

# FIRST IMPRESSIONS AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

David Colaiuta  
Coach  
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# Healthy Idahoans Living in Healthy Communities



## Our Mission

*To promote and support vibrant, effective community health centers in providing accessible, affordable, and high quality healthcare to all Idahoans*

## Our Work

### Health center administration

We help health centers strengthen business operations through support in financial management, health information technology, emergency preparedness, workforce development and medical, behavioral health and dental practice integration.

### Quality improvement

We assist health centers achieve the best patient outcomes through innovative quality improvement programs utilizing the highest clinical standards, fostering patient engagement and coordinating care within the larger healthcare system.

### Outreach and enrollment

We help health centers provide health insurance education and enrollment assistance to community members, many of whom face barriers in accessing healthcare.

### Governmental relations

We monitor the changing healthcare policy environment and connect health center leaders with elected officials on the local, state and federal levels. We engage with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare and the Department of Insurance to create strong and lasting relationships.

### Network management

We support payment reform and value based reimbursement by collaborating with insurance companies to control costs and increase quality of care.

# Webinar Housekeeping

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- Questions?
  - Use the chat function for questions
  - Email: [dstewart@idahopca.org](mailto:dstewart@idahopca.org)

Please mute your  
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# Today's Presenter

**David Colaiuta, JD**



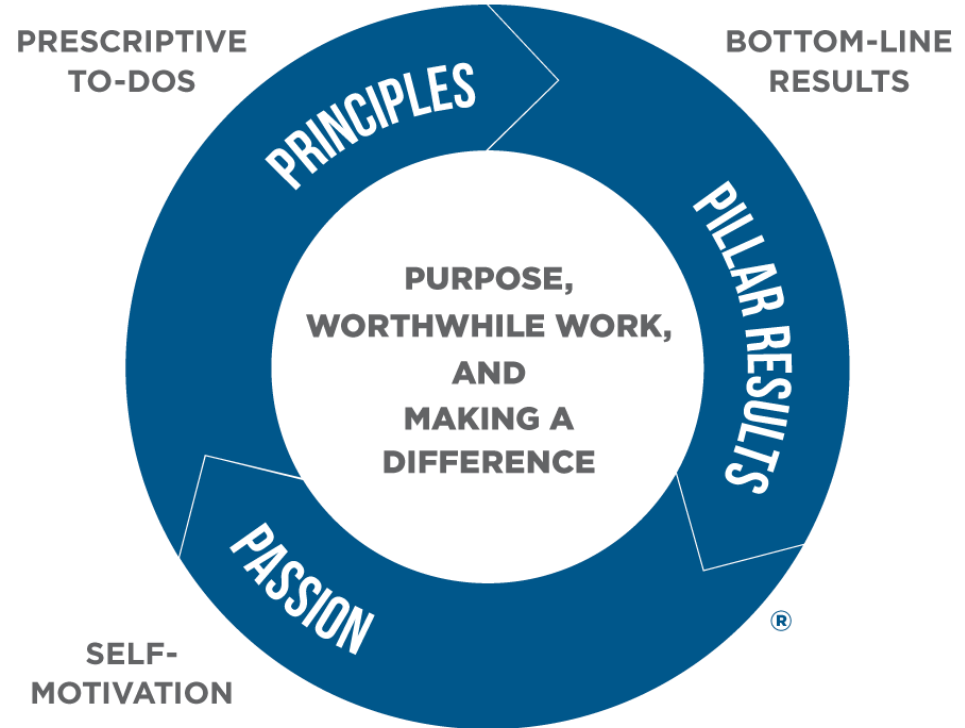
- With almost 30 years of experience in healthcare, David combines his unique medical practice operations background with a passion for creating the best possible experience for patients and those that care for them. That passion aligns perfectly with the mission-driven community health center leaders, providers and team members he has the opportunity to coach every day. With evidence-based practices and tools, David supports CHCs on their journey to become the workplace of choice and healthcare provider of choice in their communities.



Could a greater miracle take place than for  
us to look through each other's eyes... for  
an instant?

