Hat Assignment

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Lead-314-50 Diversity in the Workplace

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***History***

UofL Health is one of the three major health organizations in Louisville Kentucky. They are newest formed health organization having only been established since 2019 after the acquisition of the former Kentucky One/Catholic Health, however the foundation of what UofL Health was to become was built on a “185 year when it’s original institute, then called Louisville City Hospital was founded in 1837 as the teaching hospital of the University of Louisville’s School of Medicine, the ninth oldest medical school in the United States.” (UofL Health 2022). UofL Health is a fully integrated health system that has seven hospitals, four medical centers, with 200+ physician practice locations, and 700+ providers, they employee over 12,000 members of the immediate and surrounding community to ensure a diverse and culturally inclusive work force. UofL Health is a nonprofit that is operated for charitable, scientific, or educational purposes. UofL Health has established a full service, academic health care system of owned, affiliated, and contracted services, programs and facilities covering the full spectrum of health care delivery, advocacy, health promotion, education, research, and disease prevention. UofL Health has worked to improve the health of the communities it serves by working to ensure everyone has access to the health care they deserve. “UofL Health is committed to reducing barriers and increasing access to health care to all, but particularly those in Medically Underserved Areas. Improving health access in Medically Underserved Areas is a commitment to our community and to our own UofL Health family, as nearly 40% of our team members live in these areas.” (UofL Health, 2022). This is being accomplished by the creation of the New South Louisville Hospital so that the residents and members of the South Louisville community will have easier access to healthcare in their area without having travel for emergent or urgent needs. They are also investing in a multi-million-dollar expansion at the main campus in downtown Louisville. This will help in the creation of more jobs for the Louisville area and allow for more patients to be treated at UofL Health.

***Assessment***

UofL Health works to achieve a diverse work force to help care for the community it serves. It does this though the values of the organization which are as follows

Values:

* **Education & Research:** Further educate and help develop the skills of our staff by facilitating an academic, research-driven approach to patient care.
* **Patient-centered Care:** Demonstrate that our patients, their families, and the people of the communities we serve are at the heart of every decision we make.
* **Quality & Safety:** Achieve the highest standards of care and service by continually measuring and improving our outcomes.
* **Diversity & Inclusion:** Maintain an inclusive environment where we honor, respect and celebrate everyone for who they are, no matter their life experiences, perspectives or perceived differences.
* **Compassion:** Act with sensitivity and empathy in every encounter we have with our patients, their families and each other.
* **Stewardship:** Utilize resources, supplies and staff responsibly for the good of our patients, community, and organization.

These values are the light house of the organization to help guide UofL Health to create a diverse and inclusive environment for not only its employees, but also for the patient they serve daily. Another of the initiatives that have been put into place employee electives for development catalog where employees have “unlimited access to a robust selection of professional development courses through the Organizational Development, Engagement, and Inclusion team’s (UofL Health, 2022). These classes allow employees access to training that touches on topics such as implicit Bias in Health Care where members of the organization can learn how biases can impact patient care and the workplace. Allowing members for different parts of the organization to meet and discuss important issues like implicit bias help create a more understanding and welcoming environment not only for its employees but also for the member of the community that its servers. According to Kennedy (2008) “You can transcend hesitation, doubt, and fear in a short time by getting to know people, learning about their differences, and sharing yours” (p 90). In trying to find out more about UofL Health diversity and inclusion efforts I have interviewed three different members of the UofL Health organization with the Organizational Snapshot. These individuals are at a variety of levels of management to attempt to get a diverse look at how employees and leadership view the organization and were there current efforts amount. As UofL Health has made huge efforts with-in the three years of coming together as an organization to works toward a diverse and inclusion culture, however there is clearly more work that needs to be done, as I conducted my interviews each interviewee stated that they had a hard time or trouble answering the questions. As of lot of this information was not readily available for employees, it took some time digging though there information to find out what diversity efforts had / are taking place.

