

The Patient Experience Post

Healthcare's Resource for
Service Excellence
August 2011



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.

“She said WHAT!?” Crazy things you didn’t think your employees would say to callers

by Kristin Baird, RN, BSN, MHA

You never get a second chance to make a first impression, and this is especially true with phone encounters. So, making a great first impression on the phone is essential to any business, particularly in healthcare when trust is so important. For this reason, the Baird Group is engaged by numerous healthcare organizations to complete thousands of mystery phone calls each month. Leaders of those settings are often surprised to hear some of the statements made by their own team members. Here are some of our favorites:

“Maybe you should Google it.”

This was said to a mystery phone shopper who was seeking information about possible services for weight loss surgery. This example demonstrates how a dismissive response to questions can lead prospective patients right to competitors. If your staff send callers to a search engine instead of your own Web site, you could be helping your competition build their bariatric surgery volume.

“Before you go into detail, this is a clinic. I cannot help you.”

This caller was quickly interrupted while explaining her needs—one of the cardinal sins of effective communication. You must always listen! In this case, the caller was shot down even before the attendant heard her dilemma to ensure any of her questions. How likely is she to call back? Not very.

“How did you even get this number?”

This patient was calling a published number for the organization and should have been given direct access to schedule an appointment. Talk about unwelcoming! Every number you publish—whether in print or on the Web—should offer help to whoever calls in.

Learn more about ways you can ensure that all of your customer interactions, including over-the-phone interactions, support your healthcare organization’s brand, as in [Living Your Brand Promise](#), featuring Kent Seltman, co-author of Management Lessons From Mayo Clinic. As the former Director of Marketing at Mayo Clinic, Seltman was charged with managing the brand for this world-renowned organization. During this 90-minute presentation, you’ll hear about crucial elements in aligning the brand promise with the patient experience in order to build trust and credibility with customers. For only \$89, you’ll receive all this: pre-session worksheets, a session workbook, webinar slides, and an audio CD of the 90-minute webinar, complete with the Q&A session.

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

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Nurse, author, and consultant Kristin Baird, "Healthcare's Customer Service Guru," is



Transforming culture. Shaping patient experience.

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).