Henry David Thoreau  
1817-1862

# THE HEALTHCARE FLYWHEEL®



# What does a great experience look like & why does it matter?



# WHY THIS MATTERS TO ME

1. IT'S PERSONAL
2. IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO
3. POSITIVE PATIENT EXPERIENCE PAYS AND YOU WIN
4. NUMEROUS STUDIES ARE SHOWING A STRONG CORRELATION BETWEEN EXPERIENCE OF CARE WITH QUALITY AND SAFETY



# WHAT DO PATIENTS VALUE? – POLL #1

What do you think patients want the most?

1. Friendliness
2. Caring
3. On Time
4. Professionalism
5. Quality
6. Appreciation

# WHAT DO PATIENTS VALUE?

- Patient Experience Vision

- ❖ Adjectives to Describe the experience

- Friendly
- Caring
- Organized
- Timely
- Consistent
- Personal
- Warm
- Professional
- Understanding
- Empathetic

- ❖ Some Impressions we'd like to our patients to experience

- Be Respected
- Be Thanked
- Be Appreciated
- Be Heard
- Be Involved
- Be Recognized
- Be Remembered
- Meaningful Experience
- Memorable Experience
- Worthwhile Experience
- Be Known


# EXERCISE: What is your why?

- Take a sheet of paper and write down your “why.”
- Share your “why” with the team or a partner.
- Offer constructive/objective feedback to each other.

**WHY**

**WHAT**

**HOW**



I'm a great believer that any tool that enhances communication has profound effects in terms of **how people can learn** from each other, and **how they can achieve.**

**-Bill Gates**



# Fundamentals of Communication: AIDET Plus the Promise<sup>SM</sup>

Focus on the  
**“A” and “I”** to show courtesy and  
respect to people.

A

*Acknowledge*

I

*Introduce*

D

*Duration*

E

*Explanation*

T

*Thank You*

Focus on **“T”** to show gratitude and  
**“The Promise”** to communicate your  
commitment to providing excellent service  
or care.

*The Promise*

# WHY should we use AIDET Plus the Promise<sup>SM</sup> with Patients?

- Reduces patient and family anxiety by establishing trust
- Improves compliance for better outcomes because patients will cooperate more readily with their plan of care as a result of that trust
- Clear communication creates a safe environment to receive care
- AIDET helps us build customer loyalty; we want to be their preferred healthcare provider of choice



# A

# Acknowledge

## KEY MESSAGE: YOU ARE IMPORTANT; I RESPECT YOU, WHAT ARE WAYS WE CAN DO THIS?

- **Welcome Coordinator**
  - ✓ Immediate eye contact as patient's arrive, warm and welcoming smile, pleasant greeting – Good morning
- **Clinical Staff – MA and RN**
  - ✓ Approach directly in the lobby, warm smile, personalized greeting, escort side by side
- **Providers**
  - ✓ Eye Contact, smile, shake hands if possible, pleasant greeting – Good morning
- Knock before entering exam rooms or colleague offices
- Acknowledge people by name when appropriate
- Acknowledge everyone in the room with eye contact, a smile, a nod or “Hello”
- Take the initiative to make eye contact, smile or say hello in hallways



# First Impressions

## WITH PATIENTS AND EACH OTHER!

### Perception

- Within the first few moments of meeting you, people will form an opinion of you.
- Right or wrong, that opinion may greatly influence your ability to do your job.

### Impact

- Positive first impressions inspire others to trust you, cooperate, make your work easier to accomplish and lead to positive outcome
- Negative first impressions create distrust, anxiety, non-compliance, make your work difficult to accomplish and may lead to negative outcomes

# Impress Your Patients

## by Recognizing Them



**As human beings, many of us like to be recognized and known by others – especially if you have visited a location previously.**

**Every day, more of our patients' pictures are being loaded into Epic – this is your chance to shine!**

Instead of having to expose patient privacy by calling out their name in the waiting room, you can now look for your next patient by using the picture in Epic – walk to the person, confirm his or her name confidentially, and continue with your AIDET plans.

### **Why the Change?**

**We are all concerned about our patients' privacy.** Perceptions of privacy encompass staff actions, attitudes, and the manner in which these actions are taken. Words we say can enhance or degrade perceptions of privacy. Patients can feel that their privacy has not been respected when staff relay information volunteered by the patient to inappropriate parties or without concern that other parties may be within hearing distance (including his or her name).

