

CARE METHOD TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF RECEPTIONISTS IN THE HOSPITAL ENVIRONMENT - AN EMPIRICAL STUDY -

طريقة CARE لتحسين أداء أعوان الاستقبال في المحيط الاستشفائي - دراسة تطبيقية -

MEROUANE Abderrazak

lecturer class B at Morsli Abdellah university -tipaza- e-mail : amerouane.lmd@gmail.com

Received: 25/09/2019

Accepted: 25/10/2019

Published:01/01/2020

ملخص :

إن الهدف الأساسي من إعداد هذا المقال، هو بلورة أهمية التكوين الفعال في تحسين أداء المكونين وبالتالي إرضاء كل من يتعامل معهم من خلال تطبيق بعضا من نظريات البرمجة اللغوية العصبية وتطبيق كذلك مبادئ Care . من أجل ذلك، اخترنا أحد القطاعات الحساسة في الجزائر وهي الصحة، وحاولنا القيام بتكوين أعوان الاستقبال في المؤسسات الاستشفائية لولاية تيبازة ؛ حيث استوفت الشروط وهي : نية القيام بالتكوين، وجود تنظيم حقيقي للعملية، حضور أعوان استقبال لديهم النية في التكوين ومن شتى مؤسسات الولاية ، وتسخير كل الإمكانيات لإنجاح هذه الدورة التكوينية.

الكلمات المفتاحية : الاستقبال في المحيط الاستشفائي، caring، تكوين

Abstract :

The purpose of this article is to highlight the importance of effective training in improving the performance of trained agents, and this in order to satisfy all those who interact with them, and this by applying some theories of neurolinguistic programming and also applying the principles of the Care program. For this, we chose one of the most sensitive sectors in Algeria, which is health. Attempts were made to train the reception staff of the hospital companies of the wilaya of Tipaza, because the conditions were favorable: the intention to do a training, the actual organization of the operation, the presence of the agents of reception who intend to form and several places in the wilaya, and the mobilization of all means to achieve this training.

Key words: reception in the hospital environment, caring, training

JEL classification : I1,18

Introduction :

The methods used by our medical institutions to receive people, are very much criticized by either those visitors or media, and this could be due to many reasons, mainly the lack of training courses specified in forming good reception agents, or nurses or even doctors, which could lead to complaints from visitors and even a negative impact on their health.

In this case, an effective training for the members of medical institutions, starting by reception agents, could represent the right solution to resolve communication problems that were the sources of many crises, by applying the right training program step by step.

So : Applying the **Care** principles in the training program of reception agents, would it be suitable to improve their performance ?

In this article, we are going to expose a training experience for reception agents working in medical institutions of the State of Tipaza, using **Care** or **Caring** principles, and expose the results of pre and post evaluation of this training.

1. The meaning of reception in the medical environment, and the content of the training program

A good reception in the medical environment is considered as a guarantee of the quality of every medical institution or every hospital that wants to cure her patients and help them to recover, so it is the key of healing the patients and all visitors of all sexes and ages and social classes, thus it is essential that every medical institution, no matter its type, to pay attention to this important principle which is the center of the comfort of its visitors and most of all important for its reputation. We will discuss in this chapter the meaning of reception and a brief preview about the training program.

1.1. The meaning of reception in the medical environment and Care Principles :

A good reception is considered half-part of recovery, also the real meaning of reception is to respect the values of medical professions, and satisfy the visitors of its institutions.

Reception is a kind of an organization, which the visitor finds while entering or leaving the medical institution, and it is performed by reception agents or any other members of that institution (employees, nurses, doctors ...).

It happens very often that the guy specialized in the tasks of receiving people, it happens that he links this term with the term of **Caring** of the American Nursing Specialist **Jean Watson** (1998) a Researcher and Professor of Nursing in the University of Colorado, which means : taking care, looking after and devoting attention and interest to the visitors of medical institutions ; this because for her, a warm and a good welcoming could change the future of the visitors and represents the half-part of recovery (**Watson J. 1998, p24**).

