

STRATEGIC

RELEVANT

FOCUSED

Quality Improvement Seminar

INTERACTIVE

TEAMWORK

INFORMATIVE

FUN

SKILL BUILDING

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March 26, 2026



**Nurse Practitioner & Physician Assistant
Training Programs**



Continuing Education Credits

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This series is intended for Postgraduate Nurse Practitioners - Family, Psychiatric Mental Health, Adult-Gerontology, and Pediatric.

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You will be able to claim a comprehensive certificate on the WeP at the end of the series, **July 9, 2026**.



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Session Goals

- Discuss conflict management styles and how they can assist in team dynamics
- Review and discuss effective strategies when communicating with leaders
- Consider approaches to developing yourself as a leader



Roles

- Theory burst presenter
 - Mark
- Timekeeper & technical genius
 - Emma
- Take-home thoughts
 - Emma



Agenda

- Welcome (5 minutes)
- Conflict management styles (15 minutes)
- Managing up/working with leaders (20 minutes)
- Take-home points and looking ahead (10 minutes)
- Break (5 minutes)
- Project Team work (30 minutes)



Curriculum Plan

- *An overview of Quality Improvement (10/9/25)*
- *Care Observations & Stakeholder Considerations (10/23/25)*
- *Organizing your Improvement Project (11/13/25)*
- *Global Aim and Fishbone Diagram (12/11/25)*
- *Process Mapping (Flowcharts) (1/8/26)*
- *Measurement to Inform Change (1/22/26 & 1/29/26)*
- *An Approach to Testing a Change (2/12/26)*
- *Communication about your Improvement Effort (2/26/26)*
- *Stakeholder Analysis & Conflict Management (3/12/26)*
- **Managing Up and Gaining Leadership Buy-In (3/26/26)**
- **Negotiation (4/9/26)**
- **Negotiation and More About Cycles of Change (4/23/26)**
- **Sustaining your Improvement Effort (5/14/26)**
- **Resident Presentations (5/28/26, 6/11/26, 6/25/26)**



Last Session

- We learned about how important input from stakeholders are related to a planned change
- Discussed strategies for further engaging stakeholders
- Discussed approaches for managing conflict



Assignment

- Download the Conflict Management Style Assessment document (sent separately)
 - Complete the questionnaire and score your results
- Be prepared at our next session to share some things you have considered since learning your conflict resolution style



How do you handle conflict?

Which Type Are You?

OWL

Collaborating



TURTLE

Avoiding



TEDDY BEAR

Accommodating



FOX

Compromising



SHARK

Competing



Group Discussion

- We will open the discussion to any group (please unmute or add comments to the chat)
- Questions
 - Were you surprised by your results?
 - How might you use this information in your interactions with colleagues/clients/patients?



<https://improvingprimarycare.org>

PRIMARY CARE
TEAM GUIDE

GET STARTED

BUILD THE TEAM

DO THE WORK

SUPPORT THE TEAM

LIBRARY

The Primary Care Team Guide

Engage the best of every care team member to create a patient-centered experience.



Working Effectively in Teams

Providers (PCPs) need to:

- View themselves as team leaders or team members with lead responsibility for clinical decision making, but shared responsibility for overall patient care and panel management.
- Develop their capacity to lead a team and coach others to reach their full potential.
- Understand the roles and expertise of other team members, and support the goal that all team members work at the top of their license, training, and competence.
- Share power, control, and decision-making with others on the team.
- Move toward a culture of mutual respect and trust between PCPs and other staff.
- Develop systems that allow all team members to communicate effectively and efficiently about patient care needs.
- Look for opportunities to relinquish activities and tasks that do not require PCP-level medical knowledge, judgement, diagnostic skills, or decision making.



Communicating Up and Across

*Strategies for Communicating with
Leadership and Colleagues*



How Can Leadership Buy-In Help?

- Obtaining support from others (e.g., survey response)
- Accessing data
- Getting on the agenda
- Communicating about project effort
- Gaining visibility



Poll Question

- How do you feel when interacting with leaders at your organization? (check any that apply)
 - Uncertain – I don't do it very much
 - Nervous
 - Confident
 - Under pressure
 - Like I have something to prove
 - Comfortable



Keep These Things in Mind

Leaders Are...

- Very busy
- Balancing many priorities
- Visionary & strategic
- Responsible for financial and clinical outcomes
- Prefer data over anecdote to make decisions



A Common Scenario ...