**Patients are now expecting a greater degree of confidentiality and service.** In waiting areas, if at all possible, do not call the patient's name aloud. Instead, approach the patient personally. Pictures of the patients attached to their files will help you identify them personally. This will also reduce patients' anxiety that they will not hear the staff member call their name.

**Thank you for providing compassionate care to Ochsner patients!**



©2016 Ochsner Health System

# Research: The Importance of the Greeting

- 78.1% of patients wanted their physicians to shake hands  
(consider “air fist bump” or “elbow bump” in light of COVID)
- 91.3% of patients wanted to be addressed by their name

*Makoul G, Zick A, Green M,  
Annals of Internal Medicine 2007;167: 1172 – 1178*



# Introduce

## KEY MESSAGE: YOU CAN COUNT ON ME

- Provide your name and role on the team
- Validate the name of the person you are interacting with
- Tell him/her if you have any special skills and how long you have been doing what you do
- Manage Up:
  - Your role – talk about yourself
  - Your co-workers
  - Your organization
  - Your department

# “Manage-up”



- Affirming statement which promotes positivity of an upcoming experience, usually with an individual or a process
- Sets a positive perception of the care team or care process
- Example: “Dr. Jones should be in to see you in the next five minutes. He is an experienced internist who is among the best in our department.”
- Example: Your nurse, Judy, will bring you back to the examination room. She is one of our finest and cares deeply for her patients...”

# Why Should You Manage Up?

- Reduces anxiety in patients and family
- Co-workers have a head start in gaining the customer's confidence
- Demonstrates a united team:
  - Focuses on “What’s Right...”
  - Aligns positive behavior with positive energy:
    - Verbal, vocal, visual



# What Can you Manage Up?

## Examples Include.....

- Years of experience
- Positive attitude
- Awards/certifications
- Commitment to results
- Current performance
- Expertise
- The patient is the priority
- Embraces feedback
- Great coaching of staff to develop excellence
- Ownership
- Lead by example leadership
- Strong communicator
- Focused on solutions

# What not to say

## MANAGING DOWN...WHAT DO YOU THINK THIS IS?

- I guess I'm the only one around here who is actually working today...
- I'm sorry you had to wait in line to check in, our IT department hasn't fixed our computers yet...
- The pharmacy sent the wrong medication...
- We're always short-staffed, but Administration could care less as long as they can save a buck!



# The PROMISE

- Laying the foundation to the patient for the experience that they will receive
- ***“The Promise”*** to take.....
  - Excellent Care of you Today
  - Wonderful Care of you Today
  - Awesome Care of you Today
- You connect with your heart
- They receive the gift of knowing that they’re in good hands and that you care about them

# The PROMISE

Whichever floor you're on,  
you'll find our service on  
another level.



The  
**Hilton Garden Inn**  
PROMISE

Our goal is to make your stay better and  
brighter. If something isn't just the way you  
like it, simply let any hotel team member  
know, and we will make it right. **Guaranteed.**



Just the way you like it,  
is just the way we want it.

The  
**Hilton Garden Inn**  
PROMISE

Our goal is to make your stay better and  
brighter. If something isn't just the way you  
like it, simply let any hotel team member  
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# Duration

KEY MESSAGE: I RESPECT YOUR TIME. HOW MIGHT YOU SAY THIS?

- How long will you be working with the person?
- How long will the delay be?
- How long will the process/test take?
- How long will the person be on hold?

