the hot seat, yet while you seem to be accountable, you don't feel you have the control, or the authority, to get the results being asked for.

Too many moving parts. Too many entrenched people and practices. You feel like you're stuck between a rock and a hard place.

But, before you panic (and we'll admit there's much here to cause a certain amount of panic), take a deep breath, take a step back and follow this 5-step approach to get on top of the situation.

### 1. **Take stock**

What's the current situation? To create a plan, you first need to have a clear idea of where you're starting.

Where are you now?

This will tell you how far you need to go to get the desired results and suggest how much effort and what types of tools and resources will be required to get there.

Do a thorough audit to identify trends, strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for potential progress. (Baird Group can help guide you through a [complete audit](#).)

### 2. **Know and share the goal!**

This isn't all on you (although we recognize that sometimes it can feel that way). It takes a team to make progress, and your team members need to know what needs to be done, why, and how to get there.

Inspire others to make the goal their own by starting with the why and building a compelling case for action.

### 3. **Set clear priorities**

There may be multiple areas of opportunity for improvement, but you can't (and shouldn't) try to tackle them all at once.

Consider where you can have the greatest impact and the greatest positive outcomes for your patients. Focus on the big rocks first.

**4. Identify who needs to be involved**

Who are the individuals who have the power and the opportunity to influence positive outcomes? Who are the key stakeholders?

Once you've identified the key players, consider how you will engage them in ways that align with their values and personal passion.

**5. Determine how you will measure success**

Break down your big goal into smaller milestones to provide everyone with a sense of achievement along the way to your goal. Make plans to have some celebrations along the way!

The next time the CEO comes to your office, you'll be prepared.

Better yet.

Be proactive and let them know you have a plan in place and team members who are committed to success.

Panic can take both a mental and physical toll. Taking control of situations that may seem panic-provoking can help you get back in the driver's seat. You've got this!

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Nurse, author, and consultant Kristin Baird, "Healthcare's Customer Service Guru," is the author of *Raising the Bar on Service Excellence: The Health Care Leader's Guide to Putting Passion into Practice* (Golden Lamp Press, 2008), *Reclaiming the Passion: Stories that Celebrate the Essence of Nursing* (Golden Lamp Press, 2004), and *Customer Service In Healthcare: A Grassroots Approach to Creating a Culture of Service Excellence* (Jossey Bass, 2000). The Baird Group provides consulting, mystery shopping, and training services for improving the patient experience. To learn more, please visit <http://baird-group.com> or call 920-563-4684.