WILEY

THE **FIVE BEHAVIORS**
OF A **COHESIVE TEAM**™

From Turnover to Teamwork

How one healthcare provider saved a
leadership team from walking out the door

A Success Story featuring : **Ohio Living**
FAITH + COMPASSION + COMMUNITY

What would you do if half of your leadership team was ready to quit? Ohio Living Mount Pleasant took it as an opportunity to rediscover their team's passion and purpose.

Introverts, extroverts, and everyone in-between make up today's workforce. While each person is unique, everyone shares the need of feeling engaged and valued at work. Unfortunately, for some organizations, focusing on daily operations and managing change can cause employee engagement to slip through the cracks. This often leads to challenges with employee retention, which can have costly consequences.

The investment to keep employees engaged is no comparison to the resources, time, and energy it takes to replace them. "In a study[1] conducted by the Center for American Progress, the cost of losing an employee can cost anywhere from 16% of their salary for hourly, unsalaried employees, to 213% of the salary for a highly trained position! So, if a highly-trained leader is making $120,000 a year, the true loss could be up to $255,600 to the company!"[2] This estimate does not include the even greater potential costs to productivity, quality services, and customer satisfaction, or the morale and burnout of employees covering for that position until someone new is hired.

For Ohio Living, losing employees would be a significant hardship. Ohio Living is the largest and most experienced not-for-profit provider of life plan communities and services in Ohio, serving more than 73,000 people annually. Their mission is to provide adults with caring and quality services toward the enhancement of physical, mental and spiritual well-being. As turnover threatened to take a turn for the worse, Ohio

Living's investment in employee engagement saved one of their leadership teams from walking out the door.

STAYING TRUE TO THEIR VALUES

Ohio Living strives to exceed their residents', clients' and patients' expectations. In order to meet such high standards, the organization places employee growth at the top of their list of values. Dana Ullom-Vucelich, Chief Human Resources and Ethics Officer for Ohio Living, sought out opportunities that would help them put their values into action.

Nancy Pettigrew, owner of The Healthy Workplace, Ltd. and Authorized Partner of *The Five Behaviors of a Cohesive Team™,* seemed like a perfect fit for Ohio Living. For Pettigrew, creating a healthy workplace is more than a one-time fix. She works with people who want to make a difference in their organization, and she makes her philosophy clear: "be willing to do whatever it takes [to invest in your team] and be patient with yourself and each other in the process."

A primary goal of every organization is to find, keep, and grow quality employees in order to fulfill their mission and achieve their goals. Pettigrew works with organizations to help them create a culture where people *want* to work, which is why Ullom-Vucelich connected with her.

"The name of Nancy's organization is The Healthy Workplace, but within that name, there is an additional message, 'Heal Thy

Workplace,'" says Ullom-Vucelich, which is exactly what Ohio Living wanted to do.

ENGAGING AS A TEAM

Pettigrew introduced Ullom-Vucelich to *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team,* the teamwork fable by the *New York Times* best-selling author Patrick Lencioni. She then guided the HR leadership team through *The Five Behaviors of a Cohesive Team™,* the team program based on Lencioni's teamwork model.

The program is a unique learning experience that helps individuals discover what it takes to become a truly cohesive and productive team. It uses *The Five Behaviors™* model of Trust, Conflict, Commitment, Accountability, and Results to improve teamwork. Paired with a personality inventory, the program also helps people better understand themselves and their peers in a memorable, personal way.

After experiencing *The Five Behaviors* with her team, Ullom-Vucelich noticed significant change. "Even as optimal as we've been told that we are...we had a lot of a-ha moments, tears, and unearthing of deep seeded challenges, and we grew. We got better individually and collectively," she says. "At the end of it I was able to say, 'Nancy, this is a tool and a resource I would like you to make available to other people in the organization.'"

Pettigrew began to deliver this solution across Ohio Living's 12 locations. From senior officers in the corporate office to staff in home health and hospice sites, everyone at Ohio Living has access to this powerful tool. In fact, *The Five Behaviors* program turned out to be the solution that would completely transform the nursing leadership team for one of their life plan communities.

