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Have you heard about Care Crowd VT yet?

Clint Maun, CSP has been sharing his knowledge, experience and passion for the care profession for decades. He is known far and wide for his unique touch of humor, but more importantly, his solution-oriented, team-based approaches to improving care nationwide.



Care professionals from every corner of the country have been asking for a way to benefit from Clint's™ ideas on an ongoing basis between those times when he might be speaking in their area. In response to this popular demand, Clint has created **Care Crowd VT**, an online, interactive training platform available 24/7 at a very affordable rate. For pennies a day, every employee at a facility can have unlimited access to Clint's™ unique approach to **improving care from within**.

At the heart of **Care Crowd VT** are 4 pillars that *define what it means to be a Care Crowd member*. These simple principles establish a framework that forms a strong foundation you can build your care career on for a lifetime of success.

- **Care is Cool!**
- **Customers are Great!**
- **Teaming Makes it Easier**
- **I (personally) Make a Difference**

By joining the Care Crowd and mastering these fundamental, yet critical courses, you make tremendous strides in *improving care, building self-esteem, fostering partnerships and driving accountability* at all levels.

Become a part of the solution today!

Please take just a few moments for Clint to tell you more about **Care Crowd VT**.



Communication Corner

3 Fatal Communication Mistakes Leaders Often Make

No doubt about it, great leaders must be great communicators. Of course, as it is with just about any aspect of being a leader, this isn't always easy to do. Not only do leaders have to be sharp with their communication skills, but they also have to be ready and able to overcome such obstacles as an audience who doesn't want to listen or who disagrees with what's being said. In these scenarios even the greatest leaders can make common, yet critical mistakes which can cause a breakdown in trust and conversation among their team. Fortunately, if you're aware of these scenarios you can avoid or quickly address them, and thus maintain open, honest, and direct communication.

Keep these common mistakes in mind when you communicate with your peers and staff.

1. **Failing to make a personal connection.** We're all undoubtedly busy, and time is indeed valuable, but taking five or so minutes to simply ask how your team is doing or how their weekend was can help foster caring and connection among your team. Remember this: the more personal and engaging the conversation is, the more effective it will be. There is great truth to the saying, "people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." So make a conscious effort to show your *human* side!
2. **Believing that a 20-minute monologue will make them appear smarter.** Leaders get the opportunity to open and drive conversations, and many leaders will take this chance to speak ad-nauseam. Many leaders mistakenly believe that if they speak at length, it will demonstrate their knowledge and gain them

respect. However, simple and concise is always better than complicated and confusing. Your goal is to weed out the superfluous and to make your words count. If you can get to the point in two minutes, do so.

3. **Being scared to ask questions.** Many leaders mistakenly believe that if they don't know all the answers their people will question their knowledge and ability to lead. However, it's simply not realistic or necessarily efficient to know everything. To be sure, teams are designed to leverage information, skills, and knowledge from one another. So, don't ever be afraid to ask questions to quickly gain information, opinions, and ideas from your team. You may be surprised at how much they appreciate it!

There is only one rule for being a good talker - learn to listen.
—Christopher Morley



The Leading Edge

Do You Have Too Much Compassion? How to Tell & What to Do

Compassion is a wonderful thing. It allows us to think outside of ourselves and help those in need. However, as healthcare professionals, we are around people in need almost constantly—those who are sick, aging, and/or traumatized. And although you do indeed want to feel and show compassion, too much of it could cause some personal strife and prevent you from excelling at your job.

Indeed, if you begin to continually place yourself in your patients' shoes, you may begin to feel just as traumatized or sick as they do. Those who become entrenched in feelings of patient compassion could begin to experience chronic nightmares, stomach aches, insomnia, social withdrawal, and feelings of inadequacy. You may become so overwhelmed by your compassion that the people you tend to begin to attend to you. It can ultimately bring a sense of chaos to your job and personal life.

The good news is that you can educate yourself and employ some simple strategies to prevent *compassion fatigue*:

Take Stock

It's important to pay attention and evaluate how you're feeling and acting on the job. On a weekly basis take stock of the following:

- Are you taking regularly scheduled breaks and full lunch breaks?
- Do you keep your personal contact information private (you're not sharing it with patients and customers)?
- Do you feel a sense of satisfaction or do you feel anxious or hopelessness from your job?
- Do you feel personally responsible to solve your patients/customers' problems?

Answer each question honestly. If you feel that you are personally responsible for patient outcomes or feel deep despair, you need to take some steps to address the situation.

Take Action

You can certainly still be effective at your job, and feel a reasonable amount of compassion without it derailing your personal and professional life. Take note of these tips:

- **Ensure you are taking time to decompress every day.** It's essential to set aside time for lunch and breaks. Use this time to focus on yourself, to socialize, and to just get away from the day for a bit. Even five or 10 minutes a few times a day (in addition to your lunch/dinner break) can do wonders to help your nerves recover.
- **Be mindful of the moment when you're away from work.** When you're mindful, you're focusing on the here and now—not tomorrow or yesterday. Practicing mindfulness can help ease stress and enable you to enjoy your free time more fully.
- **Give yourself a pat on the back.** Remind yourself that it's not your job to solve all of your patients' problems. Even if a patient's situation deteriorates, you did your job by helping him/her. That should give you a sense of ease and accomplishment.
- **Share your thoughts and concerns with like-minded people.** Chances are, you're not alone in how you feel. By talking to coworkers about how you feel, you can start to build a critical support network—you can share your tips and anecdotes and they will reciprocate.

If you've implemented all of these strategies but still feel an overwhelming sense of negativity and despair, seek professional help. There are several professionals who can help you through *compassion fatigue* so you can better help the people you serve.

“Never look down on anybody unless you're helping them up.”
—Jesse Jackson



News You Can Use

New Study Indicates Millions of New LTC Employees Needed

A new study out of UC San Francisco indicates that about 2.5 million more long-term care (LTC) workers are needed between now and 2030 to keep up with the aging population. Additionally, they say it makes no difference in demand whether seniors choose to live in an LTC facility or at home. Approximately 20 percent of Americans will be age 65 by 2030, according to the study, and those 19 million adults will need LTC services by 2050, which is up from 8 million in 2000.

To help address this pressing need, the study's authors suggest that policymakers and educators work double-time to recruit and train LTC workers, especially home health and personal care aides.

The jobs needed most over the next 15 years are:

- Counselors
- Social workers

- Community and social service workers
- Home health and personal care aides

The study authors note that the greatest need is going to be for home health and personal care aides, with well over 1 million additional jobs by 2030. The challenge is that these are currently very low-paid, high-turnover, entry-level positions. A lot of people in these jobs are living in poverty while working full time. We have to figure out how to make them sustainable.

[Learn more details of the study here.](#)

“Aging is not lost youth but a new stage of opportunity and strength.”
—Betty Friedan



Just For Fun

The Price of Healthcare

We all know that healthcare costs are rising. We may not be able to control this upward spiral, but we can at least garner some humor out of it!

Q. Do all diagnostic procedures require pre-certification?

A. No. Only those you need.

Q. Can I get coverage for my preexisting conditions?

A. Certainly, as long as they don't require any treatment.

Q. What happens if I want to try alternative forms of medicine?

A. You'll need to find alternative forms of payment.

Q. My pharmacy plan only covers generic drugs, but I need the name brand. I tried the generic medication, but it gave me a stomach ache. What should I do?

A. Poke yourself in the eye.

Q. What if I'm away from home and I get sick?

A. You really shouldn't do that.



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CareCrowdVT.org



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