



General session

# Shifting culture — a journey in affecting the right staff experience

2023 Fall member retreat

**Sandra Johnson**  
Vice President and Chief Revenue Officer  
**MedStar Health**

## Learning objectives

### Shifting culture—a journey in affecting the right staff experience

- Discuss how to get the full organization operating behind the same mission, values and goals
- Navigate an example of pre- and post-state culture: observing how to influence a more empathetic, supportive, trusting and team-based work environment
- Strategize how to acknowledge and reward staff while also adjusting from a top-bottom to bottom-up approach for ideation and improvement

# 2023 Fall member retreat panelists

About me:



## Sandra Johnson

**Vice President and Chief Revenue Officer**

Sandra has worked in the revenue cycle field for 30+ years with responsibilities across the cycle and between hospital and physician services at different periods in her career from scheduling and patient access to HIM, case management, informatics, managed care, uncompensated care, PACS, transplant finance, and patient financial services.

She has a BS in Accounting from the College of Great Falls in Great Falls Montana, an MBA from the University of Montana in Bozeman, Montana, and an MSM in Healthcare Administration from Troy State University in Columbus, Georgia.

She is a Lean Six Sigma Black Belt and has served on the board of United Way, the Volunteer Hospital Association, Baltimore Medical Services and HFMA.

Sandra was voted one of the Top 25 Minority Executives in Healthcare by Modern Healthcare in 2018.

# MedStar Health at a glance



# MedStar Health

## Organizational Facts and Figures

<b>Hospitals</b>	10
<b>Employees</b>	32,000+
<b>Physicians</b>	4,500+
<b>Locations</b>	465
<b>Headquartered</b>	Maryland, DC, and Virginia
<b>Gross revenue</b>	\$8 billion

*Locations include ambulatory medical center, urgent care, physical therapy and home health*



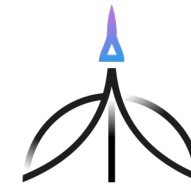
# What is “difference”?



**A change in our relationship**  
with work and with our lives.



**A realignment in how we think**  
about where work can be  
done.



**The loss of the loyalty**  
and commitment to our  
employers.

# The awakening



## Employees

now function like independent contractors.



## Family

is now more important.



## Flexibility

"or I'm out."



## Mental health

and self-care must be emphasized.



## Know and understand

your employees—it is too critical not to in the current market.

## So, what did I do?

I started Town Hall meetings ...

- It allowed employees to vent, to cry and to help each other
- It started as a daily meeting, went to weekly and is now monthly
- It is now more of a communication tool



**Respect,  
wellbeing,  
one-on-one,  
A promise**

# Communication is key

Start a newsletter...

## OUR VOICES



### IN THIS ISSUE

Straight from the Top

National Asian American and Pacific Islander Month

AAPI Contributions

Happy Mother's Day

Notes From Our Mothers'

National Mental Health Month

Self-Care at Your Desk

Memorial Day

Employee Spotlight

Quality Trends

The Coding Corner

### Straight from the Top

Service, Excellence, Impact



As we start to prepare for the end of the fiscal year, I want to make sure we remember self-care is important. We work in a stressful environment so we must take a moment and close our eyes and breath.

Your commitment helps the organization see and serve more patients. We are in the business of changing lives, and our

# Make yourself accessible

- Instead of coming through my door, they email me
- I email back to see if we can talk by email or if they want to Zoom or talk by Teams
- My assistant knows to get them on my calendar as soon as possible



**I do insist  
on chain of  
command**  
(based on the issue)

# Develop your staff



## Mentoring program



## Leadership training

- Communications
- Emotional intelligence
- Handling conflict



## New/next leaders program

- DISC
- Leadership and management training
- Employee incentive program

# Make sure you take surveys seriously

- Let them know how important they are
- Read the comments
- Use the word cloud
- Go over the results with them



**Make sure they participate in the development of the plan**



# Engagement



## Make sure staff is heard

- Listening sessions
- Be aware of your biases



## Diversity, equity, inclusion

is so important to this transition



## Give them ownership

and it will never fail

## The results

A story that demonstrates sentiment:

I had been gone from the hospital for five years.

I ran into my staff from the organization, so we made plans that night to catch up over dinner.

When I arrived, half of my staff greeted me.

