

# **HUMANS OF PARTNERSHIP**

## SPEAK UP







## Are you #FreeToSpeak?

It took a whack on the head for Tedros Tecle to learn the importance of speaking up.

You'll meet Tecle on page 6. He's a rad tech at our Santa Rosa Medical Center. Because of a less-than-ideal setup, he banged his head on a mobile X-ray machine. He wasn't hurt, just really embarrassed. Enough so that he didn't say anything.

You can guess what happened next: Another tech did the same thing and was injured. The experience motivated Tecle to become a facility workplace safety tri-chair and a champion for speaking up.

Keeping employees, managers, physicians and patients free from injury requires a **#FreeToSpeak** culture, one where halting work to address a safety concern is a cause for gratitude, not—as in some workplaces—scorn.

In fact, a **#FreeToSpeak** culture is the foundation for being able to do what we value most at Kaiser Permanente and in the Coalition of Kaiser Permanente Unions: providing high-quality care and service at an affordable price while providing the best place to work for our employees.

To do that, everyone on our unit-based teams—no matter their role or job title—must feel free to chime in with suggestions about how to make things better, no matter how wacky or inconvenient their ideas might seem. That's not yet the case; responses to KP's annual People Pulse survey show the need for improvement.

Creating a speaking-up culture takes time. In this issue of *Hank*, you'll find tips and tools to get started and keep going, whether you're a frontline manager or a union-represented employee. And you'll hear from the Humans of Partnership who are, more and more, #FreeToSpeak.

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12 On speaking up when you are not the boss Practical advice from two union workers on how to gain the confidence to use your voice.

**13** How to create a 'speak-up' culture
Four tips from one manager to earn the trust of your staff.





#### INFOGRAPHIC

A visual board is worth 10,000 words: Use one to build a #FreeToSpeak environment.

## TO DO THIS ISSUE

- 6 Speak out, be heard: Start small and ask questions.
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Are you a problem solver?

## Easy to browse, easy to use



The LMP website is getting a makeover. Visit LMPartnership.org in October and see what's changed! You'll find these new sections and more:

» Team-Tested Practices: Stories and tools packaged together to make spreading best practices a snap.

- » Path to Performance: Where teams at each level can get the tools they need.
- » Gallery: Watch our latest videos and get the current issue of *Hank* online.

#### WHO'S BEHIND HANK?

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## WHAT IS HANK?



Hank is an award-winning journal named in honor of Kaiser Permanente's visionary co-founder and innovator, Henry J. Kaiser.

Hank's mission: Highlight the successes and struggles of Kaiser Permanente's Labor Management Partnership, which has been recognized as a model operating strategy for health care. Hank is published quarterly for the partnership's more than 145,000 workers, managers, physicians and dentists. All of them are working to make KP the best place to receive care and

the best place to work—and in the process are making health care history. That's what Henry Kaiser had in mind from the start.

For information about the management and union co-leads advancing partnership in your region, please visit LMPartnership.org.





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LMPartnership.org

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## MEET YOUR NATIONAL AGREEMENT



## How do you get everyone on your team to know they're in a UBT? Talk to them!

'm in a UBT, you're in a UBT, we're all in a UBT! Hooray! Let's start our performance improvement project, collect our data and make a PowerPoint presentation to explain our results.

...Whoa. Not so fast. Unit-based teams were launched as part of the 2005 National Agreement, but we all still hear stories about frontline union members, managers and physicians who don't realize they're on a UBT. This is a big deal. When people don't know they're on a UBT, they're missing out on an opportunity to take part in improving service and quality for our members and patients.

That's why negotiators hammering out the 2015 National Agreement added a requirement to the Path to Performance: In order for a UBT to move up to Level 3, it has to have "a communications structure to reach all members of the department" in place.

Over time, this will help everyone in the department realize they're part of the UBT—and will lay to rest the myth that "the UBT" is a small group of people who lock themselves in a meeting room, drink coffee and eat doughnuts and solve problems for everyone else. Your team needs you contributing ideas; our members and patients need you.