We also could look into the theory of **Caring** as a philosophy, and values, or a scientific model widely extended and based on the bioenergy of the person, and love affection, and developed conscious, also the theory is based on the following ten essential factors that leads to recovery :

1. To build an organism of human and altruism values : this organism is based upon on all that could be human and ethical (taking care, the welcoming expressions and the good ethics ...) ;
2. To encourage high level of faith and hope : of course believing that god is the healer, and never loose hope in the recovery of the patient no matter his medical condition ;
3. The spiritual and emotional culture : which is the most important, means the nurse or the reception agent must always try to put himself in the visitor's place, to feel as he feels and to have the right behavior to comfort him ;
4. To build a relationship based on trust, and help and altruism ;

5. To accept that others express their positive and negative feelings : which helps to have a good understanding of the visitor's wants to satisfy them ;

6. To establish a scientific method to solve problems : by inventing an operational technic to answer the visitor's questions, and respecting the priorities at the same time ;

7. A non-stop training for reception agents, and nurses, and even doctors, about the good behavior towards visitors ;

8. To improve and protect and/or adjust the mental and physical and social-cultural and spiritual environment of visitors : which could help them to recover or at least to feel serene ;

9. To satisfy the humanitarian needs of the visitor : us comfort, food, peace ...

10. The existential powers and the spiritual phenomena : taken from all religions and cultures, and which is focused on faith in god and meditation ...²

In regards to Algerian hospitals, in the past years a good reception was a spontaneous thing, but today, sadly, some signs of rudness and ignorance started to appear in the behavior of reception agents and mostly in the medical staff , according to statements from visitors of these hospitals that became more characterized by an « unwelcoming » atmosphere and nepotism, and rudness more often.

1.2. Preview of the training program proposed by the researcher :

Actually, the program titled « **Reception and Direction in The Medical Enviromnent** » contains many « Modules » proposed by a State Commission composed of the formation director in the Health Direction of Tipaza, a doctor and director of Drugs and Addiction Center (Fouka), an university professor (the researcher from the University Center of Tipaza), a former specialist in communication technics (Kolea Hospital), two formers specialists (Cherchell Hospital, and Gouraya Hospital).The module proposed by the researcher holds the

same title as the title of the program, and which has been taught during the training sections with (02) hours per section, each section contains 4 chapters, from the **8th May 2014** until the **5th June 2014**, as it is illustrated bellow :

The title of the module : Technics of a Good Communication and Reception in the Medical Environment :

- The meaning and domains of communication : we gave general meanings about communication, and its models, and domains of its application in the institution ;
- The conditions of an effective communication : we resumed in it how to effectively communicate to our objectives, whether from the sender or the receiver ;
- The reception in the medical environment : we gave the most important meaning of reception in the medical environment ;
- Explaining the **CARE** or **CARING** methode and it's ten principles : we gave a preview about the life of the researcher **Watson** and her receiving and nursing philosophy ;
- Changing the future of the hospital visitors by a good reception : we clarified the objectives and the role of a good reception in the recovery of the hospital visitors ;
- A preview about communicaion during crisis : the aim from this chapter is how to contain crisis (specifically communication crisis) and to find solutions ;
- Some advices.

As we've already mentioned, this program contains five (05) modules, the main one is the module stated above ; so, during the study and the evaluation questionnaire we will focus on this module's chapters.

2. The evaluation of the training program in the medical institutions of the state of Tipaza :

We've divided the operation of evaluation into two parts, the first one is pre-evaluation : in which we've identified the ability and the readiness of the

reception agents to go through a training program, and the post-evaluation : in which we've evaluated the amount of assimilation and application on field of what the reception agents have learned during the training course. So the previous state committee has met to prepare the training program, and the researcher prepared a questionnaire dedicated to the reception agents concerned by this training, to know them much better mainly their job and their strengths and weaknesses. 27 reception agents have gone through this training (only 6 men, means 22%) came from different hospitals of the state of Tipaza, recommended by the Health Direction, to make of this operation a success and to optimize the post-training performance.

Firstly : pre-evaluation : it includes a questionnaire dedicated to reception agents and nurses interested in this training, its aim is to collect some important and personal informations about the trained and his relationship with his colleagues and his job ; to allow the researcher to prepare the suitable chapters of the module. The field-evaluation was done a month before the training.

