

Attitude in the workplace essay



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The most important element in producing a quality product or service is the behavior and corresponding attitude of the people doing the work—not only the front line staff—but the attitude and expressed behavior of all levels of management. An employee's attitude about the product, about the work, about management, and about the organization itself will pretty well determine the behaviors they will express to others, in particular clients, which can directly affect the quality of the work.

In what follows, an exploration of the following question will be presented and discussed: How does human behavior affect quality service in the health care sector. What human behaviors significantly impact on the implementation of a quality management approach to care and service delivery. Is it possible to change a 'health care' organizational culture, if so, how can this be done in light of the above.

Attitudes are Habits

An attitude is a thought habit; a habitual way of thinking. Once an attitude is formed, it's pretty much the way a person will think about any subject. A person's attitude about their job, the product or service they produce, and about their leader will determine the quality of their work.

There are many ways to develop a positive or negative attitude and resulting behaviors. Consider the existing staff within an organization, especially the 'old staff' they may have a good attitude, but then again, maybe not. They know all about the organization and what it will put up with. If management haven't made performance standards clear, staff will have it pretty well

figured out what it is. As a result, these attitudes about the company, the product, are already formed.

It is easy for a manager to lay down a set of rules or guidelines that govern their department. It is another thing entirely to ensure that those rules are followed completely and that quality healthcare is delivered. Ideally, if this was a perfect world, set procedures would be followed to the letter and every department in the health care profession would function perfectly. Unfortunately this is not the case for one specific reason: human behavior. We are not robots. Of all the outside factors that influence today's health care system, human behavior is the single most condition that can't be one hundred-percent predicted and charted. This particular point is not isolated to one particular department or hierarchy. It affects every level of the health care system:

The administrative assistant who is normally very proficient at her work had to deal with a crying newborn last night. Because she wasn't alert at her job the next morning, a requisition got missed and supplies for the emergency ward weren't ordered.

The nurse who is going through a nasty divorce and has been fielding phone calls from her ex-husband's lawyer, misses a plugged catheter on a patient under her care. The patient suffers several hours until the error is discovered on the next shift.

The housekeeper, who decides that although a clean-up in Room 203 was requested of him, decides that his shift is over in 10 minutes and has to pick up his kids from school. He figures ' Someone will clean it up'.

The manager who gets passed on for promotion decides that he won't correct an error made by his colleague, for nothing more than simple spite.

All these examples show how human behavior can negatively impact a workplace. Conversely, a positive impact can also be achieved through an individual's behavior:

A new health-care aide who has dedicated herself to her profession, goes the extra mile to ensure that her patient's hair is combed and that she looks presentable for visiting family.

A senior manager takes a new front-line manager under his wing and mentors him in a new department.

A dedicated nurse who picks up an extended shift because her colleague has fallen ill.

These situations show how human behavior can have a positive impact in the health care profession, or how human behavior can so easily throw a wrench into a well-oiled machine and cause turmoil where there normally would be a well functioning system.