

Case Report #1939

**Leadership Excellence Project: Director of Case Management**

*Community hospital achieves \$564,000 Annualized Positive Financial Impact  
Project Turnaround Time from Diagnostic Assessment to Leader Start 292 days*

**Case Overview**

**Facility Overview:** Not-for profit, 650+ bed, teaching affiliated community hospital.

**Case Presentation:** History of unstable leadership. Recent implementation of Meditech has been identified as a challenge for the entire organization. Facility’s rural, southern location was expected to be undesirable for most leaders in the national market as well as salary.

**Outcome:** Big 4 threats mitigated.

**Client Quote:** *“This was my first interaction with HealthLinx and I was very impressed...!” ~CMO*

**Aim / Client Goals for Engagement**

HealthLinx’ aim was to provide an immediate leadership solution to a high risk area and achieve mutually agreed upon goals. In addition we would identify the Permanent Leader and provide a seamless handoff between the Transitional and Permanent Leader.

- Prepare the position for a sustainable Permanent Leader (PL)
- Acquire the PL for long-term position leadership and performance
- Coordinate the departure of the Transitional Leader (TL) and on-boarding of the PL

<b>Client Project Goals</b>	
1.	Acquisition of a Permanent Leader based on a customized leader profile
2.	Department Stabilization to engage the employees and improve productivity
3.	Rebuild Department Foundation to impact Discharge Planning Process
4.	Create infrastructure to impact appropriate utilization and payments

HealthLinx always performs a diagnostic assessment, sets realistic expectations, and then uses its proven processes and best practices. Using this highly prescriptive process, all levels of the organization were engaged to develop and then execute the transformational plan.

**Changes Hardwired**

1. Department stabilization to engage the employees and improve productivity by creating a culture of education, personnel development and open communication.
2. Established department foundation to improve discharge planning processes through creation of tools and checklists as well as position delineation.
3. Created the infrastructure to impact appropriate utilization of services, pre-approval of procedures and decreased denials.

**Process**

Following an initial conversation with the client organization, The HealthLinx Outcome Leadership Excellence Process was implemented. The process is designed to:

- Immediately improve the position’s leadership and performance
- Stabilize the position to achieve longer term goals

## Measurable Outcomes

	Baseline*	Outcome	Financial Impact
<i>Quantified Financial Impact from Key Deliverables</i>			
LOS	5.60	5.57	\$564,657
HCAHPS DC Info	81.3%	83.7%	

