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COLLABORATION HEALTH CARE

ALIGNING IDEAS WITH EXECUTION TO IMPROVE HEALTH CARE TODAY



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Establishing Win/Win Relationships

Over the past several months we've talked about many of the business aspects we believe are required to operate successfully in the health care system of tomorrow.

These topics included some of the basic business fundamentals that are going to be necessary to operate in a complex and changing health care market. We think an additional component is going to be required to pull all of it together. All of us are going to need to get better at establishing the relationships and making the decisions that create a Win/Win result for the patient- and the individual consumer as they become more involved in the health care solution..

Today's health care system is tough. Organizations are frequently forced to make decisions based simply on basic economics and sometimes the results to the individual patient or consumer are overlooked. Strengthening the relationship with the patient and consumer is not going to be easy. But, strengthening these relationships is going to be critical if we want to establish a collaborative health care system that we need today, and will need in the future.

From Individual Silos- To Win/Win Results for the Individual

When you think about it, our health care system is a complex system of interrelated relationships. The patients, providers, hospitals, payers, health plans, employers, and government are the traditional front-line stakeholders in our existing health care system. When you include all of the medical technology, pharmaceutical, and specialty companies supporting the infrastructure for health care delivery you come to the \$2 trillion (and growing) industry we have today.

Today, each of these participants has their own individual agendas and expectations of what they want and expect. While all of these players may communicate an admirable mission to the outside world of "improving health care ", in reality the

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The Foundation of Win/Win Relationships

Getting to Win/Win isn't just an act or a good intention. Truly establishing a Win/Win encounter requires a large amount of trust between all of the parties involved. We don't have enough trust built-in to our health care system today so getting to Win/Win will involve a different way of thinking than we've used before. Here is Stephen Covey's list of principles that can be used to help organizations and individuals build the trust they will need to get to Win/Win in health care, and in life.

- Understand the Individual
- Attend to the Little Things
- Keep Your Commitments
- Clarify Your Expectations
- Show Personal Integrity
- Apologize Sincerely When You Need To

IssueSources: The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People; Steven R. Covey; Free Press; 1989

Market Driven Healthcare; Regina Hertzlinger, Da Capo Press, 1999

Win/Win for Individuals (con't)

interactions (or lack thereof) have resulted in the creation of a culture that is perceived by the broader market as “heartless, insensitive, greedy, and self-serving the status quo”. The system that should work closely together to improve the health and well-being of the individual has evolved into one that includes individual silos that rarely communicate unless seeing an advantage to themselves or to protect their own self-interest.

In his book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, Steven Covey introduces the concept of focusing on establishing “Win/Win” relationships in all interactions. While not always easy, we’ve always tried to use this principle in all of our work and in our relationships. Very simply, the concept focuses on making certain there is mutual benefit in all of your actions. If we can’t get to Win/Win, it’s No Deal. It’s pretty simple.

But getting to a Win/Win result requires a fundamental shift in thinking and a solid foundation of intentions. Covey states, *“It begins with character and moves toward relationships, out of which flow agreements. It is nurtured in an environment where structure and systems are based on Win/Win. And it involves process; we cannot achieve Win/Win ends with Win/Lose or Lose/Win means”*.

Over the years, our siloed health care system has become so large and so complex that it is focused more on “transactions” than relationships. We call it a “transaction-based health care environment”. This is where productivity, market-share, and economics outweigh the human component of the health care delivery model. While some of the interactions may be a Win/Win for some of the participants involved, they continue to be perceived as Win/Lose for the individual- the patient or consumer. That’s why most of us agree something needs to be done to change the way health care is delivered and paid-for today.

Our health care system has evolved into a series of transactions between siloed participants that simply have separate agendas. In 2002, Mitchell Kruscoff, a researcher from Duke University made the comment, “Despite all the attention medicine has paid to new technology, it has neglected to ask what happens if you pay attention to the rest of the patient.” We believe (6 years later) we still haven’t paid attention to the rest of the patient and that is going to require establishing closer relationships with them today than currently exists.

In our work of nearly 30 years in this industry, we have always tried to focus on the Win/Win outcome for the patient- or the individual. To be honest, we may have been viewed as rebels in some circumstances when we disagreed with the Win/Win result that could be obtained for an organization, at the expense of a Win/Lose outcome for the individual. We don’t apologize. No matter how you restructure the delivery of health care, it’s still going to be up to the individual consumer receiving the care that is going to make it work. It’s going to be up to the individual understanding the need to manage their chronic condition; it’s going to be up to the individual keeping themselves healthy so they can minimize their access in the first place. It’s called getting the individual engaged. And, to get them engaged, you’re going to need a relationship first.

So, as we move further into the seemingly never-ending political campaign of promises to solve the problems we have today, we hope both parties begin to address the fundamental cultural change that is going to be required to improve the dialogue and collaboration between the siloes existing in today’s health care system and begin focusing on establishing a Win/Win result for the individual. We hope, as Harvard Professor Regina Hertzlinger has stated in her 1999 book *Market Driven Health Care*, we begin “restructuring the health care delivery system around the needs of human beings, not around the needs of the status quo”.

And, it’s going to require better relationships than exist today.

Think About It:

“Do not hire a man who does your work for money, but him who does it for the love of it.”

Henry David Thoreau

“You don’t measure giants by height or weight or by the size of the paycheck. You measure them by the size of their soul.”

Doug Grow

“In the end, you’re not measured by how much you undertake, but what you finally accomplish.”

Donald Trump