To help his UBT, Marc White, a registered nurse and labor co-lead at Sunnyside Medical Center in the Northwest region, started an e-mail newsletter. Talk about a communications challenge! His team is the float pool for all the medical-surgical units at the hospital. So members don't even work together on a regular basis. Because they dip into

other departments, they need to know about the goals and performance improvement projects going on in the six units they support.

From the slew of emails that fly back and forth, White picks out the key information about those departments that the nurses need to know. His management co-lead, Beth Parmenter, is all for it. "Every unit could benefit from a newsletter," she says.

White, a member of OFNHP/ONA, has ambitious plans. Going forward, he says, "I want it to be colorful, put it in sections—maybe have our own little website."

But White is the first to say perfection isn't the goal: An email with three "need to know" items will do. [150]



# Nine top tips for getting everyone involved

- 1. Set up an email list
- 2. Send updates via email
- **3.** Assign UBT representative members to meet one on one with other staff
- 4. Huddle regularly
- **5.** Huddle in front of a visual board
- **6.** Convene regular department-wide meetings
- Create a storyboard for your staff break room
- 8. Have a suggestion box
- 9. Create a phone tree

### I'M IN A UBT— AND SO ARE YOU!

It's a common problem: In large departments, a lot of people think "the unit-based team" only includes the employees who go to UBT meetings. Truth is, everyone working in the unit is a UBT member, and the ones going to meetings are their representatives.

Better communication in a department helps everyone get involved in the team's work and take pride in what's being accomplished. That leads to better outcomes for our patients.

Watch for LMP tools with this icon—they'll give you tips for getting everyone on your team involved.



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# HUMANS OF PARTNERSHIP

# SPEAK UP

For everyone at Kaiser Permanente—union members, managers, care providers—speaking up is a right and a responsibility. Being **#FreeToSpeak** is part of working in partnership. It's not always easy, but your voice makes a difference. The short stories here make that clear.



y mom was very much into making sure people registered to vote. 'If you don't vote, you can't complain,' she told us. It works that way in everything. In life. At work, I was a union steward and a compliance champion—these put me in a position to speak up for others. Most people are afraid of the repercussions. I'm even more afraid about what may happen if I don't speak up. Before I worked at KP, I was an assistant manager at a company that didn't have a union, UBTs or a partnership. The manager made all of the decisions. The manager wanted to let a person go, but couldn't tell me a good reason why. I said, 'We need to give her another chance if it's not because of her job performance.' I could have lost my job for speaking up, but it worked out fine for both of us. They put it in my hands to train her."

#### -NADINE B. FIELDS-ROUNTREE

Union partnership representative, UFCW Local 1996, Coalition of Kaiser Permanente Unions (Georgia)

efore I was in a UBT, I couldn't bring up concerns to the whole department in an environment where I felt I was heard, like [what happens now] in a huddle. I'm all about fairness. I hate for people who do the work to be shut down. We need to have a voice so that we can be heard and make things better for ourselves and our patients."

#### —TERI CARVALHO LUKE, RN

UBT consultant, Hawaii Nurses Association, OPEIU Local 50 (Mapunapuna Clinic, Hawaii)



do process improvement every day as part of my job. I sort mail and look for ways to save money. I noticed that several envelopes were being mailed to the same location almost daily. I decided to bundle the envelopes to the same location and was able to save over \$20 per bundle, which is about \$1,500 monthly for just this one location. I've got 15 addresses I do this with. Everything I do with the mail, I look for savings. I've worked for KP for 46 years. I'm a mail clerk that's what I do and I've had the same job since I was hired."

