

February 2007

History of Valentine's Day

Every February, candy, flowers, & gifts are exchanged, all in the name of St. Valentine. But who is this mysterious saint & why do we celebrate this holiday?

One legend contends that Valentine was a priest who served during the 3rd century in Rome. When Emperor Claudius II decided single men made better soldiers, he outlawed marriage for young men. Valentine, realizing the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius & continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. When Valentine's actions were revealed, Claudius sentenced him to death.

According to legend, Valentine actually sent the first 'valentine' greeting. While in prison, Valentine fell in love with a young girl who visited him during his confinement. Before his death, it is alleged that he wrote her a letter, signed 'From your Valentine,' an expression that is still in use today. By the Middle Ages, he became one of the most popular saints in England & France.

Source: The History Channel

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Retaining Hospital Staff Vital to Success
by Chris Thrash

According to the Department of Labor, health care occupations are expected to grow at twice the rate of non-healthcare jobs, and more than 5 million new healthcare workers will be needed by 2010. Nearly every hospital in the United States is dealing with staffing shortages along with rising employee turnover and declining employee morale which lead to costly expenses that accompany these issues. American Hospital Association reports there are currently more than 125,000 nursing positions unfilled in healthcare today. There will be a shortfall of approximately 1 million nurses by 2010 and 1.5 million by 2020 according to Fitch, Inc., a Wall Street Bond Rating Firm. JCAHO has identified that the nursing shortage is also diminishing hospitals' capacity to treat patients as tens of thousands of hospital deaths every year can be blamed on a nationwide nursing shortage. Your healthcare organization is competing for staff members in your community. If your competitor does a better job of attracting, developing and retaining top



talent, this can have serious impact on your organization's patient care abilities and overall financial performance. Giving managers effective tools to build successful relationships with their staff is vital to success. Developing an atmosphere of teamwork, reward and recognition can help organizations attract new employees and retain talented staff to offset the ongoing challenges of staffing shortages. At Chris Thrash and Associates, we help hospitals create a culture that attracts new employees and retain top performers.

Ignite with PASSION

How can a leader ignite with passion to recognize, reward and communicate service excellence?

- Use encouragement as positive feedback for staff
- Personalize recognition for all staff
- Personally hand write thank you notes to staff who go above & beyond

- Make rewards & recognition fair and consistent for everyone
- Celebrate accomplishments publicly
- Make recognition fun & motivating to encourage repeat behavior
- Make work meaningful and show staff how they make a difference
- Strive for your workplace to be family friendly
- Inspire staff to be their best



Inspire. Engage. Ignite.

OUR MISSION

"To create vision, purpose and passion for service culture excellence within organizations"

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Client Spotlight 

The Methodist Hospital System in Houston is consistently named one of America's Top 100 Hospitals. In 2006, The Methodist Hospital was ranked in the top 20 in five specialties by U.S. News & World Report. Not only is Methodist consistently named as 'most preferred' by patient surveys, Methodist Hospital System has been ranked as one of FORTUNE's "100 Best Companies to Work For". Methodist is committed to a culture of service excellence. Their locations are **The Methodist Hospital** in Houston, **Methodist Sugar Land Hospital**, **Methodist Willowbrook** and **San Jacinto Methodist** in



Baytown. Chris Thrash has had the privilege to partner with Methodist to offer training presentations and customized videos as part of their service initiatives. Methodist is always creative in their approach to training. In 2005, Chris played the role of Ryan Seacrest as part of their Service Star competition, a spin on TV's "American Idol".

What's Really Propping Up the Economy ?

Since 2001, the healthcare industry has added 1.7 million jobs. The rest of the private sector? None. If you really want to understand what makes the U.S. economy tick these days, don't go to Silicon Valley, Wall Street, or Washington. Just take a short trip to your local hospital. Park where you don't block the ambulances, and watch the unending flow of doctors, nurses, technicians, and support personnel. You'll have a front row seat at the healthcare economy. For years, everyone from politicians on both sides of the aisle to corporate execs to your Aunt Tilly have bemoaned American health care. But the very real problems with the healthcare system mask a simple fact: Without it, the nation's labor market would be in a deep coma. Since 2001, 1.7 million new jobs have been added in the healthcare sector, which includes related industries such as pharmaceuticals and health insurance. Meanwhile, the number of private sector jobs outside of healthcare is no higher than it was five years ago. The U.S. unemployment rate is 4.7%, compared with 8.2% and 8.9%, respectively, in Germany and France. But the healthcare systems of those two countries added very few jobs from 1997 to 2004, according to new data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development, while U.S. hospitals and physician offices never stopped growing. Take away healthcare hiring in the U.S., and quicker than you can say cardiac bypass, the U.S. unemployment rate would be 1 to 2 percentage points higher. *Source: Business Week Online Sept 2006*



Want a Fresh Perspective on Creating Service Excellence at Your Hospital?

Chris Thrash and Associates will evaluate your service culture and help you create new energy & ideas for service excellence !

For a Free Assessment by Phone, Call Today

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