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Leadership Meets Employees

Leadership is also about preventing high technology, cost pressures and even, to some extent, patient-centered care from affecting and demotivating the most precious resource of a hospital, namely its staff. Only healthy and content employees can fulfill their task of making the patient their priority.

Management, fuzzy logic and new hospital governance

Jean Luc Chassaniol, Director General of Saint Anne Hospital, President of the French association of Hospital Directors (ADH) and Guy Vallet, Honorary Director General of Rouen and Marseille Hospitals, France

Jean Luc Chassaniol and Guy Vallet challenged the audience with management clichés such as “an executive should delegate” and “he should motivate his staff”.

Management fads and miracle solutions are difficult to apply and so they recommended that we turn our attentions elsewhere- to fuzzy logic.

The pyramid structures of the past have gone. Now each staff member should play an active role in the functioning of his or her team; and commitment must be encouraged and initiative rewarded. Cooperation is the key.

Fuzzy logic is a pragmatic approach. It is how our brains work. Fuzzy logic formalises the world exactly as the brain does. It assesses input and output variables approximately and enacts a set of rules allowing the determination of output as a function of input.

It has been used successfully in project management, demographic analysis and health insurance fraud detection among other things. The main weakness of fuzzy logic is the fact that it is impossible to prove the stability of the system on which it is based.

But when talking about management do we really need such proof? Or is it only the result that counts?

Jean Luc Chassaniol and Guy Vallet then went on to discuss how this idea of fuzzy logic can be adapted to university hospital centre management in the framework of new governance. Fuzzy logic should allow “sustainable management”.

This includes recognising that

the acceptance of ideas is the

only driving force of change in

an organisation, that the working man would like to know and understand before he accepts and that only man is able to adapt to a complex environment.

Sustainable management also concerns quality control, patient/client satisfaction, safeguarding public interest, recognising the individual responsibility of employees and having a flat and “reactive” organisation chart.

Innovation and Leadership

Mag. Gottfried KOOS, member of the Executive Board, VAMED, Vienna, Austria

Mr. Koos began his presentation by describing the current state of the European healthcare industry and its domination by dynamic technical, technological, medical and demographic developments and, of course, by the available financial funding.

There is a lot of pressure to change; innovation in healthcare is the desire to be successful in the treatment of illness. It is about prevention, raising awareness and making healthcare available to everyone.

More often than not there are conflicts between the desire to save lives versus financial issues or economisation versus humanisation. Mr. Koos stated that there are three categories of businesses: pushers, plodders and pioneers.

Pushers are strong in marketing but have less scope for innovation, plodders consistently work, they have a medium marketing and medium innovation level and pioneers are the real innovators, they concentrate on the process and try to implement what they have developed. He then went on to describe the four types of innovation: product and service, process, organisation and social.

There is an obvious correlation between sustainable success and innovation. But Mr. Koos maintained that the innovation of a system or enterprise could only be stimulated or maintained over long periods of time through strong leadership and organisation.

A new understanding of health is emerging, psychosocial aspects of health are now just as important as prevention, vitality and quality of life.

With this new understanding comes a new age of healthcare management and an opportunity to develop and offer new services.

Even with the new biotechnologies and computers, productivity can increase the most dramatically by the improvement of the way we collaborate, form networks and manage clusters.

According to Mr. Koos areas for future innovation include the migration of the health and illness markets, the remuneration of services becoming increasingly orientated to the quality of results and hospital locations evolving into health campuses.

The presentation was concluded with the emphasis that the "economisation" and "humanisation" of healthcare systems should not be a contradiction.

Only an efficient and economic healthcare system will be able to offer secure jobs and only healthy and content employees can fulfil their task, which is putting patients first.

The objective is not just to increase efficiency but to make innovation an essential part of our organisational culture. (LC)

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