# D

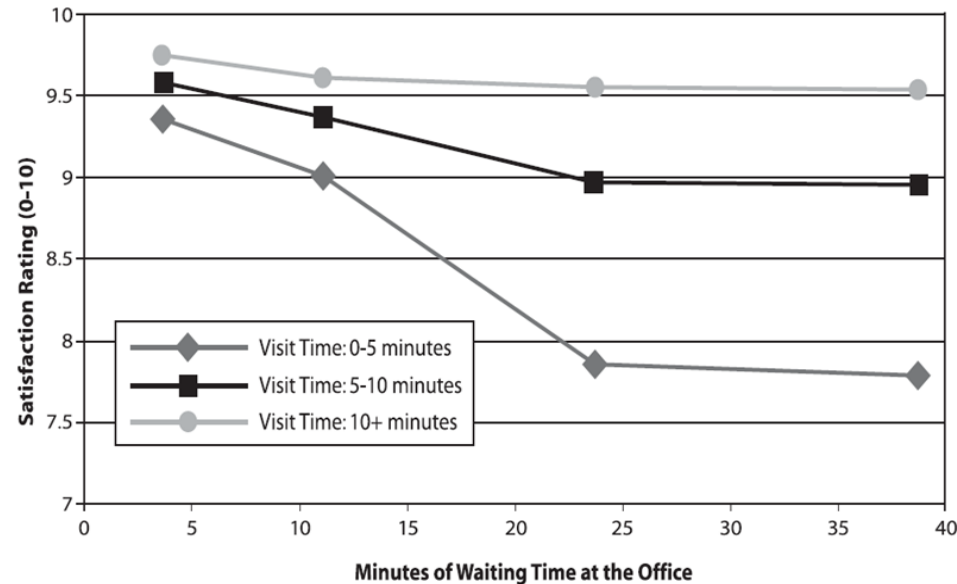
## Duration – Poll #2

HOW LONG WILL PATIENTS WAIT BEFORE THEY WONDER WHY THE WAIT IS SO LONG?

1. 5 minutes
2. 10 minutes
3. 15 minutes
4. 30 minutes
5. To the end of the article they are reading or the show they are watching.

# The Relationship between Patient's Perceived Waiting Time and Office-Based Practice Satisfaction

**Figure 1.**  
**Mean Provider Ratings by Waiting Time and Visit Time**



*Waiting time can also be conceptualized as eroding the value derived from a treatment.*

***"Waiting is frustrating, demoralizing, agonizing, aggravating, annoying, time consuming and incredibly expensive."***

-The Psychology of Waiting Lines  
By David H. Maister

# Managing Waits and delays

- ‘Second Law of Service’- *It's hard to play catch-up ball.*
- *The corollary to this law is the proposition that there is a halo-effect created by the early stages of any service encounter, and that if money, time and attention is to be spent in improving the perceived quality of service, then the largest payback may well occur in these early stages.*
- **Key Principles**
  1. Occupied Time Feels Shorter Than Unoccupied Time.
  2. People Want to Get Started.
  3. Anxiety Makes Waits Seem Longer
  4. Uncertain Waits Are Longer than Known, Finite Waits
  5. Unexplained Waits Are Longer than Explained Waits
  6. Unfair Waits Are Longer than Equitable Waits
  7. The More Valuable the Service, the Longer the Customer Will Wait
  8. Solo Waits Feel Longer than Group Waits

## The Psychology of Waiting Lines

By David H. Maister

### Introduction

In one of a series of memorable advertisements for which it has become justly famous, Federal Express (the overnight package delivery service) noted that: "Waiting is frustrating, demoralizing, agonizing, aggravating, annoying, time consuming and incredibly expensive." (1)

The truth of this assertion cannot be denied: there can be few consumers of services in a modern society who have not felt, at one time or another, each of the emotions identified by Federal Express' copywriters. What is more, each of us who can recall such experiences can also attest to the fact that the waiting-line experience in a service facility significantly affects our overall perceptions of the quality of service provided.

Once we are being served, our transaction with the service organization may be efficient, courteous and complete: but the bitter taste of how long it took to get attention pollutes the overall judgments that we make about the quality of service.




The mathematical theory of waiting lines (or queues) has received a great deal of attention from academic researchers and their results and insights have been successfully applied in a variety of settings. (2) However, most of this work is concerned with the objective reality of

various 'queue management' techniques: for example, what the effects are upon average waiting times of adding servers, altering 'queue discipline' (the order in which customers are served), speeding up serving times, and so on. What has been relatively neglected, however, is much substantive discussion of the experience of waiting.

As Levitt reminds us, "Products are consumed, services are experienced." Accordingly, if managers are to concern themselves with how long their customers or clients wait in line for service (as, indeed, they should), then they must pay attention not only to the readily-measurable, objective, reality of waiting times, but also how those waits are experienced. It is a common experience that a two minute wait can feel like nothing at all, or can feel like 'forever'. We must learn to influence how the customer feels about a given length of waiting time.

