



Singapore Healthcare Management 2015

SingHealth Headquarters (SHHQ) Staff Appreciation Initiative

Vivian Lee & Erin Koh
Leadership & Organisation Development, SHR



INTRODUCTION

At SingHealth, we believe that 'Our People' is the bedrock of the organisation and determines our success. Hence, staff engagement is a key focus to unleash the potential and positively encourage our staff to perform at their best especially in SingHealth Headquarters (SHHQ) where employees are mainly non-patient facing and thus, greater challenges arise in meaningfully engaging this category of employees.

AIM

SingHealth HQ's Employee Engagement Framework is built upon *MacLeod and Clarke's Concept of Employee Engagement*. It centres on **4 key enablers**, viz. *Strong Strategic Narratives, Engaging Line Managers, Employees' Voices* and *Organisational Culture* to raise and sustain employee engagement levels. The delicate interplay of these 4 lenses provides a strong foundation towards driving organisational culture, promoting high retention rates and increasing workforce productivity within the organisation.

The first enabler highlights the importance of strong strategic narratives, e.g. SingHealth's Vision, Mission and Values which provides a clear line of sight between the employee's job and organisation's Vision of "Defining Tomorrow's Medicine" and Common Purpose of putting "Patients. At the Heart Of All We Do". As such, SHHQ Management leverages on various platforms to consistently communicate these narratives such as SingHealth Orientation Programme, Senior Leadership's updates in the monthly town hall sessions ("SYNERGY") and Group CEO's memorandum. The second enabler, i.e. Engaging Line Managers is equally crucial in building a happy and engaged workforce. Thus, employees attend various training and leadership development programmes to enhance their supervisory skills, gain better insights and deeper understanding on effective leadership practices needed to build and keep their team members meaningfully engaged.

To increase commitment levels and enhance employees' sense of belonging, communication channels are established to hear employees' voices through the different spheres in the organisation. Ranging from small to large-group communications session, e.g. HQ Conversations to Domain-specific Townhall Sessions, employees are given the opportunity to share their concerns or provide suggestions for improvement in their respective work areas. The Employee Engagement Survey (EES), a biennial exercise, also seeks to obtain employees' perception on key organisational issues, ranging from Rewards and Recognition to Working Conditions.

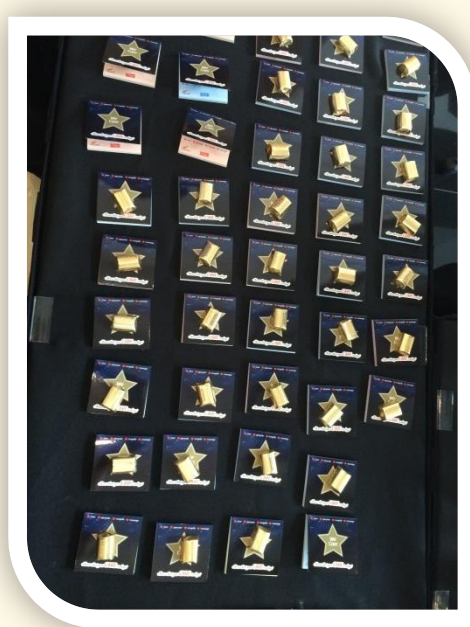
Recognising the importance of creating a coherent organisational culture, SHHQ espouses a set of core values (Compassion, Integrity and Collaboration – CIC) which serves as guidelines on the behavioural norms to be upheld by all employees in their daily interactions at work. The **Staff Appreciation Initiative** reinforces the Organisational Culture component as it endeavours to build a positive organisational culture and healthy work environment where employees feel valued and appreciated by encouraging supervisors to affirm their staff regularly and recognise their employees' behaviours that support SingHealth values.



METHODOLOGY



SHHQ Appreciation Champions



Post-It Pads given to employees

SHR-LOD kick-started the Staff Appreciation Initiative with 11 employees from various departments designated as **Appreciation Champions (ACs)** to co-drive this organisation-wide towards building an appreciative culture. The theme "**We C-A-R-E**" was chosen as the Appreciation Champions felt that C-A-R-E ("Cheer", "Appreciate", "Recognise" and "Encourage") qualities were integral components towards sustaining engagement levels in SHHQ. Group CEO spearheaded the initiative and presented a book on the benefits of a positive appreciative culture to Senior Management members with her penned appreciation messages. During the session, SHR-LOD also took the opportunity to share the importance of positive relationships and had them initiate the gesture amongst themselves. Senior Management members were also given additional copies of the book and encouraged to "walk the talk" by presenting the books to their staff with their individually penned "thank you" messages.

Prior to the launch event, a series of activities were designed to create awareness among the employees, e.g. launch of WE C-A-R-E microsite to share information on the initiative (e.g. acts of appreciation, short stories etc.), clear folders printed with the "We C-A-R-E" message given to all employees, and employees submitting videos of themselves thanking their colleagues, screened on-site during the launch event.

The launch event was well-received with **more than 70% SHHQ employees** participating and **90% of the Senior Management** serving food at Academia on 10 September 2014. During the event, Senior Management members, decked in colourful aprons served fun-snacks such as pop-corn, ice-cream and 'kachang pteh' and wrote "thank you messages" on post-its to appreciate their employees. SHHQ employees also actively participated by taking photos and writing "thank you" messages with their bosses and colleagues.

