

Team Leadership Monthly Activity: Reacting vs. Responding

Understanding the differences between *reacting* to a patient's needs and *responding* to a patient's needs is key when crafting a response to questions and objections. This month's activity will help your team to recognize the significance of building a long-term patient-responsive relationship.

Ask the team to describe how they have responded to patient objections in the past. They may recall that they are quick to take action and may have the tendency to evaluate the situation after the fact. You could ask them how often they encounter an objection or concern to which they have carefully crafted a response that they can call on when the situation arises. Most likely, this is not the common occurrence. Most often, our goal is to extinguish the fire and immediately (potentially temporarily) take care of the problem.

This is reacting. The fact of the matter is that many of the objections we encounter in a given day are not unique- many patients share the same concerns, hesitations and fears. In this month's message, Kevin challenges us to carefully and intentionally craft responses to common objections and concerns.

If you've ever asked Kevin a question, you will know that he is rarely (if ever) caught off guard- and if he is, you would never know it. He is a master of crafting responses- and in doing so, educating and increasing the confidence of the person to whom he is speaking. You can inspire this in your patients. Your goal here is to build a long-term patient-responsive relationship.

1. Divide the group into teams of four to six individuals.
2. Have each team come up with three to five key differences between reacting to a customer's needs versus responding.
3. Allow 5 to 8 minutes for discussion.
4. When finished have each group share while building a master list.

The master list should reflect the following ideas:

Reacting	vs.	Responding
Short-term consequences		Long-term solutions
Putting out fires		Building relationships
Quick answers, just moving past the question		Right answers, addressing root of the problem
Stressed, caught off guard		More relaxed, prepared
Rushed, “on the fly”		Intentional and thoughtful
Ready—Fire—Aim		Ready—Aim—Fire
Reactive		Proactive preparation

Review and discuss the final list. Did the team recognize that building a long-term patient-responsive relationship actually requires some of both: reacting *and* responding?

However, if we take the time to intentionally prepare a well-crafted response that addresses the heart of the concern and the true objection, we are able to respond as a result of getting to know our patients better and cultivating powerful and lasting relationships in the process.

While this does take time and effort on the front end, it becomes second nature as you have this dialogue with patients over time. And the relationships you build with your patient base will prove invaluable as you see your case acceptance as well as referral culture grow which helps you achieve your ultimate goals of helping more patients get healthy.