- *You have an excellent idea for a quality improvement initiative that will improve clinical outcomes, patient experience, and clinician satisfaction. However, you cannot seem to obtain the necessary organizational resources to support your proposal.*

James TA. (<https://learn.hms.harvard.edu/insights/all-insights/gaining-leadership-buy-organizational-change-health-care>)



Strategies to Consider

- Priority
 - Align your initiative with broader organizational strategic priorities
- Pragmatic
 - Present a plan that includes anticipated barriers and potential solutions
- Proof of Concept
 - Share a small-scale pilot to demonstrate that your idea is feasible and can produce the promised results
- Politics
 - Perform a ‘stakeholder analysis’ and find opportunities to work with peers and senior leadership instead of against or around them
- Persistence
 - If you are serious about the change initiative, you should be willing to go to bat more than once



Tips for Getting a Project Green Light

1. Build a business case
2. Find early champions for your cause
3. Build and perfect your elevator pitch
4. Iterate
5. Define what success will look like
6. Build a roadmap to get there with specific stops to measure progress
7. Getting buy-in from the wider organization
8. Report on progress to leadership

Cieslinski J. (<https://peoplemanagingpeople.com/hr-strategy/leadership-buy-in>)



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Communicate Clearly & Succinctly

In the time it takes in an elevator ride – could you describe your project?

- Need for change
- Vision of the new state
- Additional elements:
 - Problem / issue
 - Benefit
 - Where we are
 - What others can do



Some Insights from Garrett

- A successful improvement effort is likely achieved by a combination of forged relationships and convincing data.
- It may be difficult to gain buy-in from leaders and influencers in an organization that one is new to. Even if you have a great idea, it's important to remember that when organizations have become used to doing things a certain way and, particularly, when a change affects a workflow, you might encounter resistance – even if the idea for change is a good one.
- For insiders who have been around for a while, it may not be readily apparent that a component of a workflow or a policy (or a lack of policy) affects efficiency and that there may be better ways to do things.
- For an outsider who's just started somewhere, it may be obvious from the first time they encounter it.
- Charting or graphing data over time can help you show a member of your organization's leadership where the issue lies which can help aid your suggestions of how to improve it.



Some Insights from Garrett

- Just like our QI projects do, prompting someone from your organization that you feel like there may be a better way to do something that will make everyone's life easier (including the patient's) and that you would like to trial it first with a small team is an easier way to introduce and test your hypotheses without disrupting the current workflow of the organization as a whole; it's a way to say, "I can respect that this is the way things have been done for some time and I'm not trying to break down *all* of the walls, but I think I can make it better."
- As you collect your data, if you can show that it will improve workflow, efficiency, and overall satisfaction for staff, patients, and the organization, you're more likely to be successful.
- In regard to relationships, as you build those connections overtime, you create trust. As other members of the team see your value and your suggestions will hold much more weight than they might have in the beginning.



Action Steps To Consider

- Learn organization/leader priorities
- Demonstrate how your project aligns with core agency goals and objectives
- Understand the impact on finance as well as on staff and patients
- Use data to make your case



What is your next communication step in your project?



What haven't we figured out yet?

Questions or issues that remain unclear?



Take-home Thoughts

Emma – share 1 or 2 ideas you will take away from our discussion



Summary

- Gaining leadership buy-in can enhance your QI effort by increasing visibility of your work, leveraging resources, and helping to engage others in your effort.
- Leaders commonly appreciate updates on projects that include information about the goal of the project, current status, results to date, and relationship to organizational objectives.
- It is helpful to remember that leaders are pulled in many directions, so keeping your communication short and to the point is always appreciated.



Session XII Assignment

- Read the overview of the negotiation case (Word doc)
- Your team will be assigned a role in the live negotiation during our next session
- If your team is one of the negotiation participants, please do the following:
 - ✓ Read your confidential instructions carefully
 - ✓ Meet as a team to prepare your negotiation strategy and plan
- Contact Mark or Emma if you have questions
- Be prepared to participate in the live negotiation during our next session on 4/9/26





Break!



Take five minutes to recharge and refresh.



Project Group Work

We will use breakout rooms for each team:

- DePaul CHC
- Holyoke HC
- Sun River Health
- CHC Hartford
- CHC Meriden
- CHC Middletown/NB
- MMG Via Verde
- MMG Group II
- Camino HC (Irvine)
- Yakima NHS
- Open Door
- CHC New London
- CHC PMHNP



FYI – Additional Slides about Managing Up and Communicating with Leaders





Communicating Up and Across: Strategies for Communicating with Leadership and Colleagues



Types of Communication

- **Virtual** (Zoom, Skype, Facetime, Phone)
- **Crisis** (the collection, processing, and dissemination of information required to address a crisis situation)
- **Presentation** (A succinct report out to peers or leadership)
- **Elevator** (a brief & descriptive explanation in the time it takes to ride the elevator)



Know Your Stakeholders

- Projects often fail when key stakeholders are:
 - unaware, unsupportive, unengaged
- Projects can fail when we don't properly anticipate the impact of a change



Remember to do a Stakeholder Analysis...

