



# Efficient delivery, optimal care aided by CUSTOMER-INSPIRED<sup>®</sup> management system

*Shaw Resources has pioneered efforts to bring process management from the manufacturing floor to the healthcare industry. The firm has guided executives of a wide variety of healthcare organizations in their quest for more efficient delivery and optimal patient care.*

## Learning to see from the patient's point of view

Most of Shaw Resources' healthcare clients are not accustomed to thinking of patients as customers. "We had always measured our services by the clinical standards of healthcare professionals, not by the service measures of patients," says Joann Zimmerman, Assistant Director of Nursing at Stanford University Hospital in Palo Alto, CA.

It was "a startling experience to analyze our processes through the eyes of the patient, rather than from our own experience," says Sharon Hollander, Associate Director for Patient Care.

Most patients do not know how to judge a healthcare organization on clinical excellence, so they assess their experience on service criteria, such as how fast a nurse responds to a call bell. It's difficult for healthcare professionals to shift to this perspective, but once Stanford began to focus on service excellence, patient satisfaction increased.

"We are seeing real change and real results that will be long-lasting because they are altering the core infrastructure of our organization," says Hollander.

## Complaints are guideposts to what needs to be improved

Leaders at Dominican Hospital in Santa Cruz, CA are now true believers in the value of studying customer complaints in order to determine patient expectations and problem areas that need to be addressed.

"Managing a comprehensive complaint process, more than anything else, directly supports the hospital's commitment to quality," says Sister Julie, Dominican's Chief Executive Officer.

Although Dominican had done a good job resolving individual complaints, there was no formal system enabling the organization to grasp the bigger issues embedded in the complaints. With the help of Shaw Resources, Dominican developed a new Manage Complaints system that identifies and implements changes that significantly boost patient satisfaction. Today, everyone in the Dominican organization has been transformed into a patient relations representative.

## Changing the way people approach their work

One of the most important benefits clients often report as a result of their work with Shaw Resources is the change in the way people work together within the organization.

“You begin to change the culture,” says Remo Cerruti, Chief of Professional Services for Washington Hospital in Fremont. “People go from saying: ‘I do what I do, I do it well, and that’s my only responsibility’ to ‘How I do it with other people is important, too.’”

When cross-communication is limited or nonexistent, as it is in many organizations, there is a tendency to undervalue or overvalue what others do. Working on cross-functional teams, people gain a realistic view of what others do, and understand how their work impacts one another and the customer’s perception of quality.

Patricia Stillwill, Director of Patient Financial Service, agrees. “The Shaw method helps us in all day-to-day activities, not just what we’re doing on the teams. It makes for better working relationships. You are able to put faces with names. You understand the other point of view. And you learn that no one is making mistakes just to make your life miserable.”

Cerruti concludes: “Improving processes is not extra to the work you do. It is the work you do. It adds joy to your work, and goals.”

## Cutting costs also benefits customers and quality

Customers also benefit, indirectly, from increasing operational productivity and cost-effectiveness. Shaw Resources has helped several healthcare clients cut costs by streamlining and simplifying their business processes.

A San Jose Medical Clinic team, for example, reduced the rate of missing charts in its Manage Medical Records Process to save \$70,000 annually.

Another team, in a two-fold effort, first reduced an abnormally high insurance claims rejection rate from 20% to 4% by implementing new computer and registration procedures to ensure accurate patient information. The team went on to reduce the rate to 2%, an even more difficult and impressive accomplishment, because the drop reflected changes that went beyond problem solving to permanently improve the process.



*CUSTOMER-INSIRED<sup>®</sup> management systems*

**Copyright © All Rights Reserved Shaw Resources, 4249 185TH PI SE, Issaquah, WA 98027**  
**Ph: 888-SHAW-RES Fax: 877-FAX-SHAW Info@ShawResources.com [www.ShawResources.com](http://www.ShawResources.com)**

Copyright © Shaw Resources, 2006, all rights reserved. (888-SHAWRES), email: [Info@ShawResources.com](mailto:Info@ShawResources.com); [www.ShawResources.com](http://www.ShawResources.com).  
You may reproduce this article provided: 1) each copy you generate is of the article in its entirety, without modification of any kind; 2) you receive no fee whatsoever; and 3) this copyright and permission notice, including the contact information, must be prominently displayed on each copy produced.