Secondly : Post-evaluation : it includes a questionnaire dedicated to the 27 agents whom have been through the training, its aim is to measure the performance of these agents and to evaluate them, the field-evaluation was done a month before the training.

2.1. The pre-evaluation and the analysis of it's results :

After many meetings that we've previously mentionned, we've visited the place of the training at the hospital of Yahia Fares in Kolea, which is a kind of a big auditorium in the extreme south of the hospital in the limits of the forest, a calm place, Air conditionned, all the necessary equipments as a board and a data-show and a microphone. Then we've handed out a questionnaire (of the primary evaluation) with the help of the director of formation and the health direction of Tipaza, and the number of the questionnaires handed back was (27).

2.1.1. pre-evaluation results :

We will resume the questionnaire analysis and focus on the main questions of our theme :

The Seventh Question : Are you satisfied with the occupation handed to you in this hospital ?

The aim from this question is to know if the reception agent accept this occupation or not.

⊗ 1		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	☺ 10	Σ
f i		6	1	12	1	1	1	5	0	27
f i %		.22	.07	.44	.07	.07	.07	.51	0	1.00

Generally, the results are above average and seem very normal which is a good thing for the former, means he will focus his persuasive efforts on only 7 persons (26%) whom marks are beneath (5) on the likert scale.

The Tenth Question : Do you find difficulties to do your job ?

The aim from this question is about communication and performance, means whenever the results are good the practical performance and the practical communication of the trained individual will be good, because most of the work of the reception agent is about communication.

	Yes	Someti mes	Nev er
With your seniors chiefs	14	10	3
With your subordinates	0	0	1
With your colleagues	2	6	19

With others services employees	1	8	18
With patients	12	13	2
With visitors and their families	11	10	6
With the other sex	0	9	18
With your family	1	5	21
None	1		
Σ	41	61	78
xi %	22.77 %	33.88%	43.3 3%

Almost the same positive remark as the seventh question, (43,33% have no difficulties), but only (03) exceptions are beneath average : with seniors chiefs, with patients, with visitors and their families, and it is relatively a normal thing ; because very often these agents have to deal with some nervous and sensitive persons, so the former will consider these exceptions.

The Fourteenth Question : Do you hope for a positive change ?

The aim from this question is to measure the degree of optimism and willingness in the reception agents to develop themselves.

	Oui	Non	Pa s d'avis
In your professionnelle life	27	0	0
In your personal life	25	0	2
With your colleagues	7	18	2

With your seniors chiefs	24	2	1
In your way of thinking	20	5	2
In your way of working	15	10	2
Others			
Σ	118	35	9
xi %	72.8 3%	21.6 0%	5.5 5%

We notice that the results are very good (almost 73%), which means that these reception agents have a huge amount of optimism and willingness to change themselves for better specially in their personal and professional life, this helps the former to achieve the program goals.

2.1.2. The analysis of pre-evaluation results :

The aim of the pre-evaluation is to know the general atmosphere of the training, its time and its place, also the way of thinking of the reception agents and their ability and readiness to learn. We will resume the results of the pre-evaluation in the following points :

- The preparation of the training program has been done according to the usual and normal steps, from establishing the problematic and the objective of the program, the help of a some specialists, preparing the right atmosphere for the different members of the training, and determining the training requirements ...
- All the questionned people have more than (05) years of experience, and most of them are satisfied about their occupation, and have a low training recurrence because of the lack of reception and communication training programs in medical institutions, neither for agents nor nurses or doctors ; which represents the dark point of our medical institutions ;

- For reception agents, the seniors chiefs of the medical institutions give more importance to the organizational and superficial tasks (the apron, the clothes, not using the phone or not smoking while working, putting their badges ...) without paying attention to communication and good attitude with the visitors of the medical institutions ;
- Generally, the pre-evaluation results were highly positive, which made the work easier for the former optimist towards the agents responsivity to the program.
- Now the success of this program depends on the performance of the former and the reception of the message through the training, also and most of all on the psychological and physical readiness (the well-being not sports) of the reception agents during the days of the training.

2.2. The post-evaluation and the analysis of it's results :

After the end of the training period at the hospital of Yahia Fares in Kolea, and after honoring the trainers and thanking them ; the researcher has prepared another questionnaire, its aim is to know if there is a positive change in the reception agents performance.

