



RHQN NEWSLETTER

January 2010

Change Don't Come Easy!

As the old song goes, change isn't easy and very few people enjoy it. It may be especially unpleasant if you're the one leading a team charged with making changes. The RHQN January Members Conference Call was the first of a series on facilitating change management. For many of us, the idea of having to change anything - be it our personal routine or the way we accomplish our work - is challenging. It becomes scary when we, personally, are asked to facilitate a change management process, lead a team, or implement a change strategy. Can we do it, do we want to do it, will we have any credibility, will we look like a fool? All these thoughts race through our heads and sometimes make us sick to our stomach.

This month's conference call explored aspects of change management facilitation that were both personal and corporate. They sounded like the advertising blurb for a movie. There were gremlins, prisoners, and romance. Being a good facilitator for change management requires a focus in two areas. The first is content knowledge. Success as a facilitator certainly requires a knowledge of the content or subject matter to be improved or implemented. The second major focus is on managing the process and group dynamics. This month's focus was on personal and group dynamics.

We learned that fundamental to being a good facilitator is being able to deal with your gremlins. The gremlins are mostly personal. They are related to feelings of fear about competency and people skills. Once you start to dwell on your gremlins, they've got you. The more one thinks about the gremlins, the weaker one becomes. From our discussions, we learned to spend no more than ten minutes thinking about the gremlins. As the saying went, "flick the gremlins off your shoulder."

We found out that good change facilitators are well organized, good listeners, adept at picking up body language, asking questions that promote discussion and involving participants. Some participants on a change management team may only be on the team because they were sent/ordered to attend. They are what we referred to as 'prisoners' and can be difficult to deal with. They proved to be difficult team members because they were not personally invested in the team's success.

Good facilitators were identified as innately curious. Curiosity proved to be a foundational characteristic of success. Curiosity poses questions so that team members have to go looking and exploring. **Curiosity encourages and builds relationships. Curiosity generates exploring, exploring creates learning, and learning leads to growth and change.**

Oh, we must not forget the romance of change management facilitation. If you listened to the conference call, you know that this was the 'teaser.' The romance in change management facilitation was to "love your flipchart." Being well organized and making use of all available tools contributed greatly to our picture of a successful facilitator. Use the equipment at your disposal and make it work for you. The romance of change management facilitation also focused on having fun as the process moved forward. There was always a need for celebration of successes and motivation to keep moving forward (remember FIDO?).

So, an open invitation to review the materials and listen to the conference call is extended as a way to bolster your competence and get the gremlins off your back. If you have questions about change management facilitation or need a consultation about the process, please feel free to contact Randy Benson, RHQN Executive Director at randyb@wsha.org or (206) 577-1821.

Subspecialty Peer Review

We wanted to remind everyone that the RHQN provides subspecialty peer review assistance in several areas. Subspecialty peer review services are available in general surgery, orthopedic surgery, radiology, sleep lab, internal medicine, and nephrology. Please contact Lori Martinez, RHQN Administrative Assistant, at lorim@wsha.org or (206) 216-2550 for details.

Proposed Adverse Event Legislation

The Washington State legislature is considering legislation which would assess penalties for failure to report adverse clinical events. The Adverse Event and RCA class, which the RHQN offers, is seen as a tool for rural hospitals to demonstrate competence in recognizing adverse events and preparedness for responding to them (completing the root cause analysis). Action plans arising from completion of an RCA are evidence of process and quality improvement. The RHQN can offer this class in your facility, **free of charge**, if you feel a need for it. Many member facilities have already completed the training. If you have questions or would like to schedule the class, please contact Randy Benson, RHQN Executive Director at randyb@wsha.org or (206) 577-1821 or Bev McCullough, RHQN QI Manager at bevm@wsha.org or (206) 216-2862.

Upcoming Member Conference Calls

Bev McCullough, RHQN QI Manager, and I have split the Members Conference Call topic list for 2010. We will be doing calls every month. If you have topic suggestions, please call or e-mail Randy Benson, RHQN Executive Director, at randyb@wsha.org or at (206) 577-1821.

- February 9, 10:30 a.m. - **Clinical Best Practices and Lessons Learned**, facilitated by Bev McCullough, RHQN Quality Improvement Manager
- March 9, 10:30 a.m. - **"Applying Excellence: A Primer on Facilitating Change - Part II"** presented by Randy Benson, RHQN Executive Director
- April 13, 10:30 a.m. - **Clinical Best Practices and Lessons Learned**, facilitated by Bev McCullough, RHQN Quality Improvement Manager
- May 11, 10:30 a.m. - **"DOH Survey Update: What's New In the Environment of Care"** presented by Randy Benson, RHQN Executive Director

If you have ideas, comments, questions, need additional resources or a consultation, contact Randy Benson, RHQN Executive Director, at (206) 577-1821 or randyb@wsha.org