



When Change is the New Normal: Achieving Success Amidst the Unknown

If there is one truth in health care today...

It's that the landscape is always changing. As leaders, managing through uncertain times can feel like walking across a tightrope without a net – you can see where you need to go, but getting there is full of risks, and you may question your ability to get to the other side.

Although the current environment is constantly in flux, leaders can still be successful by maintaining focus on what matters most for organizational success. This means having a clear plan to move forward, built on a solid understanding of the broader health care environment. It means leveraging strategic partners to maximize effectiveness, and engaging employees to work with you. And finally, it's built upon informed, relevant, and timely communication. Together, these actions can help leaders get to the other side of that tightrope.

How Can You Take Action in Uncertain Times?

1. Have A Clear Plan That Leverages Your Strengths

It's critical to provide stability: for your team, your organization, and for your stakeholders. This means having a clear plan of action that sets out your goals, your strategies, and that identifies risks that you will need to manage. Most importantly, play to your strengths to ensure you can steer your team through the uncertainty successfully. This means:

- Focus your plan to lever what you have the most control over, aligned with your strengths.
- Be prepared to make decisions and prioritize – you can't be everything to everyone, and more importantly, in times of change you won't be able to do everything you want to do.
- Concentrate on those initiatives that align best with your strategy to drive the most effective outcome for your organization – this will support you in achieving the greatest impact on service delivery for your stakeholders.



2. Get Informed To Understand Your Changing Environment

In order to develop a plan to manage through uncertainty, you need to understand the world you're working in. Identifying what the underlying drivers of the uncertainty are and gathering data and information about them are both critical actions necessary to build your strategy and manage your response. There are several ways to be informed:

- Tap the power within your own organization - colleagues and front line staff will have insights and information, probably more than you realize.
- Maximize your stakeholder and partner networks - influencers, subject matter experts, and current or past collaborators will all have information, data and knowledge about what's happening in the health care landscape. Consolidated and analyzed, this can give you a powerful lens through which to understand the uncertainty.
- As a leader, always be learning and understanding the changing landscape as an individual.

3. Maximize Your Partner Relationships

You're not alone in managing in uncertainty – your partners, whether they are providers, service delivery agencies, funders, or collaborators, are all facing the same challenges as you in this complex health care environment. All stakeholders need to find innovative and unique ways to manage through uncertainty, and more than not, they too don't want to do it solo. To tap into your partners:

- Understand their situations, how they are managing and where there are opportunities to collaborate for success.
- Consider strategic partnerships that align with your plan and priorities, just be careful to not focus on those that could become a distraction from your core activities.
- Share best practices and insights to collectively build your knowledge and ability to respond to change.
- Embrace ideas that maximize your collective resources in ways that build stability. This may be people, infrastructure, or networks.

4. Empower Your Team

Uncertainty can be toughest for those on the front lines who manage the day to day services and interactions with patients and other stakeholders. With so much change in health care, it's not surprising this can translate into people leaving, increased job stress or reductions in confidence in the work being done; all of this can undermine the overall success of the organization. Some of these challenges can be alleviated through engagement and communication. It's sometimes easy to forget your teams when you're busy as a leader responding to change. Empower them and they can become a powerful asset for you. Here's how:

- Include them in the planning. Ask for their perspectives and ideas, they often know more than you do.
- Keep them informed through regular updates and communication.
- Ensure they know their roles during changing times, what the expectations are and how they can contribute to helping the organization manage through the uncertainty.

5. Communicate, Communicate, Communicate!

As a leader, it's important to understand that communication is a powerful tool to use when you are surrounded by change. Even if you don't have all the information you might want, or the answers to every potential questions you might get, being open and authentic in your communications can go a long way to mitigating concerns and building confidence in the way forward. What to consider:

- Understand what you need to communicate and have a clear communications plan that outlines what's happening, why, what you know and what this means for the organization.
- Identify who you need to communicate to, the key messages - and do it often!
- Follow-up to ensure your team knows what is happening to allay concerns.
- Use multiple communication tools – don't rely on just one.



Four Trends Driving Uncertainty in Health Care Today

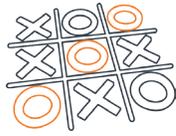
TRENDS	WHAT IT MEANS	THE UNCERTAINTY IT DRIVES
Patient First	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care focused on the patient • Services better coordinated • Responsiveness to needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moves focus from providers to patients • Creates need for major culture shift across the system • Will require new models of care
Accountability & Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public reporting on activities, service delivery • Involvement of broader stakeholders in decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unknown impact of greater public scrutiny • Justification for actions • Changing expectations for stakeholder engagement
Quality Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear focus on outcomes, not inputs or outputs • Improve quality with partnerships • Data to drive decisions and priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to define outcomes • Where to find the partnerships • What data matters, how to get it and is it reliable
Funding Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding models to incent health service providers to deliver care differently • Health Based Allocation Model (HBAM): funds the future based on the past • Quality Based Procedures (QBP): set prices for groups of services for target populations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the impacts given complexity • Balancing high quality care with cost controls • Only in year four of a multi-year roll out – more change to come

THE BOTTOM LINE

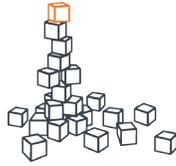
The health care landscape is constantly changing. While it may be overwhelming at times, it can also be a great thing, for our stakeholders, organizations, and broader health system. By staying focused on what truly matters, leaders can navigate the unknown and come through on the other side.

OUR CAPABILITIES

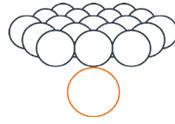
Management Consulting • Resource Augmentation



Strategy



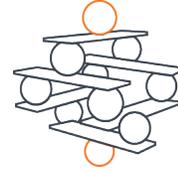
Process Improvement



Project Management



Research & Analytics



Governance & Leadership

WHAT WE DO

SOLUTION	DESCRIPTION	CLIENT BENEFITS
Change Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tools, Methodology & Planning Change Management Office Framework Development Training & Implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Save cost / resources when implementing any kind of change Build capacity to manage change internally Tools/training can be highly leveraged
Organizational Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Psychometrics Employee Engagement Organizational Alignment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve results faster Improved performance of resources, teams & organizations Increased efficiency
Governance & Leadership Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Coaching Board Governance Leadership Development Succession Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased leadership capacity Board effectiveness Increased leadership impact

WHO WE ARE

OPTIMUS | SBR is a management consulting firm that provides advisory services customized to address strategy, process, and project management needs to leading firms across North America.

Our functional practice areas include strategy, process, project management, leadership development, research and analytics, and implementation support among a range of various other consulting services.

OUR VALUES

How we do things is just as important as what we do. Our consultants behave in accordance to our value system:

Teamwork • Integrity • Passion • Initiative • Leadership

PRACTICE AREAS

Our experience spans across our key practice areas:

Financial Services | Energy & Infrastructure | Health Care & Not-for-Profit | Government & Agencies



2015
Best Small
and Medium
Employers
in Canada
By Aon Hewitt and
Queen's School of Business

For the third consecutive year



2014
The Green 30
By Aon Hewitt

30 Adelaide Street East, Suite 600
Toronto, ON M5C 3G8
info@optimussbr.com
416-649-6000
www.OptimusSbr.com