#### —JOHN LYSTER

Mail clerk, SEIU Local 49 (Northwest)

neveral years ago, many nurses in the region were facing layoff or redeployment due to a primary care redesign. We were forced to leave our work teams, facilities, patients and friends that many of us had worked with for years. It was tough. Devastating, really, for many of us. We had to get past that to move forward. We had to figure out our purpose and how to best take care of our patients and each other. I'm the UBT labor co-lead for Primary Care Virtual Support. Our team is amazing. The people I work with don't just show up, we're professionals and we're engaged. I'm all about getting us to the highest level we can get to."

— LAVONNE E. HARRIS, RN UFCW Local 7 (Colorado)



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# HUMANS OF PARTNERSHP SPEAK UP (continued from page 5)



friend of mine committed suicide a week and a half ago. We all thought things were OK, even though we knew they weren't perfect. We had no idea things were as bad as they were. This wasn't a Kaiser colleague or member but—at home, at work, you never know when what you say might make the crucial difference. Could I have asked more questions? It may not have changed the outcome, but at least I would have spoken up."

-DAVID A. HARPER

Continuing Care director (Mid-Atlantic States)

## Speak out, be heard

Your voice matters. Your participation in your UBT helps improve care—and improves the workplace. If you are reluctant to say what's on your mind, try these tips.

- Start small. Build your "speakingup" muscle with things that are relatively easy to talk about. You'll gain confidence and the strength to speak up about harder subjects.
- Ask questions. You'll get more comfortable speaking up if you start by asking others to say more about points they've made.
- Get advance support. Knowing there's someone on your team who shares your point of view will make it easier to speak up in a meeting.
- Take three deep breaths.

  Deep breathing relaxes your body and reduces fear.
- Offer solutions, not just problems. Team members will be more receptive if you make the effort to find possible solutions.

**CALL TO ACTION:** Identify what stops you from speaking up—and what you can do to feel safe. Then plan what you'd like to say about an issue that matters to you.

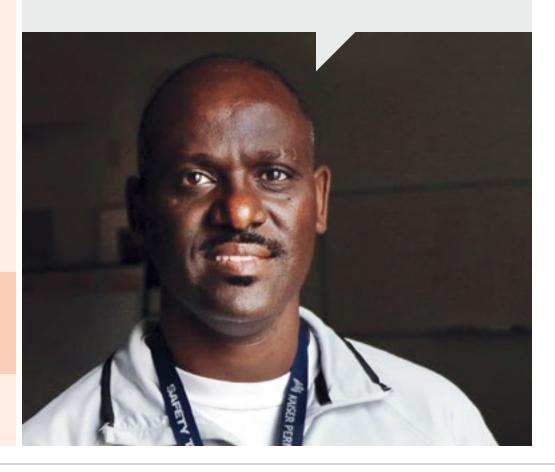
Download a poster version of these tips at LMPartnership.org/free-to-speak.

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bout eight years ago I was using a mobile X-ray machine in a patient's room. The rooms in this section were very small. I had the machine and the tube set up, then I positioned the patient—and when I moved, I forgot about where the tube was. I hit my head on it. It hurt quite a bit, but I wasn't injured. I was too embarrassed to tell anyone. I didn't say anything and sure enough another tech did the same thing. Unfortunately, they were hurt a lot more than I was. I could only think that if I had spoken up earlier, I could have potentially helped others. After my colleague was injured, I spoke out at my department meeting. Now we position the patient first, and we don't move the tube for the X-ray machine until we are ready to take the picture."

#### —TEDROS TECLE

Radiologic technologist, SEIU-UHW steward and workplace safety tri-chair (Santa Rosa Medical Center, Northern California)



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had an injury at my previous job. It was due to the workstation not beingappropriate for my height. I had talked about the issues I had with my workstation for years, and unfortunately no attention was brought to it until an injury occurred, which ended up being two separate injuries—one to my neck and one to my shoulder, arm and hand. My hand actually locked up in the middle of work. When I came here, I wanted to make sure that no one else went through that experience. That's why I became a workplace safety champion."