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| **AREAS OF INFLUENCE** | **INTERVIEWEES 1 and 2** |
| **Leadership** | 1. Found upper leadership to have little to no diversity.2. Felt like there was a diverse group of leaders. |
| **Culture** | 1. I believe the diversity stating is fluent with the Mission of our organization, in that we focus on compassion and patient-centered care, which would embrace the diverse population that we care for.2. Felt there is a diverse culture, among the hospitals, but was unsure about offsite campuses. |
| **Involvement** | 1. Feel like UofL does try to be involved with the community, but more work can be done.2. Felt the UofL does a decent job getting employees and the community involved in the local community |
| **Business** |  1. At UofL Health I cannot think of anything specifically focused on diversity, as the population we serve is well represented by the team members in the organization. We continually look for gaps in care for our patients and by continually working to fill those gaps, we further embrace the diverse culture around us.2. We are a diverse group of people working together, and mostly doing it well |
| **Strategy & Measures** | 1. UofL collects data around diversity and inclusion and is using it to build on what they already have, but the information should be more transparent to the workforce. 2. Data is being collected and reviewed, and then is used to help gear training. |
| **Staffing & Development** | 1. There is basic training in diversity and inclusion, and that more can be added to have a more well-rounded course. More follow up should be done throughout the year 2. Feel like there is training available for diversity and inclusion. |
| **Ownership** | 1. There is ownership of results, however the important part is what they are doing with those results once they have them. That is the piece of the puzzle that is missing 2. Very high ownership if results  |

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| **AREAS OF INFLUENCE** | **INTERVIEW 3** |
| **Leadership** | Leadership at the lower level or ground level is made up of a diverse group of individuals, however leadership at the executive level remains with little diversity. |
| **Culture** | The culture of UofL health is quite diverse with many different cultures having representation in the workforce in the hospitals.  |
| **Involvement** | UofL does show some involvement with the community but does not do the best job in communicating how members of the work force can become involved in community events or being involved with changes within UofL Health.  |
| **Business** |  We are a diverse workforce on the ground level, and it needs to persuade more at the higher levels of the organization as these members have the most influence over the organization and what direction that it goes in.  |
| **Strategy & Measures** | Unaware of how UofL measures diversity in its organization as they have not shared this information with its employees or if it has not made the information readily available for members of the everyday workforce.  |
| **Staffing & Development** | UofL health has yearly training and assessments that members of its workforce must complete though the Knowledge center to stay in good standing with the organization. Many of these training touch on diversity and inclusion but tend to be the only classes we can take.  |
| **Ownership** |  Ownership belongs to every team member at UofL Health. Everyone needs to take a piece of the pie so that we can work as a diver inclusive organization.  |

**Acceptance**

To have a truly diverse and inclusive working culture there needs to be buy-in at every level from executive leadership to the team members on the ground level working with patients. UofL Health is committed to having a diverse and inclusive work environment, however there is more work to do. There needs to be more effort, time and resources made to the diversity and inclusion of UofL Health for it to become a leader in the Healthcare industry. The benefit of working towards this goal as a healthcare organization is it allows you to produce new fresh ideas, allows you to meet more of the community needs, and allows you to build trust within the community you serve. According to the Usaha this is evident “Research has shown that diverse groups are more effective at problem solving than homogenous groups, and policies that promote diversity and inclusion will enhance our ability to draw from the broadest possible pool of talent, solve our toughest challenges, maximize employee engagement and innovation, and lead by example by setting a high standard for providing access to opportunity to all segments of our society.”(Usaha,2022) People come to UofL Health at some of lowest and hardest times, they need a Healthcare system that is going to be there and understanding of what the need to heal. This starts with its employees they have as they are their face and voice to the community. Some of the barriers that can in place in simply time. Many members of healthcare are already struggling and are stretched thinly to accommodate the influx of patients seeking care. Many times, training is rushed though, and are mostly looked at as a check off something you need to complete rather then something you can learn from. If you do not allow the time for employees to truly engage in the training, then there is really a lack of benefit from it. According to the Harvard Business Review a better route to diversity training is “A broad range of approaches, from targeting training to different audiences, to re-engineering hiring practices, to normalizing flex time, to using technology and behavioral science to reduce bias in performance evaluations.” This allows you to reach different members of your organization and allows you to meet them where they are at vs trying to fit everyone into a box. Another barrier at UofL Health is lack of communication of training, programs, or events that you can take part in to help those in the community or your fellow employees. If the employees are unaware that they can participate in these then you aren’t really getting the most out of your efforts.

