



Case Study: eePulse, Inc. Helps Hospital Save Thousands and Improve Productivity

The Players

eePulse, Inc. and Northwestern Memorial Hospital (NMH) are the key players. eePulse, Inc., developed from years of research by Theresa Welbourne, Ph.D., provides patent-pending relationship management software using an ASP business model, copyright-protected research that focuses on the drivers of firm performance and weekly support to assure usability and success. Northwestern Memorial Hospital has a 136-year history and is the second oldest hospital in Chicago. It is one of 125 academic medical center hospitals committed to teaching and clinical research. The hospital provides a tertiary level of care and is a major healthcare employer in the City of Chicago.

The Bottom Line

Traditional survey methods were time-consuming and provided old information once tabulated. Northwestern Memorial Hospital decided to utilize eePulse Inc.'s Measurecom™ system, a Web-based measurement tool, to improve workforce commitment to support hospital strategic goals, monitor trends and address employee concerns. After eight months experience, 33% of the workforce contributed to the e-mail survey. NMH was then able to create a taskforce of managers and Human Resource leaders to successfully address key concerns. The ability to collect people data in real-time saved NMH at least \$250,000 in one year in the amount of time saved from conducting focus groups and taking employees away from their jobs to take a traditional survey.

Key Technologies

NMH used eePulse Inc.'s Measurecom (measurement plus communication), solution, a Web-based tool that gives managers weekly reports on workforce energy levels (the "Pulse"), productivity, satisfaction, and the key opportunity and problem areas that affect the weekly Pulse. Based on extensive research, specific questions were e-mailed to employees. Participants received their own weekly, customized reports and could compare their answers with those of their co-workers. Hospital managers could view results immediately and use the unique "Coach" function to respond to employees, attach report copies, and share information. Also, H.R. professionals could respond directly to comments without knowing the identity of the respondent.

How It Happened

NMH's strategic plan called for developing and maintaining the "best patient experience". The hospital knew that their workforce was an important part of this strategy so they were looking for real-time, frequent metrics about their employees. They utilized the Measurecom solution to obtain data that assessed employee energy and productivity levels and to communicate back to employees regarding key issues.

In addition to the regular Pulse question, NMH used the Pulse survey to ask additional questions relating to strategic initiatives and events such as those of September 11th. The hospital executives immediately knew what they did well and how they needed to improve in their disaster recovery planning. "My colleagues were reading articles about how employers could learn from the Oklahoma bombing; I didn't need to do that; I learned from my own employees," states Jan Bultema, NMH Director of Human Resources.

From Pulse results, NMH successfully established a taskforce of managers and Human Resource leaders to address key concerns through newsletter articles, staff and manager meetings, and monthly HR update e-mails. The hospital created workgroups to respond to top issues, initiated manager response pilots and distributed gift certificates to selected survey respondents.

The ability to respond quickly to employee concerns resulted in the hospital being able to measure and understand energy and productivity, act on short-term tactical opportunities to improve productivity while simultaneously making needed changes in larger strategic initiatives, communicate back that something was acted on, energize and engage employees in their work and achieve bottom line performance improvements. By giving feedback to employees and having a running dialogue, NMH met their goals of improving staff productivity levels and internal communications. "The ability to collect people data in a real-time fashion has saved NMH at least several hundred thousand dollars this year alone," said Dean Manheimer, Senior VP of Human Resources for Northwestern Memorial. "There are real costs to our hospital when my team conducts their own focus groups and takes employees out of their jobs for such events. Focus groups have helped us immensely in the past, but they simply can't be done in a way that is both timely and representative of the entire employee population. eePulse eliminates the need for us to expend those staff hours and costs."