#### —CHAKANA MAYO

Pharmacy technician, UFCW Local 770, and workplace safety champion, Ambulatory Care Pharmacy (Robertson Building, West Los Angeles Medical Center)

## Make it safe to speak up

Are you a team leader? Here are tips for creating a work environment where team members feel free to speak without fear of being embarrassed or punished.



**Lead by example.** Actively listen and encourage feedback.



**Build trust.** Use huddles and meetings as opportunities for employee voices to be heard. Share a mistake you've made—and what you learned from it.



**Encourage others to ask questions,** express concerns or suggest solutions to a problem.



Round routinely. Have a short list of open-ended questions to use at huddles and when you meet with each team member for regular one-on-one check-ins. Knowing what questions to expect can help people organize their thoughts.



**Close the loop.** Take action on concerns that are raised. Then share the results.

**CALL TO ACTION:** Learn more about the power of rounding on **LMPartnership.org**; type *rounding for outcomes* in the search box. Or, on insideKP, go to **kpnet.kp.org/qrrm/service2/COE/roundings**.

Download a poster version of these tips at LMPartnership.org/free-to-speak.

# Canine partners ease the way



"People are always touching me. Talking baby talk to me. That's OK. It makes them feel better. When I go to work, I'm there for the patients. In my heart, though, I know I'm there for the staff, too. They work so hard. They look so stressed sometimes. No wonder it's hard for them to speak up! I give them a little bump, and I know I've helped. That's how I speak up. Every day. I'm a pet therapy dog. I've been coming to Sunnyside Medical Center for nearly two years."

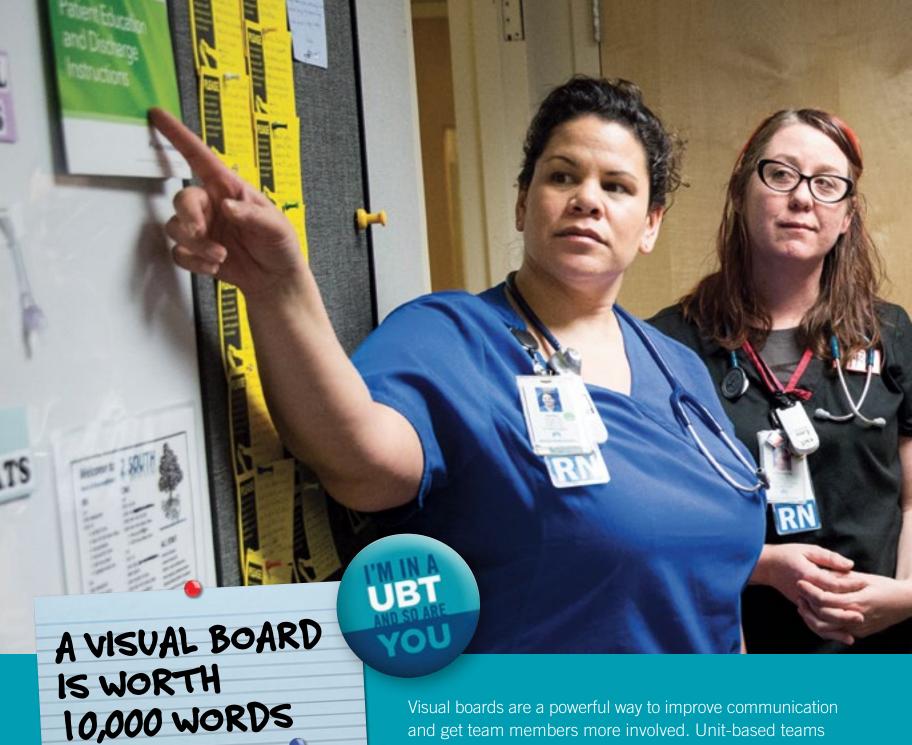
**—LENA**, volunteer, unrepresented (Northwest)

## More Humans on LMPartnership.org

You'll meet frontline workers—Richard Abrenilla (right), an ED clerk in South Sacramento, who recalls working in a department where "everyone was too afraid to say anything"—and higher-ups, too. Humans of Partnership is inspired by Humans of New York, a blog started by photographer Brandon Stanton in 2010 that now has millions of followers. We'll be adding more stories all the time.