In this paper, I shall discuss the psychology of waiting lines, examining how waits are experienced and shall attempt to offer specific managerial advice to service organizations about how to improve this aspect of their service encounters. down in separate components, so that practicing managers can begin to think about the available tools they can use to influence the customer's waiting experience.

# Choose Your Words Wisely

SAY	DO	RESULT
A minute	5 minutes	 <b>Upset!</b>
5 minutes	5 minutes	 <b>Satisfied</b>
10 minutes	5 minutes	 <b>Exceeded Expectations!</b>

# Hope is not a strategy – words to avoid

- **Hopefully-** *undermines confidence*
- **As soon as possible-** *provides no clarity*
- **Pretty quick-** *according to whom?*
- **Probably-** *fails to make a commitment*
- **In a few minutes-** *context may be different between you and the patient's perception of “few”*





# Explanation

**KEY MESSAGE: I WANT YOU TO UNDERSTAND, SO I KNOW I'VE DONE MY JOB WELL...**

- Do not use JARGON. Use words they will understand.
- Say what you're about to do (before you do it) and why
- Say what will happen, and what they should expect
- Always offer an opportunity to ask questions after you explain something.

“What questions do you have for me?” and/or use teach back to confirm understanding



# Thank You

**KEY MESSAGE: I WANT TO PROVIDE EXCELLENT SERVICE TO YOU.**

- Shows appreciation; provides a positive closing
- Thanks for letting me help you today
- Thank you for your waiting, this won't affect your time with Dr. Smith
- Thank the family for their support to our patients (WOW)
- Ask: "What other questions do you have for me?"
- Ask: "What more I can do for you before you leave?"

# WHY should we use AIDET Plus the Promise<sup>SM</sup> with Patients?

- Reduces patient and family anxiety by establishing trust
- Improves compliance for better outcomes because patients will cooperate more readily with their plan of care as a result of that trust
- Clear communication creates a safe environment to receive care
- AIDET helps us build customer loyalty; we want to be their preferred healthcare provider of choice



# Key Words at Key Times

## MAKE THINGS MEMORABLE

- Work with AIDET® to align your words with your actions to connect the dots for people as to what we are doing and why.
- Communication is a key opportunity in our employee engagement, which improves our patient satisfaction, you might say: “We are working very hard to ensure our communication is excellent, so your care is as well, how have we done with that today?”
- “I’m going to close the door to protect your privacy, do you need anything before I step out?”
- “Dr. Smith knows you are here in room #3, I’ll check back with you in about 10 minutes to provide you an update if he hasn’t come in yet”.

# The Power of Words



# When greeting someone in person, always say:

- “Good (Morning). How may I help you?”
  - A visible name badge at shoulder level can play an active part of introduction
- **Listen to need. Provide assistance.**
- **After a more prolonged interaction, ask the customer the following:**
  - “Is there anything else I can do for you today? Okay, my name is Sarah. If you have more questions, just ask for me, but any of our employees will be happy to help you!”

# When answering the phone, always say:

- “Thank you for calling (your department). This is \_\_\_\_\_. How may I help you?”
- Always ask the name of the person calling if they don’t give it first:
  - “May I ask who is calling?”
- After a request is met, ask the customer the following: “(customer’s name) is there anything else I can do for you?”
  - When completing the call, say: “Thank you for calling (clinic or department).”



# AIDET<sup>®</sup> FOR TELEPHONE COMMUNICATION





# Acknowledge

- Smile with your voice
- Avoid monotone
- Repeat names
- Verify who answers the phone
- Call by appropriate name
- Show appreciation

# Introduce

- Your Name
- Your Role – **Manage Up**
- Your Organization – **Manage Up**
- Your Department – **Manage Up**

# Duration

- How long the call will take
- How long will it take to complete the request
- How long will they be on hold
- How long before someone calls them back
- If planning a visit
  - How long will the visit last
  - What time they can expect someone to arrive at their home

# Explanation

- Why are we calling
- What we need to do to complete their request
- Why are we transferring – **Manage Up**
- What should the person on the other end of the phone be doing
- What will they hear when I place them on hold
- Why are we placing them on hold