\*Baseline – Rolling 12 months preceding HealthLinx Engagement

## Key Takeaways / Lessons Learned

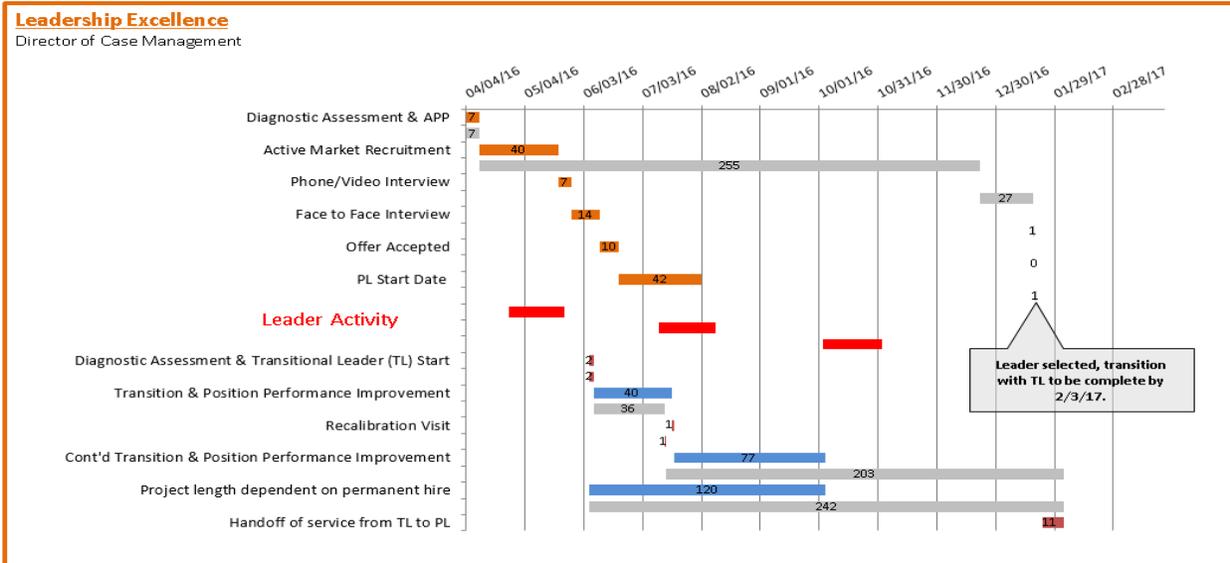
1. The Diagnostic Assessment, was the single most important activity to thoroughly understanding the needs of the department and representing those needs to leaders considering the opportunity.
2. The project began with an intention for an internal interim Director to cover until the Permanent Leader arrived. Through a sequence of unfortunate missteps, this person was relieved of their responsibilities, and HealthLinx provided a Transitional Leader who served as a mentor to the selected Director. Over the course of eight months, the partnership for growth was good. When the selected Director was announced, they received affirmation and support from the staff and administrators for their appointment.
3. Location: When a hospital is located in an area of the country that is more remote, this desirability threat must be mitigated. A leader, in many respects, needs to have a personal or emotional connection to the community, in order to stay in the conversation about the leadership opportunity.
4. Riskholder Misalignment can impact project timing. Three external leaders were presented. The second leader was presented within three weeks of the arrival of the Transitional Leader who was providing much needed structure and guidance to the staff. The voice of the staff carried a lot of weight and they vetoed this leader, extending the project timeline.
5. Transitional Leadership as a parallel process to the Permanent Leader search is essential for addressing misconception and adjusting process needs for the

organization. It sets a future Permanent Leader up for greater success by improving position Desirability.

6. The HealthLinx process allowed for an objective assessment of internal talent for the role. After thorough consideration of several externally presented leaders, the selected Director ultimately came from within the internal organization. Early in the project, this leader was vetted by HealthLinx and determined not to be ready for the Director role, a decision confirmed by the hiring authority. HealthLinx gave this leader honest feedback, and while the outcome was disappointing for this leader, they embraced the opportunity to learn and grow, ultimately preparing them for the Director position. The strengths and areas for focused development were validated by HealthLinx and helped set the internal leader up for success.

## Project Timeline

There was early interest from the market for the position, and the first leader presented within 21 days of the start of the project was ultimately not selected due to not being a match to the changing intangible leadership qualities for which the organization desired. The second leader was presented within the 120 day project plan and had the intangible leadership qualities and the experience, however, there was hesitation to move forward and ultimately deviation from the agreed to process by the client. As the project continued, it became more challenging to stir interest among other leaders and when a third leader was presented, again they were not selected. As the project progressed and the internal Selected Director learned and grew in their leadership, it became more obvious that the instruction and modeling by the Transitional Leader was having a positive impact. The Selected Director was gracious and embraced the second opportunity to be vetted and coached by HealthLinx. When the interviews were completed, the offer was extended and accepted. There was a period of handoff that covered approximately two weeks for onboarding and project transition.



## Client Testimonial / Feedback

*"The Diagnostic Assessment was a very valuable part of the process, as it gives the chance for the intangible qualities (the items that often make all the difference), to be considered. There is a degree of rigor and thoroughness in terms of interviewing the hiring executive to pick their brain as to the necessary attributes for this unique position vs. just a generic requisite skills and qualifications that someone needs. It's a very customized approach rather than a one-size-fits-all approach!" ~CMO*