My former assistant director gave the toast for them:

*"When you were here, it was like The Beatles White Album."*

**The was one of the highlights of my career.**



**Press Ganey scores went  
from 40<sup>th</sup> percentile to  
82<sup>nd</sup>**

From one survey to the very next  
(10 months)

## Comment themes: What's changed?

**Improvement in leadership and management, especially hiring the new vice president. Overall, improvement in leadership and management practices.**

- The hiring of the new VP Sandra Johnson. She's a *very positive and influential Leader* that *advocates for all staff*. We will continue to grow progressively forward in culture, diversity and talent with her style of leadership.
- The addition of new leadership with *positive feedback* to the staff.
- Many disruptive/negative employees in leadership roles have resigned.
- Management is being more *approachable and understanding*.
- New VP trying to create a better environment *for all*. Her efforts are not going unnoticed.
- Mrs. Sandra Johnson. She is the Vice President of Revenue Cycle. She is a breath of fresh air. She has made *a lot of positive changes*.
- *More communication* with leaders. A lot *more encouragement* from leaders.
- Leadership **TRULY showing care and concern** about their employees.



# Comment themes: What's changed?

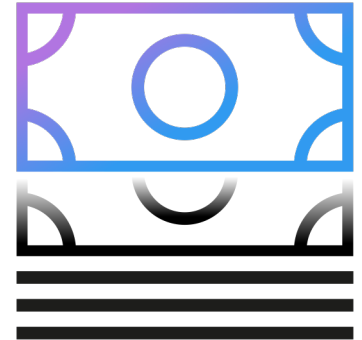
## *Improvement in leadership and management (Ctd.)*

- *Leadership has become **more transparent** (Town Halls). The employee **engagement/appreciation** efforts have been great.*
- *Leadership being more concerned about employees' **values and opinions**.*
- *I have seen a change in more **open communication and staff involvement**. Although we are basically working in a virtual environment, senior leadership has most definitely been **more visible and helpful**.*
- *I feel Mrs. Sandra Johnson has fought hard for us and it is appreciated. I feel the **diversity and training** has helped, **respect** is getting better for employees and the **incentive program** is great even though we are still waiting I appreciate my **hard work being recognized**.*
- ***Evaluating** the productivity.*
- *Leadership is **easier to talk to**.*

## Comment themes: What's changed?

### *Opportunity for bonus, incentive pay when goals are met.*

- *The new bonus structure. The morale is up as a whole.*
- *The initiation of the incentive program*
- *The implementing of the bonus program.*
- *The discussion to have a bonus. Which is an amazing turning point. Even if it's never distributed, just the thought of Mrs. Sandra Johnson coming in within a year's time and going before leaders and requesting more money shows really what she thinks of our workers. A huge accomplishment to say the least.*
- *The changes I have seen this past year were for the better. Management has approved bonuses if our goals are met quarterly. We have employee engagement meetings to express our concerns.*
- *Incentive program approved.*
- *Bonuses that we've been asking for since forever.*



## Comment themes: What's changed?

*There has been focus on and improvement in culture, communication, engagement and morale.*

- *Willingness of employees and management to **work together** to address internal culture. It takes all of us.*
- ***Unity**, great atmosphere and great leadership.*
- *The overall culture. The morale amongst the staff and leaders.*
- *The frequent town hall meetings and outdoor engagements. **More communication**.*
- *Some of the process that was set up due to COVID, employee incentives and culture change awareness.*
- *Over the past year, I would say the **department outings**. The last drive-by was so much fun ... Gave staff an opportunity to have fun ... get to see upper leadership having fun and talking to staff on a different level.*
- *So many things! Employee engagement has been intentional and, in my eyes, successful. Communication across departments has been more **uniform and consistent**.*
- *I have seen positive changes in the culture—**employees are treated with respect**. The culture of bullying employees in the workplace from management, supervision, and directors has stopped completely. Employees **feel comfortable to speak opinions** without harsh backlash from upper management.*



*“The greatest mistake we make is living in constant fear that we will make one.”*

John C. Maxwell  
Author/speaker/pastor

*“The cave you fear to enter holds the treasure you seek.”*

Joseph Campbell  
Writer/professor

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Thank you  
Questions?

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It's how we **treat people.**