# Thank You

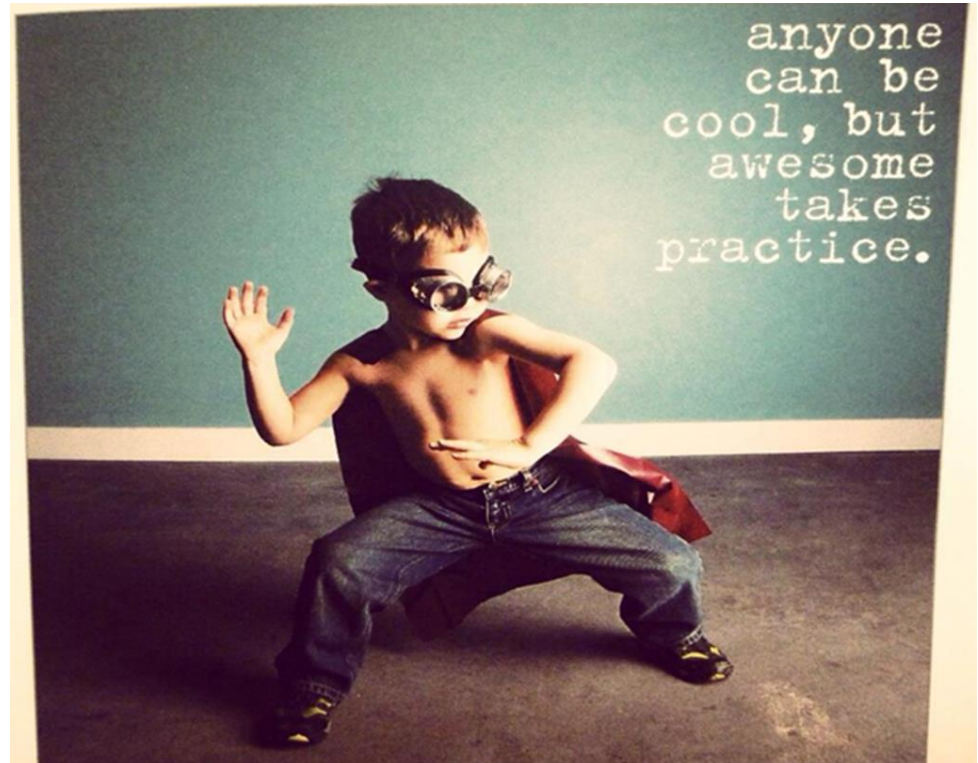
- For their time
- For allowing us to continue to provide service
- For letting us know they had a concern
- For scheduling future visits

# Key Words When Things Go Wrong

- “I’m sorry this has happened.”
- “This certainly does not meet our standards, so I’ll take care of this right away.”
- “Here’s what I want to make sure happens first.”
- “Either (name and role) or I will follow-up with you on the next steps.”
- “You can expect that by (time) (improvement made).”
- “Thank-you for bringing this to my attention.”

# Build Competency

# Validate Consistent Execution



# Practice At Home

- Enlist a partner.
- One does their AIDET®, one plays the patient, observe and give feedback.
- Offer constructive/objective feedback for ONE thing they can improve on.
- Write down the one thing you are going to do TODAY based on the feedback
- Switch roles



# Make it Personal – Poll #3

What will be the hardest for me to do?

- Acknowledge everyone immediately
- Introduce myself by name
- Provide a specific duration for how long the process will take or wait will be
- Explain what I am going to do, before I do it
- Say “Thank You”
- Personally “Own It” and make a Promise



Maya Angelou

*I've learned that people will forget  
what you said, people will forget  
what you did, but **people will  
never forget how you  
made them feel.***



A high-angle, blue-tinted photograph of a group of healthcare professionals (doctors and nurses) standing in a circle on a tiled floor, looking down at a tablet or document held by one of them. The image is used as a background for the slide.

# QUESTIONS



A high-angle, blue-tinted photograph of a group of healthcare professionals, including doctors and nurses, gathered around a table in a clinical setting, engaged in a discussion. The image serves as the background for the slide.

# EVALUATION POLL





# THANK YOU

