Better Hires, Better Outcomes

Hire and promote employees for improved quality, safety, and service outcomes across the healthcare continuum.
Radical transformation is underway. The industry is grappling with massive changes in regulation, competition, delivery, consumerism, technology, operations, etc. The accelerated speed of change leaves little room for hiring missteps. And, in healthcare, poor hiring decisions endanger not only the business, but also the patients.

To help health systems quickly hire the best-performing talent, DDI offers a series of assessments specifically designed for healthcare workers and first-level managers. These assessments identify strengths and gaps related to healthcare’s Triple Aim focus on population health, patient care, and cost reduction. Specifically, the assessments can accurately predict how well individuals will perform on quality, service, and safety measures.

And that’s not all. Our pre-employment assessments predict employee engagement. They deliver a “Triple Aim-plus” view of your candidates—making it easier to identify those most likely to stay and grow with your organization.

Time-to-fill and ramp-up time are greatly reduced as a result of the assessment-generated feedback, which can also be used to accelerate onboarding. The results will ensure your candidates have what you need on day one, and diagnose development needs for both short- and long-term readiness.

In this report, we reveal more than the competencies our assessments measure. We also highlight the outcomes of these behaviors—the real-world, bottom-line results reported by participants’ managers.

About Our Study
We looked at 6,086 assessment participants from U.S. healthcare systems across the continuum of care. These included all-level employees up through first-line leaders.

The competencies and attributes assessed were rolled up into five general categories. In each of the five categories, we compared the participants’ ratings/scores with their on-the-job performance. Approximately two-thirds of high scorers were shown to be high performers across all five categories.
Ensuring patient safety not only improves the experience of care, it also drives down per capita costs. In recent years, health systems have made great strides in reducing the occurrence of hospital-acquired conditions (HACs). These include various types of preventable infections, as well as diagnostic and medication errors. According to a 2015 report from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), HACs dropped 17 percent from 2010 to 2014, resulting in 87,000 fewer patient deaths and cumulative cost savings of approximately $19.8 billion.

Still, there is room for improvement. Medication errors continue to still affect nearly five percent of hospitalized patients. Worse yet, a Massachusetts General Hospital report (Oct. 2015) found that these errors (labeling, incorrect dosage, neglecting to provide treatment, documentation errors, etc.) occur in some form in nearly half of all surgeries.

For these issues to be addressed, integrated care-delivery systems need individuals who will nurture and contribute to a safety culture. DDI’s healthcare assessments help differentiate candidates based on Safety Awareness and Stress Tolerance, in addition to Technical/Professional Knowledge and Skills.

Top assessment scorers, for example, were twice as likely to Maintain a Safe Work Environment and more than three times as likely to Maintain Low Error Rates.
Quality shapes the patient experience and impacts cost. It is commonly judged based on the Institute of Medicine (IOM) framework, which considers how safe, effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient, and equitable the care is.

Quality measures are also used to calculate reimbursement for government programs (and guide calculations for private payers as well). From the patient’s perspective, however, quality is less quantifiable and more “I know it when I see it.” Fortunately, health care systems need not leave patient perception—and reimbursement—to chance.

On DDI healthcare assessments, candidates who scored highest (vs. lowest) were stronger across four quality care indicators. For example, high scorers more than twice as likely (2.7 times to Exemplify Quality Care. They were also 2.4 times more apt to demonstrate superior Patient Assessment Skills and 1.7 times more apt to Contribute to Hospital Ratings.

The Measurable Difference in Quality Care
Service is an increasingly important differentiator for health systems. High-deductible plans have put the power of the purse in the hands of consumers, who look to social media and patient feedback sites to guide their out-of-pocket spend. But, unlike the average retail customer, patients are under duress. They are vulnerable. Beyond physical needs—medication, meals, vital sign monitoring, etc.—they have acute emotional needs. They are looking for reassurance, respect, and compassion.