CREATING CHANGE AT OHIO LIVING MOUNT PLEASANT

From the residents' point of view, being part of Ohio Living's Mount Pleasant community was great. Mount Pleasant had superior ratings from regulatory agencies, customer satisfaction surveys, and more. However, like all workplaces, this seemingly ideal community faced internal challenges. Soon, these issues grew too big to ignore.

Nurse leaders struggled to work together and did not fully trust their peers. They worked in silos and defined success on their own terms.

"We invested in each member of the team, demonstrating that we believe and support them both as individuals and as working partners. We want them to feel welcome and part of Ohio Living for years to come."

— *Josie Browning Haney*

They failed to treat team members with the same level of care and support that they provided every day to their residents and clients. Tension was so high that four of the eight nurse leaders were ready to leave the organization.

Losing half of the nursing leadership team would be an enormous loss for Mount Pleasant. Morale would significantly drop and the cost to replace four leaders would be a huge challenge for the organization. As the youngest administrator within Ohio Living, Josie Browning Haney did not buckle under the stress. Instead, she sought out Pettigrew for help.

DISCOVERING A SHARED VOICE
As her first step, Pettigrew met with each nurse leader individually. She was not surprised to find that despite the struggles and frustration they experienced in the workplace, they were deeply passionate about their work. Each of them wanted to make a positive difference for those they served, but they were not confident they could do it together as a team.

"Everyone was committed to Ohio Living Mount Pleasant and loved the work," she said. The issue was that even though they could help others, they couldn't seem to heal their own relationships. They needed to believe in themselves and restore their confidence in becoming a cohesive team.

The question remained, would that belief be strong enough to bring the team together? In order to become a stronger team, they needed to gain a better understanding of each other, not just as nurse leaders, but as people outside of Mount Pleasant. Pettigrew took the team through a variety of trainings, including *The Five Behaviors of a Cohesive Team™,* to help them enhance their relationships with one another.

The Five Behaviors™ program is paired with *Everything DiSC®,* a powerful workplace solution that helps teams improve communication and work relationships. Based on four basic personality styles (D - Dominance, i - Influence, S – Steadiness, and C - Conscientiousness), *Everything DiSC* helps people understand their own DiSC® style and how it relates to others.

Gaining insights about each other's unique DiSC styles helped the nurse leaders appreciate the individual talents on the team. "When we work together, we're so much stronger than when we are working in our silos," says Haney. The common language of DiSC would help the team improve their communication and working relationships and effectively navigate *The Five Behaviors* program.

TRUSTING THE PROCESS
On the surface, *The Five Behaviors* program seemed overwhelming. "When I was told the amount of time it would take to experience

real change, I couldn't see how we could make that happen," says Haney. "I really wanted a quick fix. How on earth was I going to have eight key leaders out of the building for one day every month?"

However, she took the risk and made *The Five Behaviors™* a priority. Moving forward with the program made a statement about Ohio Living's values. The organization's stance was clear: "We believe in you enough….We hear that you're having challenges. And we want you to be happy here [for years to come]."

The team started with Trust, the foundation of *The Five Behaviors* model. This proved to be the most intense, yet transformative part of the program for the Mount Pleasant team. It required them to step back from the demands of the healthcare industry and reflect on their purpose—as individuals and as a team. They addressed important questions about their work. "Why did we choose long-term care? What do we want our legacy to be? How can we make this place better than it was before we got here?"

In order to answer those questions, the team had to understand vulnerability-based trust, the foundation of any high-performing team. Pettigrew facilitated an exercise that asked each person to share personal accomplishments and challenges that influence who she is today. This process helped the team identify their shared values and purpose. More importantly, connecting over these personal experiences renewed their trust in one another.

"Every member of the team had genuine motivation, and true authenticity to the mission of this organization," says Haney. Coming to this realization helped create grace within the team and unite the nurse leaders in a new way.