Visit LMPartnership.org/humans often!





Here's the basic information that goes on a board. Visual boards are a powerful way to improve communication and get team members more involved. Unit-based teams that regularly huddle in front of their visual board find the practice surfaces issues and builds a **#FreeToSpeak** work environment.



## Team information

Start by including the name of the UBT and department. You also may want to add the names of the team's co-leads, sponsors and health and safety champion. Post minutes from team meetings or department announcements in this section.



## Key goals: region, facility, department

Which are the most important quality, service, affordability and best place to work goals that team members need to know about? Post them—and post the most current metrics to show how the team is doing on those goals.



## Current SMART goal

Use this space to post the SMART goal (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-bound) for the team's current test of change.



## Data on tests of change

A run chart shows how the team is doing on its current tests of change. Post that chart or an alternate visual presentation of the data the team is gathering.

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**Get started today:** Download a tip sheet and headers for organizing your board from **LMPartnership.org**; type *create visual board* into the search box.

Visual board example

## TIP: Make it practical, not pretty

Don't stress about making your board a thing of beauty. What counts is that it works for your team and you use it. Visual boards are one of several practices that can be used to get better outcomes for patients, Kaiser Permanente members and team members.



## Improvement ideas

Make it easy for team members to contribute ideas by providing index cards or improvement idea forms.

Team members can write in their idea and either post the form or slip it into an envelope that's been attached to the board for that purpose.



## Next steps

Take the improvement ideas from team members and prioritize them—which ones can be done right away, which need more information, which need to be parked.



## Voice of the member

What are members and patients saying about their experience with the team's care and service? Share quotes from them.



## Team recognition

Teammate-to-teammate appreciation notes and thank you notes from other departments and from members and patients.

# WHY WE SPEAK UP

Article by:
SHERRY CROSBY

# Workplace injuries vanish almost entirely after these pharmacy workers find their voice

ngela Chandler and Nee Tang, Pharm.D., didn't like what they were seeing. The team co-leads for the West Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Pharmacy crouched beside Camille Wong, scrutinizing her posture as the pharmacist and UNAC/UHCP member sat typing at her computer.

After a quick huddle, the pair worked together to adjust Wong's chair until she was sitting in the ideal position to protect her from pain—and a potential injury.

"I didn't know I could adjust my chair this way. It feels good," Wong said appreciatively, her feet resting flat on the floor and her legs bent at the appropriate 90-degree angle.

## Shift in culture

Such peer safety rounds are one of the hallmarks of a dramatic shift in culture for the team, a shift that has built engagement and created a workplace where frontline workers feel confident speaking up. The department went 3½ years without injuries and earned a national workplace safety award this year.

"We're all in it together, and we're all here for each other," says Chakana Mayo, a pharmacy

technician and UFCW Local 770 member who is the team's workplace safety champion.

But the situation was not always so bright.

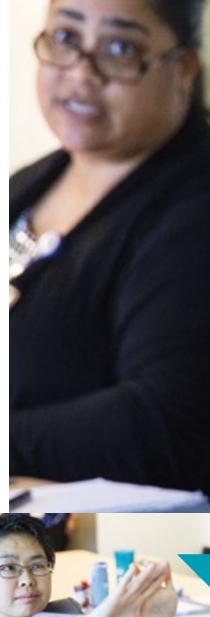
In 2011 and 2012, the department experienced a spate of workplace injuries. Employees, who spend most of their time on phones and computers, sometimes were reluctant to report pain—including one who suffered a repetitive motion injury so severe it required two surgeries and time off from work.

"It was really a wake-up call," says Tang, a pharmacy supervisor and the team's management co-lead. "We needed to make sure that everyone feels comfortable enough to speak up when they have a problem."