2.2.1. The post-evaluation results :

We will resume the analysis of the questions below :

The First Question : How was your physical and psychological health during the training ?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 ☺	Σ
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	------	---

Physical	0				1	1	1	1	17	6	$\frac{2}{7}$
psychological	0				2	1	3	2	15	4	$\frac{2}{7}$
fi P %	0				$\frac{3}{.70}$	$\frac{3}{.70}$	$\frac{3}{.70}$	$\frac{3}{.70}$	$\frac{62}{.96}$	$\frac{22}{.22}$	$\frac{1}{.00}$
fi M %	0				$\frac{7}{.40}$	$\frac{3}{.70}$	$\frac{11}{.11}$	$\frac{7}{.40}$	$\frac{55}{.55}$	$\frac{14}{.81}$	$\frac{1}{.00}$

We notice that the answers are very satisfying, the excellent physical readiness represents (from 9 to 10 on 10) a rate of 85%, while the excellent psychological readiness represents a rate of 70%, we also notice that the answers haven't been under average, because there have been no cases of complaints or illness or any of that.

The Second Question : What is your evaluation of the former performance in the module of «Technics of a Good Communication and Reception in the Medical Environment »

	⊗ 1					6	7	8	9	😊 10	Σ
Good speech abilities	0					0	7	9	10	1	$\frac{2}{7}$
fi %	0					0	$\frac{25}{92}$	$\frac{33}{33}$	$\frac{37}{03}$	$\frac{37}{0}$	$\frac{1}{00}$
Understanding	0					3	6	14	3	1	$\frac{2}{7}$
fi %	0					$\frac{11}{11}$	$\frac{22}{22}$	$\frac{51}{85}$	$\frac{11}{11}$	$\frac{37}{0}$	$\frac{1}{00}$

Self appearance	0					0	5	6	14	2	$\frac{2}{7}$
fi %	0					0	18.51	22.22	51.85	7.40	$\frac{1}{00}$
Body language	0					0	3	12	9	3	$\frac{2}{7}$
fi %	0					0	11.11	44.44	33.33	11.11	$\frac{1}{00}$
Mastering the lesson	0					0	0	14	11	2	$\frac{2}{7}$
fi %	0					0	0	51.85	40.74	7.40	$\frac{1}{00}$
Alternate with examples	0					4	2	10	10	1	$\frac{2}{7}$
fi %	0					14.81	7.40	37.03	37.03	3.70	$\frac{1}{00}$

As it is illustrated in the table, all the results above 8 on 10 are above 62% until 92%, which is positive and very common for the reception agents or for the former, and this because of the good readiness for the training and the continued revision of the program, and the alternation with examples, and the implication of the reception agents in the courses in an interactive way.

The Third Question : What is your evaluation for the place of the training ?

	⊖ 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	⊕ 10	Σ
Large room	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	9	10	1	$\frac{2}{7}$
fi %	0	0	0	0	0	0	25.92	33.33	37.03	3.70	$\frac{1}{00}$

Comfo rtable chairs	0	0	0	0	0	3	6	14	3	1	² ₇
fi %	0	0	0	0	0	^{11.} ₁₁	²² _{.22}	51.85	^{11.} ₁₁	^{3.} ₇₀	¹ ₀₀
The place of the hospital	4	4	7	1	6	2	2	1	0	0	² ₇
fi %	^{14.} ₈₁	^{14.} ₈₁	^{25.} ₉₂	³ _{.70}	² _{2.22}	^{7.4} ₀	^{7.} ₄₀	3.70	0	0	¹ ₀₀
Noise	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	² ₆	² ₇
fi %	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	^{3.7} ₀	⁹ _{6.29}	¹ ₀₀

All the reception agents agreed about the comfort of the place of training, and the availability of all comfort conditions specially inside the room, but most of them (60%) complained about the long distance between the hospital and their houses, because very often there are no transports after 4pm in the west of the state, and also the long walking for those who have no car.

The Fourth Question : What is your evaluation for the time of the training ?

