Thank You Cards

In organizations where service excellence is a cultural standard, there are two consistent practices that have been hardwired into the organizations according to the Studor Group. Those two practices are “rounding for outcomes” and thank-you notes.

To hardwire thank-you notes, we need to establish that writing them is an essential part of every leader’s role. Every leader should hold those who are in key positions of management or influence accountable for writing a specific number of thank you notes each week.

• An effective thank you note is one that:
  ✓ Is specific – “Rachel, your nurse manager tells me that you went above and beyond to ensure the Johnson family was at home for their grandfather’s 95th birthday. She tells me that you spent extra hours working with agencies and physicians to ensure that the patient’s needs would be met at home. I appreciate your attention to detail and your commitment to anticipate a family’s real need and feelings about this important event in their life. I am proud to call you my colleague!”
  ✓ Comes from senior level administrators as well as managers
  ✓ Is mailed to the staff member’s home
  ✓ Uses the staff member’s correctly spelled name!
  ✓ Is not a routine response note from a template – “Dear staff member, I want to thank you for being a team player. We need more staff members like you…”

• Hardwiring Thank-You notes:
  ✓ Senior level administrators hold managers accountable for writing thank-you notes by collecting them and mailing them for the manager
  ✓ Managers assist senior level administrators to write thank you notes to staff by providing specific details in an e-mail along with the staff member’s home address and copy the e-mail to the administrators secretary. The administrator’s secretary prints the e-mail, attached a thank-you note and addresses the envelope!
  ✓ Develop a tracking system to ensure everyone who is dedicated to a culture of service excellence is thanked over the course of a year!

*Source: UK HealthCare Leaders: “Simply the BeSt! Creating a culture of service excellence and patient satisfaction”. Leadership Week 2007, October 29 – November 2.