Business challenge
To deliver high-quality care experiences, Community Health Network wanted to attract, retain and develop employees across its organization—but how?

Transformation
Community Health Network implemented an IBM® Social Business solution—enabling it to use actionable insights to boost engagement by 8 percent and performance enablement by 5 percent, helping to nurture talent and deliver great care experiences.

Community Health Network drives employee engagement to deliver exceptional care experiences

Established in 1956, Community Health Network is a leading not-for-profit health system with five hospitals and more than 200 sites of care across central Indiana. Employing more than 10,000 people, the organization offers a comprehensive range of care services.

“With IBM Kenexa, we can truly engage our people, encourage retention and shape great patient care.”
Stephanie Wood
Vice President of Human Resources
Community Health Network

Business benefits:
8% increase in employee engagement
5% boost to performance-enablement scores

Nurtures talent and helps maintain high-quality care experiences

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Attract, retain and develop talent

Advances in modern medicine mean that people are living longer than ever before—putting unprecedented pressure on healthcare services. How can healthcare providers rise to the challenge, and make limited resources go further?

To achieve the goal, attracting, retaining and developing talent is essential—but for large organizations such as Community Health Network, talent management can pose complex challenges.

Stephanie Wood, Vice President of Human Resources at Community Health Network takes up the story: “We see employee engagement as a key enabler of organizational performance. The more committed our people are to our vision, mission and strategy, the more inspired they will be to deliver the highest-quality of care to our patients. Similarly, by engaging the domain expertise of people throughout the organization, we can gain valuable insights to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our processes.”

Carrie Wilson, Human Resources Director of Special Projects at Community Health Network, continues: “The challenge we face is that demand for care is high, and there are skills shortages in primary care areas such as nursing, senior care and physical therapy. To mitigate the risk of skill gaps in our organization, it is crucial for us to do all we can to retain and develop our people.”

Taking the pulse of the organization

Because of the scale of its organization, employee surveys are vital for Community Health Network to take the pulse of its workforce.

“Our previous approach to employee surveys generated a large amount of data, but it was difficult to look behind the scorecards and uncover insights that would help us improve engagement, satisfaction and trust,” recalls Stephanie Wood.

“For example, although we had the ability to view graphs at the front end, we lacked the capability to drill down into the data to identify hidden trends along dimension such as age, groups or functions. To uncover the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities in our talent management process, we decided to build a new, strategic approach to employee surveys.”

Building a talent analytics platform

After assessing talent analytics solutions from a number of different vendors, Community Health Network selected an IBM Social Business solution based on IBM Kenexa® Survey Enterprise software.

“Of all the solutions we considered, we were most impressed with the IBM offering,” says Stephanie Wood. “IBM brought together all of the capabilities we needed to make our project a success—including an advanced analytics platform and expert consulting resources to help us shape the right questions, interpret our data and articulate the meaning of the results.”

As a first step, the IBM team worked with senior stakeholders at Community Health Network to understand the culture of the organization, capture its vision, and identify the key aspects of employee engagement it was looking to measure.

“We knew that gaining actionable insights from our surveys would depend on establishing a solid design at the start of the process,” continues Carrie Wilson. “The IBM team really took the time to work with us to determine the kinds of reporting hierarchies we needed to build, as well as the types of norms and survey items to include in the process.

“Thanks to this collaborative approach, we quickly developed a new survey comprising both Likert-scale and open-ended questions. We particularly appreciate the IBM solution’s ability to organize unstructured information from 14,000 comments, which often contain the most instructive insights.”
Asking the right questions

Community Health Network’s new engagement survey includes items to identify how frequently employees are thinking of looking for work with another company, how satisfied they are with Community Health Network as an employer, and how likely they are to recommend the organization as a great place to work.

By comparing the results of the survey with norms for other healthcare providers using the IBM Kenexa platform and data from the BIC healthcare survey, Community Health Network gains the context to track the impact its talent management initiatives are having across the organization.

Stephanie Wood adds: “One of the key aspects of our talent analytics project has been communicating the value of completing the survey. By appointing survey champions to run training sessions and outreach in each department, we boosted our survey response rate by more than 19 percent—collecting insight from 8,199 associates from across the organization.”

Safeguarding key skills

With IBM Kenexa driving its talent analytics process, Community Health Network is achieving its goal of improving employee engagement—safeguarding key skills and laying the foundation for even higher-quality care services.

“In the past, the results of our surveys were confined to a relatively small number of users in our human resources community, which made it difficult to use the results to drive practical changes,” says Carrie Wilson. “Since we launched our new engagement survey with IBM Kenexa, we have opened up the results of our surveys to 500 leaders across the organization, who can explore the results through secure, web-based dashboards.”

Stephanie Wood continues: “Today, each member of our leadership team receives comprehensive training in the importance of employee engagement, and, crucially, how to interpret and act on the results of the survey. The reaction has been extremely positive; we recently ran a development seminar for 900 of our leaders, which included deep dives into talent analytics, engagement drivers and sharing information with your team. As a result of sessions like these, our leaders are implementing 1,300 action plans, which are designed to address issues that our people have raised in the survey.”
Boosting employee engagement

Thanks to actionable insights from its IBM solution, Community Health Network is already measuring positive changes in employee engagement.

Carrie Wilson says: “Compared to before we started to implement our action plans, we have seen employee engagement jump from 72 percent to 78 percent, an increase of eight percent, which is strong evidence that our team's changes are bringing more passion and energy into our workplace.”

To date, 302 leaders—68 percent of Community Health Network’s leadership team—have boosted their employee engagement scores by implementing improvements based on survey feedback. Better still, 234 leaders achieved engagement scores of 83 percent favorable or higher, which is within IBM Kenexa's top decile.

“We have seen our performance-enablement scores—which measures our patient focus, standards for care, and our ability to provide our people with the resources they need to work effectively—jump from 78 percent, to 82 percent, a five percent boost,” says Carrie Wilson. “All of these improvements are helping us to nurture talent across the organization, which in turn will help us continue to enhance patient care experiences.”

Making time for deeper analysis

By reducing the manual effort required in the talent analytics process, Community Health Network is free to dig deeper into its data.

“With IBM Kenexa we spend less time collating our survey data and more time on value-added analysis,” says Carrie Wilson. “We are now free to build in-depth reports to answer specific questions from the business. For example, we can share reports with our diversity director with dimensions for employee ethnicity, gender and age to help ensure that that we are meeting our objectives in each department.”

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Carrie Wilson, Human Resources Director of Special Projects, Community Health Network

Stephanie Wood concludes: “Our aim is to develop and retain people who can provide our patients with the highest quality of care. Thanks to IBM Kenexa, we have the deep insights we need to truly engage our people, encourage retention and shape great care experiences.”