	[⊗] 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	[⊙] 10	Σ
Climate	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	² ₇	² ₇
fi %	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	¹ ₀₀	¹ ₀₀
Timing (9h – 16h)	0	2	8	3	10	1	2	1	0	0	² ₇

fi %	0	7.4 0	29 .62	11. 11	37.0 3	3. 70	7 .40	3. 70	0	0	1 00
Days (Thursday)	0	2	1	1	14	8	1	0	0	0	2 7
fi %	0	7.4 0	3. 70	3.7 0	51.8 5	29 .62	3 .70	0	0	0	1 00

The evaluation of days and timing was average, because of the long distance for most of the participants, and also choosing Thursday which is considered like « the beginning of the weekend », despite of being called-up by convocation or official licenses sent to their seniors chiefs from the state health direction to assist the training.

The Fifth Question : Could you name five principles of Caring ?

This type of questions represents « GMS : Gross Memorization Score » which means that the participant will remember the answer without help.

5. Could you name five principles of Caring ?

The result was very positive, 74% (20) from them (05) are right answers, while the rest of them (26%) (7) gave four right answers, this means the assimilation of the lesson was very good, which is confirmed by The Gross Memorization Score that is considered more representative than the Proved Memorization Score, that we will see in the coming question.

The Fifth Question : Among the following principles of a good reception, which one we have already seen during the training ?

This type of questions represents « PMS : Proved Memorization Score » which means that the participant remembers the answer when he is given a list of right answers.

Name and occupation	
Smiling and confidence climate	
Information collect	
Not speaking with family	
High level of positivity	
Fast judgments	
Never forgive but be patient	
Lives its dreams in team	
Listening to their problems	
Sitting with a perfect relaxation	

Also, it seems that memorizing the lesson achieved a high level (100%) of right answers, by choosing 5 right answers from 10, which confirms the positivity of the last question's results about The Gross Memorization Score.

The Sixth Question : How much do you apply what you've learned in reality ?

6. Evaluate the application of what you've learned on field ?

1										10
					0					

All the answers are above average, among them the third (33,33%) are excellent, means they apply on field (to a certain level) what they've learned, which is a good thing that refers the quality of the training and the optimization of the performance of reception agents.

2.2.2. Analysis of the post-evaluation results :

The aim of the post evaluation is to measure how much the training has succeeded, from the ability to rememeber and understand the given informations, and applying them on field, and then becoming able to optimize the reception agents performance.

And we will resume the results in the following points :

- All the general conditions of the training (weather, physical and psychological health, place and time) were fitting, according to reception agents, which made it easier to assimilate and to focus to understand and memorize ;
- The good preparation of the training program in general and of the module of « Technics of Communication and Reception in the Medical Environment » particulary, and the willingness of the former to change others for better, and the love for a perfect work over the positive evaluation from the former by the reception agents and colleagues and the training responsible, which is an encouraging thing to keep going ;
- The results of memorizing and assimilating the lesson have achieved a very high levels for the reception agents, the thing that have been proved by the results of The Gross Memorization Score and Proved Memorization Score, but despite the positive results there is hypothesis of a short time of the secondary evaluation, because the informations are still recent.
- The factor of memorizing and assimilating the informations helped to apply them on field, which reflects the importance of the training, very often the former had encoureged to apply what they learned in a kind of a game of roles, or real examples, or imagining themselves ... because science incites to apply informations to keep going, and to improve performance and even innovation and invention.

Conclusion :

From the pre-evaluation and the post-evaluation of the training program it occurs to us that most of the results show that the training program had achieved his objective, and we will focus in this chapter on the main results and observations and advices that we've gathered from this training program.

Firstly : The general results of the Field study :

The objective of the training program prepared by the Health Direction of the state of Tipaza, which have been stated in the politic of the ministry that pleads into continually and periodically reforming hospitals and training and qualifying workers and employees and senior managers of health, to achieve quality and improve the performance of employees in general, and particulary the performance of reception agents.

