

Points with Purpose: A Gamified approach to SPD Culture Shifts

Background

Staff reported:

Feelings of stagnation and restlessness

Limited engagement in certifications/education

Daily huddles lacked team participation



Objectives

1. Improve staff engagement and morale within the Sterile Processing Department (SPD).
2. Increase accountability in expectations such as productivity, quality event reporting, and loaner instrumentation logging compliance.
3. Encourage professional development, certification pursuit, and participation in educational initiatives
4. Foster peer recognition and collaborative problem solving within the department.

Methods

A structured gamification program was implemented within the SPD. Staff earned points throughout each calendar month based on measurable performance metrics tied directly to sterile processing functions, key performance indicators, and compliance expectations. Point-awarding behaviors were assessed at the beginning of each work week and included:

1 point for:

- Least quality events reported for the week
- Most items decontaminated
- Most flexible endoscopes processed
- Most items assembled in prep and pack (by instrument number)
- Most items sterilized

2 points for:

- On time and accurate timecard submissions/approvals
- Complete loaner instrument check-in (physical verification with photos and required documentation + instrument tracking system entry)
- Complete loaner instrument check-out (physical verification with photos and required documentation + instrument tracking system entry)

The technician with the highest point total at the end of each month received a personalized recognition item tailored to their interests (coffee, snacks, small gifts, etc) Rewards were modest in nature. Daily Huddles were modified to include public recognition of points awards in a departmental "ceremony".

Results

Increased Engagement

- Positive, professional peer competition
- Interactive and participatory daily huddles

Improved Staff Relationships

- Organic peer-recognition initiatives emerged
- Improved teamwork in workflow problem solving and conflict resolution
- Staff reported feeling seen, valued, and appreciated by leadership that took the time to learn about them and their interests.

Increased Accountability

- Stronger ownership of quality event reporting
- More accurate and timely timecards
- Improved loaner documentation compliance

Strengthened Professional Growth

- Increased certification interest (100% CRCST/50% CER/25% CIS)
- Increased HSPA chapter involvement
- Greater participation in facility multidisciplinary committees

Conclusion

Implementation of a structured gamification program with SPD resulted in improved engagement, increased accountability, enhanced compliance, stronger awareness of key performance indicators, and most importantly a meaningful cultural transformation!

This initiative demonstrates that structured engagement programs can elevate individual and team professional satisfaction within sterile processing.

