



## FROM THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# A Bottom Line With a Heartbeat

■ LAUREL STOIMENOFF, PT

It's no secret that turnover is extremely costly at all levels of an organization, particularly when the setting is medical. Each urgent care clinic is a relatively small "work unit" and the absence of a single employee is disruptive, placing additional burden on the remaining workforce.

Given the profound importance of employee loyalty, the data circling out there are daunting. A 2011 Gallup Poll revealed that 71% of the workforce is either "not actively engaged" in or "actively disengaged" from their work. And when the Saratoga Institute researched why 60,000 employees quit their job, the answer was "the boss" 80% of the time.

What does that tell us? A loyal workforce is earned. It begins with a commitment to being *the employer of choice for the employees (talent) of choice*. The loyalty continuum includes planning, sourcing, hiring, orienting, developing and ultimately *retaining* talent. And because people "quit their bosses," it means investing in your line supervisors' leadership skills and establishing *the retention of talent* as a core business strategy.

Employees who feel valued are more likely to be productive and engaged. Therefore, smart companies aren't sacrificing profit, but instead augmenting it, when operational strategies thoughtfully consider the workforce and the bottom line metaphorically "has a heartbeat." This journal and others appropriately feature articles on enhancing the patient experience and garnering patient loyalty. Why not spend an equal amount of effort on strategies to retain our employed talent?

I have been privileged to serve as the Urgent Care Association of America's (UCAOA) Interim Executive Director as we finalize plans to fill Lou Ellen Horwitz's shoes. Shortly after stepping into this role, I began reflecting on how loyalty seems to permeate UCAOA in so many ways. We are fortunate to be an association in a growth mode, largely because

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of the loyalty of our members. We are indebted to a loyal group of corporate partners who have supported us financially and consistently through the years. And, we have the ongoing wisdom and support of our founders, the Board, and leaders in the industry.

But perhaps the most compelling evidence of relentless loyalty is in the UCAOA staff. These individuals are loyal to the organization, to its members, to its mission and to each other. They are bright, energetic, committed, accountable, and innovative. Each and every day they research and respond to inquiries from members and interested parties, reach out to and address the media, oversee certification, enhance our website, find resources, analyze data, plan educational courses, coordinate conferences, and strive to elevate the industry and, therefore, the success of our membership.

It was not simply through blind luck that we arrived at this point. Considerable thought and energy went into designing new positions, identifying key attributes, interviewing, orienting, coaching, developing, rewarding, and recognizing staff. For that we need to thank Lou Ellen and her keen eye for talent and the strategy she put in place to earn this team. Lou Ellen's contributions are countless, but her true legacy may be the talent that remains at UCAOA, working tirelessly on behalf of the membership.

This organization is fortunate to be in a solid position of solvency. Financial comfort affords us opportunities to reinvest and provide greater value to our members. I am proud that its leadership has ensured that UCAOA has a bottom line with a heartbeat...and this team hasn't missed a beat. ■



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