## Training and peer rounding

Team members responded by developing the rounding program in 2012, with training and support from an ergonomist. Under the program, colleagues round on colleagues, with pharmacists and pharmacy technicians teaming up to check in with every employee every month. And they know safety risks when they see them: 80 percent of the department's 38 staff members are trained as Level 1 ergonomic assessors.

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## WHY WE SPEAK UP

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THE NUMBER OF YEARS THE DEPARTMENT WENT WITHOUT A WORKPLACE INJURY Initially, team members conducted the rounding sessions without managers, worried that workers wouldn't feel safe speaking up. But as managers acted on employees' concerns, resolving 94 percent of workplace safety issues within 90 days of identification, the fears dissipated. Now union-represented workers round side by side with managers, who are key to instituting changes.

Team leaders "built trust with employees," says Chandler, a pharmacy technician and UFCW Local 770 member who is the team's union co-lead. "Team members know we're looking out for their well-being. Now people are open and engaged."

"Once we brought in management," says Mayo, "we were able to collectively do things together, and it turned out for the better."

## Helping new employees

That open, engaged culture helps the team address problems quickly.

In February, the department experienced its first workplace injury since 2012. The employee, new to Kaiser Permanente and the team, was afraid to speak up about her pain. A co-worker eventually brought her discomfort to light, enabling her to receive treatment and prompting a fresh round of safety training.

Chandler points to the experience as evidence that the team's approach is working.

"People are speaking up on behalf of their co-workers. This is a success story," says Chandler. "With all of our safety rounding, this is a gap that we did not foresee. Now we have an opportunity to engage new employees."



## **About the team**

The Ambulatory Care Pharmacy team, a Level 5 UBT, scores above the 90th percentile on both the UBT engagement index and the workplace safety index. It brings to life what research findings show: When employees feel engaged, connected and valued, their team is likely to score well on quality, service, and patient and workplace safety measures.

The team's strong speaking-up culture gave its members the confidence to report a problem with a change in how some regional lab results were calculated. That led to its winning an annual KP patient safety award. Watch a video about the team at LMPartnership.org; type ambulatory care pharmacy in the search box.

## ON SPEAKING UP WHEN YOU'RE NOT THE BOSS: ADVICE FROM TWO UNION MEMBERS

When employees speak up, patient care improves. Gain the confidence to speak up with these tips from two frontline workers with the Ambulatory Care Pharmacy team in West Los Angeles.

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CHAKANA MAYO
Pharmacy technician, UFCW Local 770
Workplace safety champion

#### Practicing speaking up when you feel safe.

"When we first began peer rounding, people were comfortable speaking to one another versus speaking with management. Once people were comfortable speaking with one another, then they felt like they could be comfortable speaking with management."

Your voice can make a difference. "It's important to speak up early because you can prevent long-term injuries from occurring. If you're confident enough to speak up to your manager and just let them know what's going on, they'll appreciate it more."



ANGELA CHANDLER
Pharmacy technician, UFCW Local 770
UBT union co-lead

Offer solutions, not just complaints. "It's important for frontline employees to speak up and be heard not only for their own safety but for the safety of all the people they work with. The best way to do that is to engage your manager in safety. Offer feedback or advice on how to fix the problem instead of just coming at them with a bunch of problems. Give them a solution."

Take the first step. "Frontline workers should take the initiative within their department about safety and engage with their managers because they are very much part of their team. Engage them and show them you care for the entire department and the people you work with."

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# HOW TO CREATE A 'SPEAK-UP' CULTURE: TIPS FROM A MANAGER





## Don't give up: Building a speak-up culture pays off

The results of Kaiser Permanente's annual People Pulse show that higher scores on the Speaking Up Index correlate with higher patient satisfaction, greater patient and workplace safety, and fewer lost work days. But overall, our Speaking Up scores—which reflect whether employees think speaking up is safe and worthwhile—need improving.

