Developing Capacity for Leading Change: Faculty Development Academy

Quality and Safety Leadership

2021

**Background**

University of Maryland Medical Center and the associated School of Medicine is a 789-bed, academic medical center located in Baltimore, Maryland. The Medical Center is the flagship hospital within the University of Maryland Medical System- a thirteen hospital health system. The Chief Quality Officer and Associate Chief Medical Officer invited SixSEED Partners to facilitate a presentation in their first Faculty Development Leadership Academy. The purpose of the Leadership Academy was to prepare internal medicine physicians to lead Safety and Quality Improvement Projects within the organization. This was a pilot program which, if went well, would be expanded to other physicians within the medical system.

**Client Results**

**The Strategy:**

Joy Goldman RN, MS, PCC: CEO for SixSEED Partners (SSP) worked with The Chief Quality Officer (CQO) to design a two-part series focused on leading change within organizations. Since internal system resources were focusing on traditional quality improvement and project management principles, SSP decided to focus on providing a framework to help the participants expand their thinking capacity to better lead through volatile, complex, uncertain and ambiguous situations. If the clinicians could add the capacity to consider both/and perspectives in addition to traditional problem-solving, then that thinking capacity would enable them to better collaborate with those of differing viewpoints (engage stakeholders) and create sustainable change that was less focused on memorizing algorithms for change. We also wanted to create a sense of community through integrating new knowledge with relevant peer conversations that solicited and validated their experiences and emotions

**The Solution:**

After speaking with the CQO, SSP designed a polarity assessment that focused on Individual, Team and System tensions. The polarities measured included:

* Candor and Diplomacy (Individual)
* Individual and Team (Team)
* Mission and Margin (System)

Due to Covid-19 and pandemic restrictions, the workshop was delivered virtually. SSP conducted an initial four-hour workshop where the participants were introduced to the polarity framework and were given their results for the polarity assessment. The eighteen physicians, while coming from the same department, had not had much prior interaction. They were invited to participate in break out groups where they were able to share insights and personal experiences related to the identified tensions.

Toward the end of the six-month curriculum, SSP conducted a one-hour follow-up session to reinforce polarity concepts and to introduce The Empowerment Dynamic™ by David Emerald to help the participants discern when they were coming from a victim-persecutor-rescuer (DDT- Dreaded Drama Triangle) perspective as compared with the creator-challenger- coach roles within the Empowerment Dynamic.

**The Impact:**

Initial outcomes included:

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| * Application of both/and- polarity thinking to strategic and systemic change projects * In this very diverse faculty group, verbalized awareness of cultural impact on use of voice in an effort to “fit in.” Many in the group stated their realization of their habit of deference (diplomacy) to the neglect of exercising the healthy expression of candor |
| * “This was a really well conducted session and was high-yield. Thought \*\* was really wonderful as a moderator and drew out the audience. Enjoyed the small groups.” * “Enjoyed the opportunity to interact more closely with other participants in the Academy.” * “We never have this time to share our experiences with each other and realize we are not alone in our struggles. Appreciated the opportunity to use each other as consultants and advisors.”   A post-polarity assessment will be administered after their change projects are complete which is expected to be fall, 2021. |