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# Leadership Visibility in Practice



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## Introduction

Visibility of leadership within an organization is a critical driver of success, particularly when it comes to building social capital, trust and driving change. Senior leadership visibility can help shape an organization's culture, inspire accountability and ensure that objectives and progress are communicated clearly and consistently. Visibility goes beyond physical presence and includes creating feelings of emotional connection and authentic interest in teams and individuals.

This guide will walk you through the fundamentals of leadership visibility and common obstacles organizations face. With successful practices and actionable steps, this guide aims to equip you with the tools needed to enhance leader visibility within your organization.

# Why is leader visibility important?

- **Builds trust.** When leaders are present and transparent, it fosters trust. It helps humanize leaders and their decision-making process, supporting people in feeling more connected to their leaders and the organization's mission.
- **Drives change.** Leadership visibility allows teams to better understand what changes are necessary, the reasoning and thought process behind changes and how they contribute to the bigger picture.
- **Fosters engagement.** When people feel seen and heard as they interact with leadership, it keeps them connected to the organization and excited to contribute.



# Key principles of effective leader visibility



**Consistent presence:** Visibility must be constant, not a one-off event.



**Transparency:** Be open about challenges, opportunities and reasons behind decisions.



**Authenticity:** Be yourself. Be present, show genuine interest, follow-up on commitments and create a personal connection.



**Relevance:** Make sure information shared is valuable, relevant to the person or group, and connected to the organization's goals.

# Leader visibility practices

Ensure all levels of leadership provide consistent touch points.

Use these practices to guide your organization on foundational elements to driving leader visibility.

## 2. Practices for creating leader visibility

### Consistent Presence

- ✓ Executive and leader rounds (at least monthly and across as many shifts/facilities as possible).
- ✓ Opportunities to shadow employees to understand a day-in-the-life.
- ✓ Consistent, bi-directional and multi-modal communication channels. (townhalls, CEO communications, etc.)

### Transparency

- ✓ Be transparent about how decisions are made, and tie it back to employee feedback.
- ✓ Communicate clearly, through multiple modes and often.
- ✓ Close the loop on feedback that has been provided.
- ✓ Create visibility to what is going on around the organization.

### Authenticity

- ✓ Connect decisions to the value it brings to individuals and explain the “why.”
- ✓ Lead and listen with empathy and understanding.
- ✓ Create meaningful connections.

### Relevance

- ✓ Make interactions meaningful.
- ✓ Come to conversations with purpose, questions and goals.



Organizations experience many common barriers to creating leader visibility. You are not alone! Use these tips to understand the largest barriers other health systems face and how to overcome them.

## Common Barriers



### Competing priorities

Balancing leadership objectives and goals can make it hard to be visible at the right time to the right groups.



### Resistance

Individuals or groups might resist new approaches to leader visibility if they disrupt their routines, have unclear value/benefits or feel unsustainable.



### Psychological safety

Past experiences or lack of relationship development can prevent people from feeling safe sharing feedback with leadership.

## Solutions



### Prioritize communication

Create scheduled and clear ways leaders can connect with people and teams. Ensure there is clear purpose behind connections.



### Show the value

Share examples of how creating connections have helped drive experience, change or innovations. Be consistent in actions and take time to build trust. Be patient; not everyone will engage on the same timeline.



### Authentic interactions

When being visible, create authentic interactions. Ask questions that are work and personal related to form a connection. Close the loop on feedback previously given and ask what needs to happen to make the experience better for them or their patients.

**Use this discussion guide to facilitate conversation around where your organization is implementing successful practices, could improve in execution or should consider implementing to increase accountability.**

### Executive presence

- ☐ Do senior leaders regularly engage with frontline employees?
  - ☐ Through multiple formats and across shifts and facilities?
- ☐ Are executives present and active participants at new hire and leadership orientations?
- ☐ Are townhall meetings or organization-wide updates held regularly?
- ☐ Are feedback loops closed regularly? How?

### Communication channels

- ☐ Do senior leaders share a regular (e.g. monthly) newsletter or email updates?
- ☐ Are there podcasts, video messages or other engaging media used?
- ☐ Do employees feel that leadership messages are clear, transparent and authentic?

### Trust & transparency

- ☐ Do employees trust that leadership listens to their concerns?
- ☐ Are key organizational priorities and decisions explained effectively?
- ☐ Are leaders sharing updates on organizational progress and challenges?
- ☐ How much time is spent on trust-building activities by leadership?

# Reflection

After going through the discussion guide with a small team, complete the information below.

**Top 3 things we are doing well**

**Top 3 opportunities for improvement**

**What will we do from here?**

(Define specific actions you want to take to address the opportunities)

**Who needs to be involved or support this?**

(Include individuals, teams, departments or leadership)



# Prioritizing Action

Use this page to prioritize actions your organization has identified.

What actions will you take...

NOW  
(immediate actions/quick wins)

NEAR  
(next 30-60 days)

NEXT  
(long-term focused)

Items to revisit later or that  
require more planning