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#### In This Issue

[Customers Count: Three Mistakes That Can Cause a Poor Experience](#)  
[The Leading Edge: How to be a Good Co-Worker](#)  
[News You Can Use: Regulatory Changes](#)  
[Just for Fun: The Sought-After Employee](#)



## Mystery Shopping

*How would you score?*

Maun-Lemke has been Mystery Shopping healthcare organizations, by phone and live visits, for over 20 years. We create a new Mystery Shopping 'scenario' each month specific to the type and treatment specialization to be shopped (Long Term, Assisted Living, Alzheimer's, Hospice, Home Care, Mental Health, Independent Living). We rotate our Mystery Shoppers so they do not contact the same facility within a 6-month time frame. All Maun-Lemke Mystery Shoppers have healthcare experience, are trained by us and each of their reports are reviewed for grading consistency.

Consumers today are taking a much greater interest in their healthcare. They are becoming more empowered to explore healthcare options for themselves and their loved ones. Providers can no longer merely depend on discharge planners and referral sources to keep facilities full. They need to know how their organization's staff handles inquiries.

If you'd like information on Mystery Shopping your facility, call Kathy Cain at 800.356.2233.

## Customer Service Oversight! Three Mistakes That Can Cause a Poor Experience

It's safe to assume that healthcare professionals don't look for ways to produce a poor customer/patient experience, but in reality, negative patient experiences and perceptions occur all too often, and in many cases, you may not even be aware that you are causing them. Indeed, there are some big—but completely avoidable—mistakes that cause poor customer service. Keep the following three mistakes in mind, and be sure you never make them!

- **Mistake #1: Treating sick people like they're not people.** There's a difference between acknowledging and taking precautions to avoid contagious disease, and then there's treating a patient purely as a case number. We already know that sick people aren't at their best when they come to a healthcare setting, so make that extra effort to ease their pain and discomfort. It could be as simple as a smile and a reaffirming statement like, "we are going to do our best to get you better."
- **Mistake #2: Forgetting that a curtain or closed door doesn't prevent patients from hearing your conversations.** Be mindful of others who can hear what you are saying, especially if you are talking about things that might make them feel worse than they already do. It may seem like a casual conversation with your co-worker, but a patient who hears something like, "I can't wait until my shift is over so I can get away from here!" or "If I see one more case of this flu strain, I think I may barf myself" will not be comforted or feel good about their time at your facility.
- **Mistake #3: Talking about patients in a patient setting.** You never know who might be listening to your conversation when you're in a patient setting. Sharing personal and private details about a patient in a public setting where others can hear (i.e., "that patient was 90 pounds overweight." "Did you see how she took her time getting on the scale?") is never professional and will likely always result in a bad customer experience. Even if patients don't know the person you might be talking about, they may assume you will be just as vocal about them when they leave.

Remember, although these mistakes may seem like common sense things to avoid, it's all-too-often that they happen. Make a conscious effort to avoid these mistakes, and you will be on your way to helping your customers feel truly grateful for your care and service.

*"One customer well taken care of could be more valuable than \$10,000 worth of advertising."  
—Jim Rohn*

## How to be a Good Co-Worker: 5 Tips to Take On

There's no doubt about it, getting along with your co-workers makes your day and overall job much more enjoyable. That's why you should make every effort to create and nurture positive and productive co-worker relationships. And it essentially all starts with you. Whether you've been with the same team for years or are just starting with a new company, consider these simple tips that will help you be great co-worker.

1. **Arrive with a smile.** It's so easy and it can have such a powerful effect! Work is certainly a more pleasant place to be when people around you are smiling.
2. **Take interest in what your co-workers like.** Your colleagues will appreciate it when you take an interest in what they like to do. Make a special note of their favorite things and bring it into conversation when you can. For example, "I saw the Bears won last night—that's great!" or "Did you see that they're having a sale on your favorite brand of running shoes right now?"
3. **Act your age.** It's so easy to tell children to *act their age* by not doing things such as throwing tantrums, crying, and speaking ill of others. Of course, many of us could use our own advice! Great co-workers don't cry, throw tantrums, or gossip. If they find themselves

taking issue with another co-worker, they address it promptly, privately, and tactfully.

4. **Take five minutes to listen.** If a co-worker is asking for advice or a quick minute of your time to help with a problem, give it to them. Not only does this show your devotion and loyalty, but this co-worker will also likely return the favor when you need it. In most cases, five or so minutes of your time won't prevent you from getting your own work done.
5. **Always mind your manners.** From always saying "please" and "thank you," to speaking with an *inside voice*, these timeless manners should always be applied to your interactions in your healthcare setting.

Practice these tips and it's likely that your co-workers will take note, and you will probably also find yourself enjoying your time at work more.

*"When you're working with good people it brings good things out in you."*

—Martha Plimpton

## Regulatory Changes You Should Know

There have been several recent Survey and Certification Memorandums from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) that likely affect your long-term health care organization in terms of clinical provision of care and survey process changes.

Below is a list of some key changes as well as a brief description of each. Keep in mind that it's extremely important to learn and share any applicable changes with your colleagues and staff to help ensure compliance.

- **483.10(b)(4) and (8) Rights Regarding Advance Directives, Treatment, and Experimental Research (F155)** - These highlights are advanced care planning, which has a new definition and processes, advanced directives and a facility's new responsibilities, new resident choice and preferences, survey guidance and process changes, revised health practitioner and physician processes.
- **483.25 End of Life (F309)** - These highlights include advanced care planning, which has new definition and processes; imminent dying processes and definitions.
- **483.25 Naso-Gastric Tubes (F322 Feeding Tubes)** - These highlights include the Avoidable/Unavoidable use of a feeding tube; benefits, risks, decision to use feeding tubes; assessment processes and protocols for technical aspects of feeding tubes; protocols for nutritional aspects of feeding tubes and NEW survey guidance and investigative protocols.
- **S&C 12-44-NH** - The Hand in Hand training series related to dementia has been mailed to all nursing homes, Regional Offices (RO) and State Survey Agencies. This is part of the national dementia awareness and training initiative.
- **S&C 12-45-NH** - Update to Survey Process to reflect MDS 3.0. These highlights include changes to the survey process: Specifically, changes to focus, quality measures reports, and outstanding complaints; initial tour modified to recognize resident's personal preferences; licensed nurse schedules during survey; a need to provide an entire admission packet; a list of all residents who are receiving or have received antipsychotic medications over the past 30 days.

As healthcare professionals in long term care, it's critical that your operations are aware and prepared for these changes. For more information visit the CMS website at [www.cms.gov](http://www.cms.gov).

*"Everybody lies, but it doesn't matter since nobody listens."*

—Unknown

## The Sought-After Employee

Sam walks into his boss's office. "Sir, I'll be straight with you, I know the economy isn't great, but I have over three companies after me, and I would like to respectfully ask for a raise."

After a few minutes of haggling, the boss finally agrees to a 5% raise, and Sam happily gets up to leave.

"By the way," asks the boss as Sam is getting up, "which three companies are after you?"

"The electric company, water company and phone company," Sam replied.

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