Top Kaiser Permanente leaders acknowledge that managers must take the lead in making a **#FreeToSpeak** work environment a reality. As a manager, you can do your part by ensuring that employees have a positive experience when they speak up. Use the tips on this page and on pages 7, 8 and 9 to help **#TransformKP**.

Employees who feel free to share their ideas and concerns help keep our patients safe and make Kaiser Permanente a better place to work. For that to happen, managers need to create a "psychologically safe" work environment—one where employees know their ideas are valued. Here are four tips from supervisor Nee Tang, Pharm.D., Ambulatory Care Pharmacy, West Los Angeles, on how to help workers feel comfortable speaking up.



## Follow up and take action

"When an employee brings up something, look for the solution and be accountable. Make sure things are done. Having that accountability is really crucial to employees."



## Be authentic

"Having a manager who is open-minded and who truly, genuinely wants to create a safe environment for everybody, that's the key."



## Be patient and persistent

"In the beginning, people may not be as comfortable speaking out. But once they see we're coming every month no matter what [to do peer safety rounding], they're speaking out. We're getting the equipment that is needed and reminding everyone about the proper ergonomic positions. People know we're serious about making an environment that is safe for everyone."



## Find people who want to share their passion with others

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"Another key is to have people who are passionate. Angie Chandler, our labor co-lead, is really passionate about ergonomics. I'm passionate about eating healthy. We have another employee who is passionate about exercise. Everybody wants everyone to be safe and healthy and to work well together. We're passionate about what we do and want to spread that to everybody."

## PUZZLES AND GAMES

## WHO'S THAT PERSON?

In each issue of *Hank*, we feature someone prominent from Kaiser Permanente or its unions on the front cover.

**CAN YOU NAME THIS PERSON?** 



#### ICEBREAKER: Love for color

**INSTRUCTIONS:** A colorful and fun meeting icebreaker, this one will get people talking about things they love. Provide small sheets of paper in several colors (you could use sticky notes or colored index cards) and have each person take five. Then reveal a flip chart with associations listed for each color. For example:

YELLOW – a life goal you are working on

**GREEN** – your favorite book or movie

**ORANGE** – your favorite food

**BLUE** – one stressful thing about your job you wish you could improve

**PURPLE** – favorite way to revive yourself during the workday

**RED** – one thing you love about your job

Take a few minutes for people to write down their answers, one for each of their five sheets, then take turns sharing. Adjust the colors depending on what you have available, and change or add categories to suit your team!

#### WHERE'S THE MISTAKE?

In each issue of *Hank*, there is a purposeful mistake hidden somewhere in the pages. Can you find it?



FOR EXAMPLE:

Woman is holding a cactus instead of a cup of water.

YOUR ANSWER:

## TRIVIA QUESTION

Which part of the body contains cells that divide much faster than other cells?

a) Fingernails

c) Skin

b) Hair

d) Liver



Check out the answers to this issue's puzzles and games at LMPartnership.org/puzzles-and-games/answers.

## On your mark...get set...scavenger hunt!

#### BE THE TEAM TO WIN A LUNCH AND MORE!

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Get together with your team, select five opportunities from the choices below, and decide which team members will collect which items. Include your whole team—remember, everyone in the unit is a UBT member, not just the representatives who attend meetings.

Email your entry to hank@kp.org, with "contest" in the subject line, and your team will be entered into a drawing for a prize.

#### What to include when you email your entry:

- » Your region, your facility and department, and a contact phone number
- » Tell us how many members your team has and how many participated in the hunt
- » Please make it clear which of the 11 options each element of your entry relates to

Photos will be published on the LMP Facebook page and on LMPartnership.org (submission of a photo signifies that all people shown in the photo give their permission to publish it).

