

# 5 Tips for Healthcare Staff Engagement During a Crisis

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# Lead Through Crisis.

Greetings and thanks for reading. When there's a crisis, no one has loads of time to delve into some long winded dissertation...on just about anything. If you're reading this, well, there's probably some sort of crisis you're facing. After all, it seems like American healthcare has been in crisis for a long time. But now that we have Covid-19, some of the rules have shifted. Here are five methods for keeping your staff engaged, mindful and compassionate during these trying times.



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## Tip 1

# Remember that your staff is hurting.

Long hours, lack of supplies and protective equipment, fear of passing the virus onto a family member at home, mounting bills and pressures - all of it. Your staff is hurting. Remember that hurting people hurt people. Remember their pain when some staff blows their top. Remember it when a staff member walks off the job. Remember it when tough decisions have to be made. Hurting people hurt people.

## Tip 2

# Get Real.

Most folks in healthcare don't have a problem with reality. We are, after all, in a field that is based on science. But, in your leadership role, is there anything you're not being real about? Any numbers or data or metrics you're embarrassed to talk about?

Good. Those are the things you should probably be looking at.

Get real: in a time of crisis, honesty and transparency are keys to leadership.

### Tip 3

## Active Listening

When someone needs your ear, turn to that person, hold your body still (think playing freeze tag as a kid), look the other in the eye and then make your forehead smooth. And then, make your forehead even smoother. Soften your eyes. Try it now! Practice doing it a few times.

Look, in leadership, you have so much info coming at you, all at once. When actively listening, even if you're thinking of something else, your face can have an appearance of openness, receptiveness and equanimity.

#### Tip 4

## Check In With Your Colleagues...and Yourself.

Every day, inquire of a colleague or staff member, “Hey, are you getting enough sleep? Are you drinking enough water? Are you getting outdoors into nature a few times per day? Are you eating a balanced diet?”

The compassion of healthcare professionals and healthcare administration often comes out in the form of overwork. Be sure that, during this crisis, you’re checking in on yourself AND your staff.

Physically and emotionally.

## Tip 5

# Be present.

Yes, this is back to the very idea of what I've been teaching for 20 years: compassionate presence in healthcare. Using those two little words, "I'm here" to comfort the suffering, the vulnerable and the fearful. Be intentional about the sufferings of your staff and it can be as comforting to them as a nurse (or any clinician) can be to a patient. Your staff are people. Your colleagues are people. You are a person. And yet, through all our human failings and frailties, you have chosen to lead.

Thank you...we need healthcare leadership now more than ever.

[Join me virtually every Thursday at 10a & 4p ET for "Leading Through Crisis: A Conversation for Healthcare Leaders".](#)