Fostering a Culture of Recognition in the PACU

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Introduction: Acknowledging staff exemplary performance is one of the biggest motivators to boost employee morale, peer-peer relationships, and employee engagement. This project details employee recognition interventions that PACU staff and unit leadership considered meaningful and worked to incorporate into their team culture.

Identification of the Problem: The 2021 Employee Experience Survey (Gallup) scores revealed employee recognition as an area that PACU employees considered the unit must focus on to create higher levels of employee satisfaction.

Purpose of the Study: Our aim is to achieve a culture of recognition throughout our PACU team. Encouraging not only the traditional manager recognition, but also peer-peer recognition for those contributions, big and small, that make a positive impact on others.

Methods: Staff and leadership discussions emerged to address employee recognition in the PACU. Interventions implemented included: The 'Amazing People contest' staff who sends out most e-card/s through NYP Everyday Amazing platform recognizing colleagues' amazing work is awarded a gift card. 'Employee/s of the Quarter' a team's top performer is nominated, featuring the winner on the weekly huddle/email, and picture on our Recognition Wall. And the 'Terrific Tuesday Huddle' giving public shout outs to employees, and thanks to one another generating team spirit and a sense of being valued by their co-workers.

Outcomes/Results: 2021 Gallup average score from (n=26) respondents was 2.31 on a scale from 1 to 5, indicating employees disagreed they received recognition or praise for doing good work in the past 7 days. Post-intervention, (n=33) completed an interim survey on recognition as 2022 Gallup results are still pending. Average score was 3.4.

Discussion: PACU staff level of satisfaction with current unit employee recognition interventions improved. While recognition is a fundamental element of leadership, the effectiveness of peer-peer recognition on boosting staff morale must be emphasized.

Conclusion: Acknowledging the contribution of employees on a regular basis, making it habit, helped us build recognition into our team culture.

Implications for Perianesthesia Nurses and Future Research: PACU is a challenging environment, expressing praise and recognition to nursing staff on a regular basis, not only makes them feel valued and appreciated but also has a far-reaching positive effect on patient care and coworkers. Constantly exploring ways that add value to the employee recognition experience is recommended.