How can health systems confidently select employees who will deliver the kind of exemplary service that can increase patient satisfaction and HCAHPS/provider scores? High vs. low scorers on DDI healthcare assessments are 43 percent more likely to be top performers in critical service predictors and outcomes, including Care Management and Patient Focus.

They are also twice as likely to excel at making decisions and problem solving and have higher-level patient interactions.

**Quality Service as Predicted by Top Assessment Scorers Leads to Better Patient Outcomes**

- **Low Scorers (red) Bottom 25%**
  - Handling Stressful Situations 45%
  - Providing Emotional Support to Patients/Families 38%
  - Patient Would Recommend 41%
  - Quality of Patient Interactions 38%
  - Putting the Patient First 38%
  - Making Decisions and Resolving Problems 31%
  - Taking Independent Action 38%
  - Ability to Dissolve Patient Conflict 39%
  - Contributing to Patient Satisfaction 38%
  - Reducing Patient Complaints 42%

- **High Scorers (blue) Top 25%**
  - Handling Stressful Situations 59%
  - Providing Emotional Support to Patients/Families 60%
  - Patient Would Recommend 56%
  - Quality of Patient Interactions 83%
  - Putting the Patient First 57%
  - Making Decisions and Resolving Problems 82%
  - Taking Independent Action 65%
  - Ability to Dissolve Patient Conflict 62%
  - Contributing to Patient Satisfaction 62%
  - Reducing Patient Complaints 83%

High assessment scorers (blue) are more likely to exhibit the behaviors that contribute to quality outcomes.
The ongoing transformation of healthcare requires a new type of leader. The rampant consolidation of entities has brought former competitors together, joined disparate cultures and disciplines, and centralized operational and strategic decision-making. As a result, health system leaders must work across silos and drive collaboration and care coordination.

Frontline leaders, in particular, must translate the organization’s cultural imperatives for their teams.

DDI’s Healthcare Leader assessment identifies these leaders who can build teams and strategic working relationships, drive and facilitate change, delegate authority, and coach and develop their associates to achieve high standards. In addition, leaders who scored highest on the assessment were 3.7 times more likely to drive efficiency than those scoring lowest. This is especially critical in highly matrixed environments and for controlling costs. Top scorers were also nearly twice as likely to contribute to the achievement of their organization’s vision.

High scoring leaders (blue) are 3.7 times more likely to drive efficiency

High Scorers = Top 25% (blue)
BETTER HIRES, BETTER OUTCOMES

Identify:
Engaged, Long-term Contributors

A stronger economy is increasing turnover in health systems. Demand for labor, especially nurses, has grown as more—and increasingly older—patients have been added to the insurance rolls. At the same time, the most experienced nurses are retiring in droves (2015 Survey of Registered Nurses). The tight labor supply is forcing health systems to compete for the best talent, by offering attractive wages and benefits.

Extensive research indicates that lack of engagement is compounding retention issues, negatively impacting productivity (especially when employees leave), as well as patient satisfaction and safety. It also undermines employees’ willingness to work to top of their licensure—the desired performance standard within all healthcare systems.

Fortunately, identifying engaged employees can stop being a hit-or-miss proposition. DDI’s assessments can accurately ascertain if a candidate is a good fit (for healthcare and your organization), and whether he or she will thrive and continue to contribute to the organization. **High scoring leaders were approximately four times more likely to be engaged than low scoring leaders. Overall (across all assessment participants), high scorers were twice as likely to be engaged vs. low scorers.**

![Higher Engagement Drives Retention](image-url)

Employees scoring highest on engagement more frequently indicated a desire to stay.
About DDI

We work side by side with people who are relentless about identifying and developing leaders who perform and will leave an enduring legacy. Because better leaders lead to a better future, we’ve been obsessed with the science and practice of leadership for nearly five decades. We help clients uniquely define and achieve great leadership at every level of their organization, from aspiring leaders to the C-suite. Our promise remains: Together, we can co-create a solution that’s aligned with your business context and aimed squarely at your business goals.

**We do this by sharing our expertise in leadership:**
- Strategy
- Selection
- Development
- Succession Management