

2018 ATD KC Excellence in Practice

Coaching and Mentoring

Saint Luke's Health System—Growing Your Employees' Talents to Strengths

Challenge	Action	Result
<p>One out of every three employees in the United States does not feel empowered to create their own career success at work. At Saint Luke's, a 2017 third-party turnover report revealed that promotion has a limited, and smaller than expected, impact on the likelihood that an employee will leave. Conversely, employee engagement data shows that the opportunity to grow and develop is a key driver for our staff. We have been able to significantly reduce our number of "quick quits;" employees who leave within their first year of service. This has been achieved through a combination of competitive compensation packages, strategic sourcing and hiring, and improved onboarding practices. However, we are facing higher-than-industry-average turnover rates for employees with one to three years of tenure.</p> <p>The outcome of our initiative is two-fold: for employees to understand what energizes them at work, and to intentionally choose roles and projects that allow them to be at their best more often; and for leaders to ask powerful questions that help employees consider how to best leverage their strengths toward meaningful goals within the health system. Ultimately, our challenge is to change the culture of our organization to embrace career development as the intentional process of identifying our strengths and then taking on more tasks and roles that allow us to fully leverage those strengths. This is a paradigm</p>	<p>Our initiative is aimed at two behavioral outcomes: leaders will use a strengths-based coaching model to have career development discussions with their employees, and employees will make career growth decisions based on an evaluation of their strengths.</p> <p>Our first intervention was to create a leadership class entitled, "Growing Your Employees' Talents to Strengths." Leaders learn the importance of coaching rather than directing their employees, and then practice having five-minute coaching conversations using the Strengthscope™ STRONG model. During the class, leaders set a goal to have at least three coaching conversations with their employees in the next thirty days. Leaders who attend the class have the option to take the Strengthscope™ assessment and participate in a thirty-minute debrief of their assessment, as well as a follow-up call to assess their progress to goal. Employees who are interested in career development are invited to take the Strengthscope™ assessment, and receive individual coaching with a Strengthscope™ Accredited Partner within our organization. During individual coaching, we utilize our Growing Your Career guide. Employees are encouraged to begin documenting their energizers, their skills, and their drainers, and to use that self-awareness to consider what they might like to do more of in their</p>	<p>In 2017, 69 leaders attended "Growing Your Employees' Talents to Strengths." We sent participants a thirty-day follow-up survey after the class to assess their utilization of the desired behaviors. In the previous thirty days, 50% of respondents held 1-2 coaching conversations with their employees, 30% held 3-4 coaching conversations, and 20% held more than four coaching conversations. When asked how the STRONG coaching model impacted the success of their coaching conversations, leaders stated, "It made me think through the process to be sure that I was identifying strengths first," and, "I feel by being better prepared, it helped me to have more productive conversations."</p> <p>In 2017, 603 individuals completed the Strengthscope™ assessment, and then attended either an individual coaching session or a group coaching session to understand and leverage their strengths. Four individuals who received individual strengths-based career coaching were then promoted into leadership positions, where they now have the opportunity to coach their own employees. One of these leaders, a nurse manager, stated, "Knowing my strengths has helped me identify strengths in the clinicians on my team- I can see their differences as strengths, rather than annoyances. In conflict, I can appreciate that their different views make our team stronger. I adjust my leadership style based on what I know they need, and what's at the</p>

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<p>shift and a purposeful distancing from the traditional vision of career development as a defined path up a ladder, with increasing scope and supervision responsibilities at each level. We partner with Strengthscope™ for our strengths assessment and coaching models.</p>	<p>"dream role." Their key behavior is to take that work to their manager to have a discussion about opportunities in which they might further leverage their strengths. To expand and sustain the culture change, we incorporated strengths-based coaching and career development into system initiatives with a much broader audience. Our high potential program, Intentional Leadership, partners participants with mentors. Participants and mentors both take the Strengthscope™ assessment, attend a group debrief, and are encouraged to discuss their strengths throughout their mentoring relationship. Our new graduate nurse retention initiative, Strength for the Journey, is a three-year program that guides new nurses through the early part of their career by helping them focus on their energizers and find ways to do more of what they love at work.</p>	<p>front of their mind because of how they see the world."</p>