We will resume below the main results :

1. The training titled « **Reception and Direction in the Medical Institutions** » has been well prepared, in a kind of periodic meetings during almost two months, and by proposing modules from specialists ; so the experience and the brainstorming and the willingness for a perfect work were the main factors for the success of this training ;
2. The visit of the training place, and all materials needed for the module, and even the visit of the reception agents while accomplishing their tasks contributed to build trust and confidence inside the members of the training and the reception agents, after being given this opportunity ;
3. The pre-evaluation is one of the main steps of the general evaluation of the training, so the aim of the questionnaire was to know their ability to go through a training, and their readiness, so the results were very good which contributed to building trust and confidence inside the members of the training to made of this training program a success, and to improve the performance of the reception agents;
4. The only two dark points that we've deducted from the primary evaluation are : firstly, the lack of training programs for the reception agents inside medical institutions ; secondly : seniors chiefs give a bigger

priority for technical and organizational and superficial tasks over communication and good reception and good behavior towards patients and visitors of the hospital;

5. During the training, (at least while the module of Technics of a Good Communication and Reception in the Medical Environment), we've observed that most of the reception agents were interactive since the very beginning of the training, because their curiosity and also the simplicity of the former's speech ;

6. The objective of the post-evaluation is to know how much the training had succeeded, from the assimilation and understanding and memorizing the informations and applying them on field, but the researcher didn't give a big importance to the instant evaluation that is operated directly after the training and aimed to know the amount of understanding and assimilation so the former could know his mistakes and quickly catch up ;

7. All the results of the post-evaluation were good, the main reason is the good preparation of the training and the important modules that attract the attention of the aimed public, and their rich components and preparing it very well, and the readiness of the reception agents for the training and their interaction with the formers ;

8. Most of the reception agents have declared that they highly apply the informations and the skills they learned on field (speacially the ones they have learned during the module of the researcher), which proves the success of the program and the achievement of the aimed objectives, **means the improvement of the performance of the reception agents by a training program titled « Reception and Direction in the Medical environment » including a module about the principles and values of Neuro-Linguistic Programming and Care program, titled « Technics of a Good Communication and Reception in the Medical Environment ».**

Secondly : Advices

We will try to give some constructive advices that we find important for our research even if most of them are difficult to realise on field, this represents an

initiative to improve the performance of all public sector hospitals, starting by reception agents :

1. To encourage the Health Ministry to include in her culture both formation and training, not only in the technical and intellectual side but also in her communication and her relationships, and this will be applied for all workers and employees and nurses and senior chiefs and doctors of medical institutions ;

2. To check back and reorganize the priorities of reception agents, because most of seniors chiefs their only concern is to apply the law while they forget that visitors and patients are human being who came to recover and to avoid any harm or sickness ; so, it is one of the duties and priorities that reception agents must be awared of, and among the duties of senior chiefs is to put in reception agents minds the reality of this profession and its principles and values ;

3. To prepare and print the principles and the values of the profession of reception agents in a kind of a notebook, and give it to them, and it must be as important as the the internal laws of the medical institution or the laws of public function ;

4. To frame the daily activities, because very often we found in one medical institution an overlap of tasks of different categories, for example : an overlap between the reception agents, and the security service, and cleaning agents, and multiservices agents, and even nurses and doctors ;

5. The lack of politics of stimulation for the reception agents, here, we are talking about competent agents, and the examples are very numerous, so every day we find them dealing with many problems and responding to many questions, and directing visitors and patients ... without boredom or complains, so why seniors chiefs never apply here equity and not justice ? the reason why seniors chiefs should give a big importance to stimulation in all its kinds and in all companies, whether in public or private sector ;

6. To check back the capacities of hospitals which are not up to the required level, specially when it's about the needed equipments and providing hygiene ; also, when the money given to these companies is not

enough there must be a reconsideration about offering services for free and giving this advantage to some specific categories, which will have a good impact to all members of the institution ;

7. Operating a periodic sounding opinions for the patients and visitors of the medical institutions in a kind of « A Systeme of Vigilance », because often a notebook of complaints is not enough to know all problems, and this to make sure of resolving them in the perfect timing before the problems become bigger.

5. Bibliography List :

1. [Watson](#) J. (1998), "**Le caring: Philosophie et science des soins infirmiers**", traduction : Josiane Bonnet, éditions Seli Arslan, Paris
2. <http://rechercheensoinsinfirmiers.com/2014/04/06/theorie-du-caring-humain-de-jean-watson/> , visité le 15/02/2016