

Executive Tips to Maximize the Impact of Conversations With Staff

Rationale

Individual staff members have limited opportunities to directly converse with you—so when those conversations take place, they have an outsized impact on staffs' impression of you.

Goal

This quick tips list will help you ensure each conversation not only has a positive impact on staff, but also gives you helpful information.

1

Whenever you are outside your office, **try to keep your phone stowed away**. Many staff will only see executives when they pass them in the hall or elevators—and it's disengaging if you are buried in your phone. Putting your phone away can serve as a natural forcing function to interact with employees and patients.

2

If you are introducing yourself to a group of staff for the first time, **help them get to know you as a person first and a leader second**. Before diving straight in to business, share information about your life outside of work, such as your hobbies, family, or interests.

3

If staff share a complaint with you, thank them for sharing their feedback. Ask follow up questions when appropriate to understand the larger context behind their complaint.

4

If you can't address a staff member's question or concern in the moment, be sure to close the loop with that staff member. Get the staff member's name so you can email them in follow up or ask someone else to follow up with them. Even if they raise a concern that can't be fixed, it's important to follow up and explain why.

5

Remember that what might be obvious to you isn't always obvious to staff. When you are walking through organizational outcomes or data, remember that not all staff will understand all clinical and business terminology (e.g., EBIDA). Err on the side of simplifying the information and updates you share into laymen's terms.

6

If you are visiting a specific area of the organization, ask leaders in advance if there are specific individuals that deserve recognition. Whenever possible, capitalize on the opportunity to recognize staff for their work or connect the dots for how staff's work contributes to the organization's missions and values.