THE HEALTHY SIDE OF CONFLICT

Setting the foundation of vulnerability-based trust helped ease the team into the next behavior: Conflict. With half of the team ready to leave the organization, it was clear that they needed to learn how to trust each other in order to engage in productive conflict.

The Five Behaviors program helped the nurse leaders understand that directly addressing conflict is one of the best things they can do for their team. Engaging productive conflict would help them find the best possible solution in the shortest amount of time.

"We're learning to be comfortable with the uncomfortable," says Haney. "How we handle conflict is easier and not taken personally. We know what the end goal is. We want our organization to be the best version of itself."

The team's work on Trust and Conflict prepared them to move forward with the rest of the program. They met with Pettigrew on a monthly basis to learn about the remaining behaviors in *The Five Behaviors* model - Commitment,

NEW ON WLWT5
FIRE BREAKS OUT AT RETIREMENT VILLAGE
MONROE
LIVE WLWT 5

Accountability, and Results - and learned how to intentionally apply all five behaviors into their teamwork.

Establishing a shared team mission and creating action plans to achieve collective goals enhanced their working relationships. Their greatest accomplishment from the program was that they remained an intact team from start to finish, emerging stronger than ever.

AN UNFORESEEN TEST OF TEAMWORK
Shortly after completing the program, unexpected circumstances challenged the team like never before. A fire spread through a residential wing of the Mount Pleasant facility when its roof was struck by lightning one Sunday evening. With the help from leaders and staff across the community, all residents were quickly and safely evacuated from the building.

The emergency not only required calm and cohesive teamwork, but also called for caring and authentic leadership to face the aftermath. Residents and employees were displaced and in need of relocation. Ensuring residents received their care and services immediately following the fire, as well as during the building's long reconstruction phase was an immense logistical feat.

"They had the foundation to continue to optimize in a situation that was not optimal," says Ullom-Vucelich.

Work priorities changed. The nurse leaders went beyond their work roles—they were first responders, healers, listeners, and confidants. If half of the team had left the organization prior to *The Five Behaviors™* sessions, moving forward would have been even more challenging for Mount Pleasant. The team credited the program for their strength and teamwork that carried them through this physical and emotional obstacle.

"Before anyone needed delegation, we knew where we could help out and take charge," says Haney.

The nurse leaders worked together to provide excellent care to everyone involved, including each other. They recognized when someone needed a break and when they could step in to support one another. This compassionate care strengthened the team and took them to a completely new level.

A TEAM TRANSFORMATION

Overcoming this crisis was not the only proof of the team's growth. Ten months after the team's first *Five Behaviors™* session, Pettigrew ran *The Five Behaviors Progress Report* to assess the team's development. The report showed a significant increase in all five behaviors. Areas that were particularly challenging for them developed into areas of strength.

The team now performs with an even higher level of energy and efficiency that radiates throughout the campus community. Everyone on the team agrees their quality care plans are now even more well-rounded and complete with everyone coming together to contribute.

"Now I see why the investment in time and resources was so important. There were many things we needed to work through together, says Haney. "We are grateful to have gone on this journey and are proud of our progress. We are each stronger and better versions of ourselves."

The Five Behaviors program completely restored the team's purpose and faith in teamwork.

"I believe the nursing leadership team is committed to the residents of Ohio Living Mount Pleasant now, more than ever," Haney said. "Developing as a cohesive team has been a significant return on our investment. We have learned to trust and rely on one another for strength, accountability, growth, and support. Instead of potentially losing half of this talented team, everyone is still here sharing their expertise and passion for the work they love. Their spirit of collaboration continues to be a gift to all of us."

1. Boushey, H., & Glynn, Sarah Jane. (2012) *There Are Significant Business Costs to Replacing Employees. https://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/CostofTurnover.pdf. 4/18/17.*
2. Kantor, Julie, "High Turnover Costs Way More Than You Think", The Huffington Post, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/julie-kantor/high-turnover-costs-way-more-than-you-think_b_9197238.html. 4/18/17.