- Who will need to be actively involved?
- Who might be impacted?
- Who might be threatened by the changes brought about by your project?
- Don't forget IT, HR, Finance!



Stakeholder Analysis

| Stakeholder | Strongly against | Moderately against | Neutral | Moderately supportive | Strongly supportive |
|-------------|------------------|--------------------|---------|-----------------------|---------------------|
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Not all stakeholders need to be “strongly supportive” for successful change



Communication Plan

| Audience | Objectives | Message(s) | Media & Methods | Timing & Frequency | Who/When Where |
|----------|------------|------------|-----------------|--------------------|----------------|
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The Process of Communication

- Establish a regular communication process with leadership or a specific stakeholder
- Know your topic: be able to speak about it succinctly and clearly



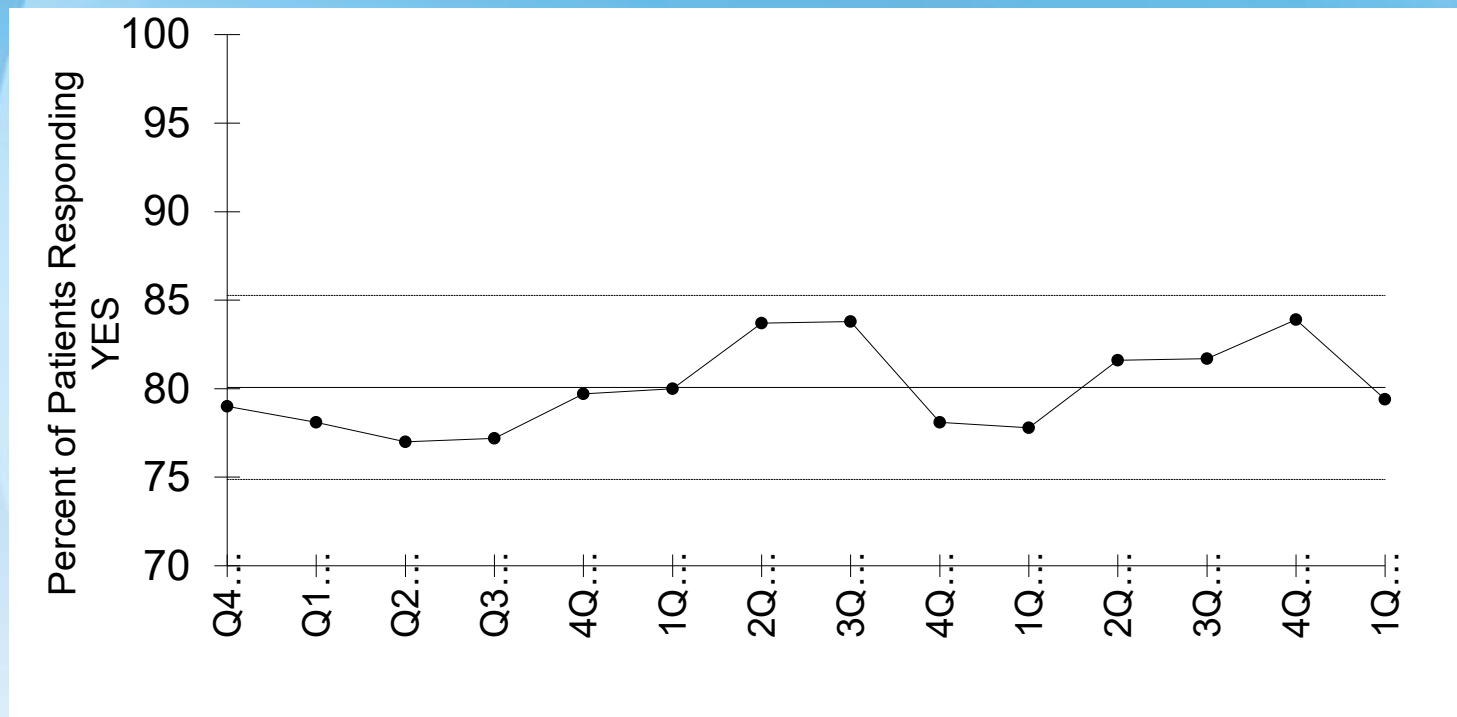
Demonstrate how your project aligns with core agency goals and objectives



Understand the impact on finance as well as on staff and clients/patients



Use data to make your case



Developing Political Skill

- Think before you speak
- Practice influence
- Socially astute
- Be sincere, professional integrity and authenticity are crucial
- Knowledge expert has authority
 - Messenger is the persuader and not necessarily the message
- Network, network, network



References

- James, TA. *Gaining Leadership Buy-in for Organizational Change in Healthcare*. Harvard Medical School. March, 2020.
(<https://learn.hms.harvard.edu/insights/all-insights/gaining-leadership-buy-organizational-change-health-care>) Accessed August 18, 2025.
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