

7. Hardwire the Five Fundamentals of Service



Learn more about the Five Fundamentals of Service at www.studergroup.com

- Type in “**AIDET Flip Tell**” to review a sample presentation format to cascade training.
- Type in “**competency assessment**” to download Studer Group’s AIDET competency assessment.

“**W**hen I ask employees what they would want for a family member if they were hospitalized, the things they consistently mention are respect, communication, appreciation, and confidence in the skill of the caregivers,” explains Studer Group Coach Don Dean. “This leads us into a discussion of the Five Fundamentals of Service... how we ensure that all patients receive excellent care.”

Studer Group uses the acronym “AIDET” (Acknowledge—Introduce—Duration—Explanation—Thank You) to help employees remember these Five Fundamentals of Service. In brief, AIDET looks like this:

- **Acknowledge**—Acknowledge the patient by name. Make eye contact. Ask: “Is there anything I can do for you?”
- **Introduce**—Introduce yourself, your skill set, your professional certification, and experience.
- **Duration**—Give an accurate time expectation for tests, physician arrival, and tray delivery.
- **Explanation**—Explain step by step what will happen, answer questions, and leave a phone number where you can be reached.
- **Thank**—Thank the patient for choosing your hospital, and for their communication and cooperation. Thank the family for assistance and being there to support the patient.

“Most patient satisfaction surveys ask the patient how well nurses, doctors and staff worked together as a team; about the willingness of physicians to discuss their case with them, and how well things were explained.”

The Five Fundamentals also afford the opportunity to “manage up” physicians and co-workers. When one nurse assures a patient at the end of her shift that the nurse who will replace him is well-loved by patients, or she shares that

the attending physician is a great listener, patients experience less anxiety and are more comfortable with the hand-offs that inevitably occur. Patient perception of care is higher and quality clinical outcomes are more likely.

Organizations who have hardwired the Five Fundamentals of Service through consistent use by all employees find this practice correlates closely with high patient satisfaction. In fact, most patient satisfaction surveys ask the patient how well nurses, doctors and staff worked together as a team; about the willingness of physicians to discuss their case with them, and how well things were explained. (To read examples of effective key words for AIDET and learn which behaviors merit a “4” versus a next generation “5”, download Studer Group’s AIDET Flip N Tell at www.studergroup.com.)

How to Roll It Out:

First, create employee buy-in. Use Don Dean’s exercise above to eliminate pushback by eliciting input from staff on what a great patient care experience looks like to them. Use Studer Group’s AIDET Flip N Tell to show how these behaviors can be integrated into what staff already do. Then role play it so they experience the difference in a concrete way.

After you’ve introduced AIDET to staff, hardwire it. Ask department leaders to complete an AIDET competency checklist as they round on their employees to see who’s consistently using the Five Fundamentals of Service. Finally, give pop quizzes! “You’d be surprised how well you can align the world around chocolate,” says Dean who gives out chocolate bars to staff who get it right. “There are certain things in a job that should be non-negotiable and AIDET is one of those. Just as Disney sets expectations about wait time for rides and Marshall Fields says thank you for shopping at our store, every patient deserves the respect and personal attention that AIDET ensures.” **H**