

- STATE your course:
 - S = Share your fact
 - T = Tell your story
 - A = Ask for others' input and viable compromise solutions
 - T = Talk about what is fact
 - E = Encourage differing views
- Let others STATE their course
- Finish clearly by recording commitments, developing measurable results, and setting a follow-up time to meet (Smith 2006)

The end result of a critical conversation is that all individuals feel like their stance was heard and that some mutually agreeable solution evolved from the conversation. Critical conversations often happen spontaneously, which may not allow the individuals to be prepared for the conversation. If emotions are too high, it is best to delay the conversation until emotions subside and a productive conversation can take place.

Check Your Understanding

1. Evaluate the role of active listening when communicating change initiatives.
2. Explain two differences between negotiating change initiatives and collaborating within change initiatives.
3. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the five conflict management styles.
4. Create a plan for approaching a critical conversation that needs to take place as a result of conflict.
5. Describe how the Thomas Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument toll can benefit an HIM professional in managing conflict.

Case Study

Objectives

- Identify components of employee satisfaction requiring improvement based on parameters outlined by a healthcare organization
- Outline action steps for improving employee satisfaction that incorporate strategic planning and change management initiatives
- Identify the collaboration, negotiation, and conflict management skills required to deploy the performance improvement plans

Instructions

Review the following case study and create an action plan for improving employee job satisfaction scores within an HIM department.

Scenario

Mary Beth is the director of HIM at a large acute-care healthcare organization. Every three years the healthcare organization undertakes a hospital-wide employee survey in which information is collected from employees regarding job satisfaction and other components. The 2018 employee survey assessed the following components:

- Alignment of employee goals with healthcare organization's mission and vision—including questions reflecting employee awareness of the organization's mission and vision and how it impacts individual jobs within the organization
- Employee job satisfaction—Assessment of the employee's satisfaction with job tasks, peer group relationships, and employee–manager relationships in regard to overall job performance
- Work-life balance—Evaluation of the employee's perception of the balance between work and home life
- Communication within the healthcare organization—evaluated communication at the organizational level, departmental level, and work area level

The survey was deployed by an outside consulting agency that has experience with creating reliable and valid healthcare employee surveys. The management team from the healthcare organization was required to attend an initial training session regarding the goals of the survey and the managers were provided nonbiased ways to encourage their employees to complete the surveys. The surveys were web-based and employees received links within their email to complete the surveys. Employees (both management and nonmanagement) were allowed to complete the survey during work hours. The survey was deployed in a systematic manner. The questions within the survey were broken down into the four categories outlined previously and the options for each answer were scored on a five-point scale. The scale options were: 5 = Extremely satisfied, 4 = Satisfied, 3 = Neutral, 2 = Dissatisfied, 1 = Extremely dissatisfied.

Weekly, each department head received a report on the percentage of departmental employees that completed the survey but individual names and responses from the employees were anonymous. Results of the 2018 survey were calculated by the consulting company and standard reports were provided to all directors and managers within the healthcare organization. Mary Beth received the 2018 employee satisfaction survey results on January 5, 2019. The HIM department results are provided in figure 5.6. The organization's human resources department and the survey consultant met with all department directors to discuss the results of the survey and what the next steps were for the healthcare organization. Each department is required to complete an action plan for improving the five components that fall below a score of 3.5.

Figure 5.6. 2018 employee satisfaction survey results

2018 Employee Satisfaction Survey Results					
Department:	Health Information Management				
Response rate:	95% Compliance, n = 74, HIM employees total = 78				
Scale rating:	5 = Extremely satisfied, 4 = Satisfied, 3 = Neutral, 2 = Dissatisfied, 1 = Extremely dissatisfied, 0 = Not applicable				
Section of survey	HIM manager 1 N = 20	HIM manager 2 N = 22	HIM manager 3 N = 26	HIM director N = 6	Overall department score
	Overall score	Overall score	Overall score	Overall score	
I. Mission and vision	4.0	3.8	3.7	4.2	3.9
II. Job satisfaction	3.2	2.9	2.2	4.0	3.1
III. Work-life balance	4.0	4.0	4.0	2.9	3.7
IV. Communication	2.8	2.6	2.5	3.5	2.9

Report legend

- HIM manager 1 area duties: Release of information, transcription, and chart completion
- HIM manager 2 area duties: Electronic record management and document imaging
- HIM manager 3 area duties: Coding (coding employees work remotely)
- HIM director: Three managers and three data quality specialists report to HIM director

Assumptions

- The HIM director will meet with the HIM management team to discuss the survey results and the action plan for improvement will be completed collaboratively by the HIM management team.
- The HIM director will need to incorporate strategic planning and change initiatives as part of the action plan for improving the HIM department's overall employee satisfaction results.
- A follow-up employee satisfaction survey will be deployed by the healthcare organization at the end of calendar year 2020, which will allow departments time to initiate improvement action plans from January to November 2019.
- Management annual performance evaluations and incentives are partially based on the results of the employee satisfaction survey.
- Reasonable goals are set for score improvement as slight gains are perceived as a positive movement toward employee satisfaction.

Deliverables

1. Create an action plan (template provided in figure 5.7) for improving the results of the next employee satisfaction survey by identifying any components of the survey that fall below a score of 3.5 for the overall HIM department.
2. Identify three action steps to improve each component of the survey by identifying appropriate change management skills and conflict resolution skills discussed within this chapter.
3. Outline the communication method for each of the action steps such as meetings, emails, online training, webinars, and such.
4. Provide the projected score for each component of the overall HIM department survey that requires an action plan.

Figure 5.7. Employee satisfaction improvement plan

Employee Satisfaction Improvement Plan			
Department:			
Date:			
Component requiring improvement from survey (Any area scoring <3.5)	Action items—Identify three action steps for each component	Identify collaboration, negotiation, or conflict management skills required to deploy each action step	Projected goal for score improvement (>3.5)