***Action***

One of the ways UofL Health can work on diversity with the organization is the creation of a focus group with members at every level in the organization. This would need to be spearheaded by executive leadership and their HR team. The members can either be voted in by their peers or nominated to the program. The diversity of the group will be key so that they can help create, update, and maintain information and process on diversity and the efforts UofL Health. Allowing employees to be a part of the conversation will make the workforce feel like the have a voice, allowing different areas of the organization to come together allows for different ideas and values and viewpoints as UofL Health have facilities all over Louisville and surrounding areas. They can then take back the initiative to their home facilities and help with the process of rolling out any new initiatives that the team would like to take on. This will need support from the executive level of leadership, and could be rolled out quickly, however the effectiveness of the program may take time see. The executive leaders will also need to be committed to allow changes that the program sees fit.

Another great way we can help promote diversity and inclusion is to create an easily accessed resource page on the employee interact page. Having an easily accessible site that could have all resources, events, policies and updates on the diversity and inclusion effort at employees’ fingers tips would allow more employees to take ownership in the efforts put out by the company. According to Kennedy(2008) in Putting our Difference to Work “Make technology a key tool for enriching communication; invest in developing knowledge and know-how to personally participate and support its use by example.”( p.52) You cannot be a part of change if you don’t know it’s happening. Investing and supporting technology such a diversity webpage so that member’s from across the organization is key for promoting diversity and inclusive work culture. For this to rollout IT and HR would need to work together on the creation of site and the rollout of the site to the employees. This is something that can be rolled out at any point with the help of the required parties to get it set up.

 Finally, UofL health can start at the hiring level, by attracting different demographics for the Louisville area to join the Healthcare organization they can create one of the most diverse work forces in Louisville. Currently there are three major health organizations in our area so there is a lot of competition for employees in the Healthcare field, but offering a place where diversity is held as an asset and not a hindrance is key. Having diverse and inclusive hiring teams will be essential. Company can do this by “undertaking a thorough investigation of talent management policies and processes to understand which ones limit opportunity. Then identify what leaders, managers, human resources, and D&I professionals should stop, change, or redesign”(Harvard Business Review,2021) UofL health can accomplish this by becoming more involved with the community practically at the High School and college level. This again would need to come from the executive level and be rolled out over time and resources will be needed for it. UofL has already started this by offering free undergraduate education to employees and their families, and they have also partnered with Central High School’s pre-medical magnet program, however the key to this working and truly creating diversity will be with allowing access to these programs at more High Schools in the area.

***Accountability***

The way that I can be accountable for helping with the diversity efforts within the organization is by getting my co-workers involved in the movements, programs, and training put forth by UofL Health. Having hard conversations about what is currently happening in our city around us and how we can be the change for the future generation of healthcare. The conversation must begin with your own group of co-workers. We have learned over the past year or so that all important changes start out with small but then grow once you put momentum behind it. The workforce has to be leading the cause, if it is left up to the cooperating employer then the status que will forever remain the same. If the employees at UofL Health show the importance of having a diverse workforce, then we can force the hand of the executive leadership to make changes we see beneficial for our organization. Change happens with numbers the more people we can get involved it making UofL Health a diverse organization the sooner it can meet the needs of it employees and the patients who seek care from UofL Health.

***Achievement***

Creating a diverse and inclusive organization will take time, effort, and dedication from all members and levels of the organization, however if we make the effort now to create change the future employees. What UofL Health can measure in its data in retention rates, employee engagement, employee satisfaction, diversity of current employment vs diversity of future employment, and the diversity across organization levels. Adding a exit interview when someone leaves the organization could also be critical in helping identify areas of improvement. People tend to be more honest in their exit interviews as they no longer have the fear of retaliation. Currently UofL health does complete an employee engagement survey every year, however the key to success is what is done with that information and how can be used to with other data collected to help continue to grow the diversity of UofL Health. Data from this key area will help create a picture of what is working and what is not working with the organization and areas of diversity and inclusion that may need improvement.

***More Actions***

 Seeing the executive leadership team talking and practicing diversity inclusion is a key step, as we know change has to start at the top in order for there to be buy-in for other levels of the organization. According to the Harvard Business review “The CEO needs to take a public stance, embed D&I in the organization’s purpose, exemplify the culture, and take responsibility for progress toward goals. They need to be out front, even if a CDO is part of the team.” (Harvard Business Review,2022). By doing this they are setting the example that is to be followed by all. Allowing employees, a part of the action will be critical to keeping a diverse work force, employees now more than ever want a say in the companies they work for. They want to know they are making a difference, and they want it to be felt. Allowing employees, a chance to be a part of the conversation and putting it back into their hands will allow them to be more willing to accept change in process. Employees want their voice heard, allowing them to be heard to create a stronger, more actively engaged worked force.

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