



## Post-Survey Improvement Work

### Selecting Items to Work On

SCORE measures many aspects of organizational culture, and deciding which item(s) members of a work setting should address can be overwhelming. However, there is logic to apply so that chosen items will generate the best overall results for patients, staff, and the organization. To ensure engagement and improvement, be sure to select item(s) that 1) are of interest to those in the work setting, 2) are appropriate for group action and 3) members of the work setting can impact, change, and improve.

Some things to keep in mind:

- Low scores may seem the most logical to focus on, but only if the item is amenable to fixing and the team is interested in improving this area. If the item with the lowest score is going to be exceptionally difficult to address because of the underlying issues, don't go after it unless the wherewithal exists in the improvement group to tackle the problem. This can be very frustrating for a group and it is better to start small and have some more modest 'wins' before tackling more complex problems.
- At least as important as the overall score for an item is the degree to which different members of the work setting agreed or disagreed with it. If, for example, only 30% of the nurses think there is good teamwork, but 80% of the doctors do, this is probably something to work on! You will want to determine, first of all, if the concerns about teamwork are within the group (the nurses are saying that there is poor teamwork among themselves) or across groups (between nurses and physicians or others).
- The ability for members of the work setting to make an impact on the item or items they choose to work on is an important consideration. Some issues, like concerns about staffing and frustration about EMRs, need to be acknowledged and addressed to the extent that the team can effect change, but these issues may be out of the scope of something the team can influence. It is important for the team to address and work on some issues that *can* be resolved -- this builds confidence and capacity to take on other and ultimately more complex issues. There is no problem too small to be fixed; often the "little" things are the most annoying and have a tremendous impact on day-to-day worklife.
- Items in the **Local Leadership** domain are primarily directed toward the manager or leader(s) of the work setting. Even if they are among the lowest scoring, they are not something that the other members of a work setting can address. It is a good idea, however, to use that data as a guide for inquiry with the staff: how often and in what manner do staff want feedback? How can they make themselves more accessible to staff? What process can we implement that would provide more consistent and valued feedback?

- The work setting leader is the 'keeper of the learning system' but some of the items in the Learning System domain may be amenable to group improvement activity. The group should be engaged in determining the ways they would like to share information and have information shared with them.
- The items in the **Burnout, Work-Life Balance, and Engagement** (if included) domains provide important feedback about the readiness and ability for a work setting or the people in a certain role type to engage in improvement work. The worse the scores the more likely that personnel will be focused on their own personal issues, and will manifest behaviors linked to emotional exhaustion, frank cynicism and disengagement. These attitudes will make them less inclined to engage in improvement efforts. A thorough debriefing of staff to identify and understand the major causes for burnout is essential, and the findings should almost always become a focus of improvement efforts. Poor scores in these domains should ALWAYS be acknowledged. The best countermeasures for Burnout relate to having a voice, feeling valued and having the tools and resources necessary to do the work.

Use the following questions to guide your discussion and selection of items to work on:

- 1) After reviewing your data with the group, what in aggregate are the major underlying concerns that were expressed?
- 2) Which survey item (or items) highlight these concerns? Is this something that is important to the group to improve?
- 3) Did the majority of the group agree that they would like to work on improving this item(s)?
- 4) Brainstorm about ideas to address these issues. What has worked in other work settings, at this hospital or elsewhere?
- 5) Who will take the lead? When will the group reconvene to discuss?
- 6) What other resources are needed to help the group address the concerns? (Other expertise, project management/data collection assistance, etc)
- 7) What specific actions will you engage in that are visible, measurable and sustainable?