As a follow-up to the launch, post-it pads were given to all SHHQ employees to continue with this initiative at their own respective departments. The Appreciation Champions also put up "**Appreciation Boards**" at their own respective working locations and divisions to encourage their colleagues to post notes on the board to appreciate their colleagues.



Strategic Human Resource



Group Education



Group Procurement Office



"Cheer"



"Appreciate"



"Recognise"



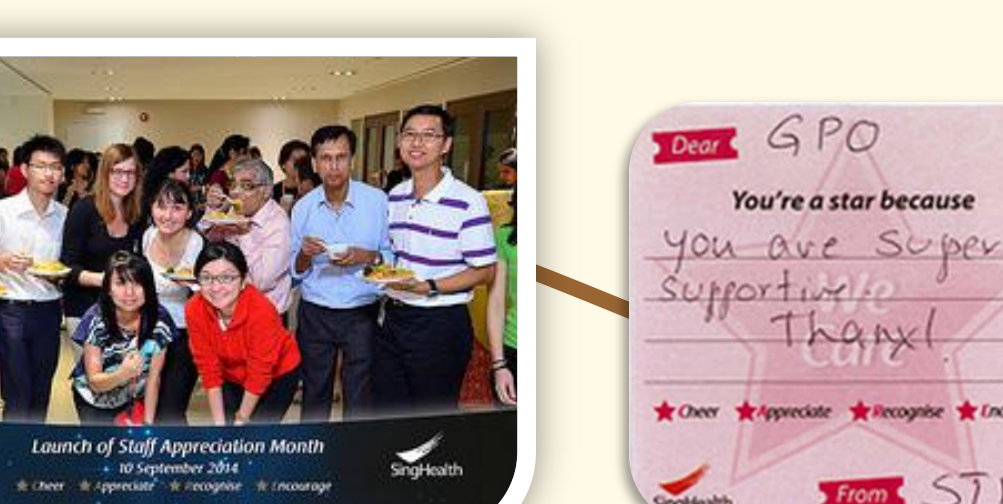
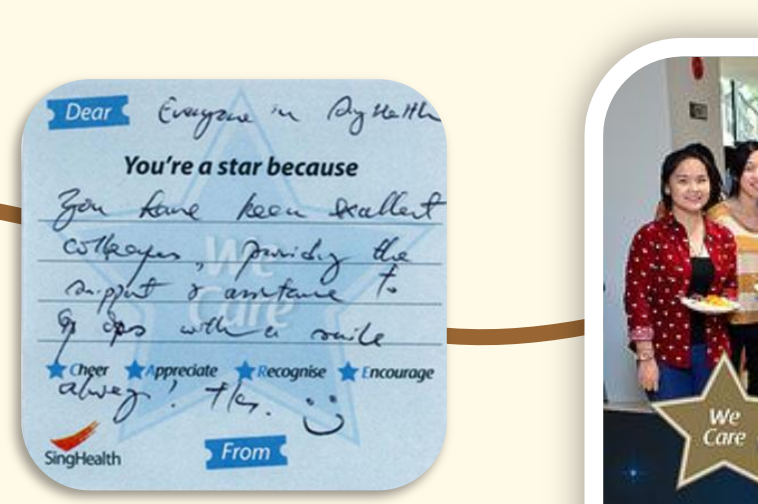
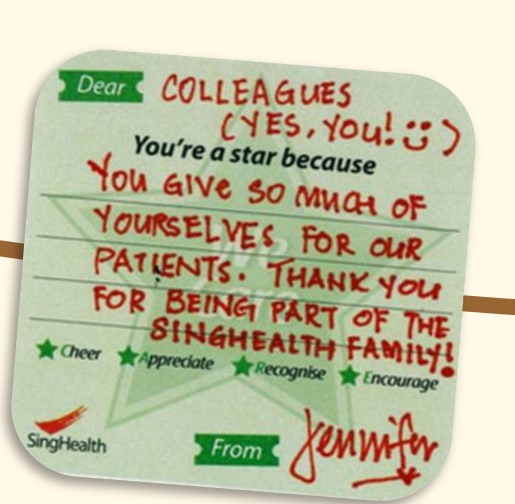
"Encourage"

RESULTS

Following the initiative, Employee Engagement Survey (EES) 2014's results had also shown marked improvements in the following areas:

- recognition given by supervisors
- non-monetary recognition received by employees

Besides the above areas, there were also significant improvements in the morale of SHHQ departments and the overall SHHQ engagement scores.



"Appreciation can make a day - even change a life. Your willingness to put it into words is all that is necessary." - Margaret Cousins



CONCLUSION

Based on the EES 2014 results, the Staff Appreciation Initiative has played a big role in promoting positive emotions and improving engagement levels in SHHQ. Recognising its positive value and impact towards fostering a coherent organisational culture, Appreciation Champions will encourage SHHQ employees to continue touching each other's lives through the little acts of C-A-R-E ("Cheer", "Appreciate", "Recognise" & "Encourage") in the concerted effort towards building a healthy, happy and engaged workforce.

EES 2014 Results

