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The Office of Public Health Support is pleased to bring you the first "IHS CEO Brief", a bi-weekly email series designed to stimulate involvement in retention problem-solving and the sharing of successful retention strategies. The "IHS CEO Brief" series, a component of the Retention Executive Management Toolkit, will deliver valuable information to help you address the challenge of retaining our professional and clinical staff.

The email series will include a number of Retention Best Practices developed from both historical and current IHS Chief Executive Officers (CEO) and staff surveys. These tips recognize that "success has a name" and that there is a knowledge base of successful retention strategies within IHS. We encourage you to review these strategies and to discuss how to implement them with your staff.

L E A D E R S H I P

Increase Your Exposure

Does your open-door policy include you walking through it yourself to talk with employees? If not, it should. And, this vital step should happen twice a day, preferably each morning and afternoon. You can build a better relationship with your team by stepping out into the clinical setting where others can see - and interact with - you. It's a simple act that sends an important message. It says that top management's priority is the welfare of the staff and to ensure that they can provide good patient care. Your staff will also feel more valued because they will have the opportunity to contribute at a higher level. Additionally, you will be giving everyone - particularly staff who may feel otherwise intimidated to walk into the CEO's office - the chance to interact with you.

C O M M U N I C A T I O N

Be Accessible

Don't wait for your staff to come to your office with a problem. Be a proactive problem-solver. When you make yourself available to talk about issues, you'll be better able to deal with them before they become a larger problem that's more difficult to manage. In fact, your accessibility can improve the perception of your support. When you make a point of putting yourself into the clinical setting where your frontline employees can build a relationship with you, they will have more confidence in you because your presence shows that you care and are willing to help them if they need it.

R E C R U I T M E N T

Build Your Team in Blocks

Sometimes, who you know can make a real difference. Apply that same strategy to building your team. Ask your professionals if they know anyone who would be a good fit for the IHS health care team. Or, hire a small group of three or four people from the same school. You'll find that new employees coming in as a group will arrive with a built-in social network. Although it does cost more initially, you will be forming a stable nucleus for the department.

P R O F E S S I O N A L D E V E L O P M E N T

Better Practices Result in Better Patient Care

A little education goes a long way in developing a well-trained, happy professional staff as the heart of your organization. They will provide excellent customer service and interact more positively with patients. Better patient care will then reciprocate this positive attitude by encouraging patients to return for more services. Give your staff members the training they deserve so they will provide you with the level of professional commitment your facility deserves. Show that you value their skills by investing in them and allowing them to enhance their ability to perform on the job. Remember, the more your employees learn, the better they'll perform for you.

We recognize that you may have successful retention best practices and we value your input. Send your best practices, comments or add a colleague to the mailing list. Email us at: [IHS CEO Brief](#)



The policy of the IHS is to provide preference to qualified American Indian/Alaska Native applicants and employees who are suitable for Federal employment in filling vacancies within the IHS. IHS Circular # 87-2, July 9, 1987. IHS is an equal opportunity employer.

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