#### **DEADLINE FOR ENTERING: FRIDAY, NOV. 11, 2016**



- 1. Take a photo with your UBT co-leads (tell us who's in the picture when you submit your entry)
- 2. Take a photo with an issue of Hank and tell us your favorite thing in that issue
- 3. Make something out of old Hank magazines and send us a photo of your creation
- 4. Take a photo of a huddle and tell us what you were discussing
- 5. Show/tell us how you used a performance improvement tool
- 6. Show/tell us about something you had a safety conversation about
- 7. Take a photo with an LMP poster (did you know the back cover of Hank is a tear-off poster? You can also go to LMPartnership.org and search on "posters" to find lots more)
- 8. Tell us how you would you find a copy of the 2015 National Agreement
- 9. Take a picture of someone using UBT Tracker and/or tell us what your team's latest test of change was
- 10. Take a picture with your UBT health and safety champion doing something that improves health or safety
- 11. Share an example of a time a team member spoke up and tell us how it made a difference

Show your spirit and get all your team members involved with the Hank scavenger hunt.



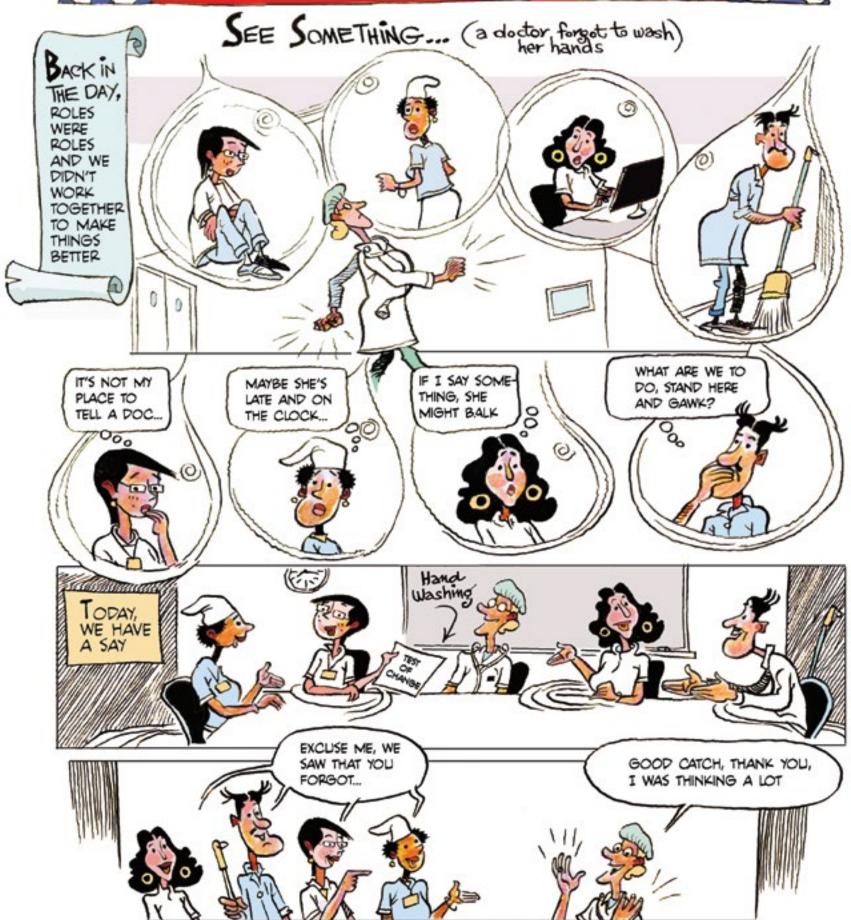
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# BEHEARD DON'T BE WRITTEN OFF

## WHINER

## VS.

## **PROBLEM SOLVER**

[ / ] create

[ / ] me-focused

[ / ] mission-focused

[ / ] anger

[ / ] passion

[ 🗸 ] pessimist

- [ 🗸 ] optimist
- energy-sapping
- [ / ] energy-generating

[ 🗸 ] alienate

[ 🗸 ] attract

[ / ] problems

[ / ] possibilities

[ / ] alone

[ / ] together

Inspired by: LOIS KELLY www.foghound.com