



## KLR Consulting

Inspiring Success in Your Leaders and Teams

# Columbia University Medical Center, Facilities & Campus Services | Success Story

*"It was clear from our first conversation that [Kristi] understood exactly what we were trying to accomplish with this retreat."*

The Facilities and Campus Services at Columbia University Medical Center are a hard-working, service-oriented group of department heads. Amador Centeno, their V.P., has worked with them over the six years of his tenure to burnish their reputation and develop their skills. This year, he felt it was time to focus more narrowly on developing the directors individually, and as a team.

Amador had a handful of recommended Leadership Development Consultants to choose from. "When I spoke with Kristi, it was clear from our first conversation that she understood exactly what it was I was trying to accomplish."

He oversees the five Facilities Management directors for Construction, Engineering, Compliance, Finance & Administration, and Housing/Custodial Services/Mail Operations. He is also responsible for the directors of the Campus Services Group, which comprises Student Health Services, Libraries, Dining & Catering, and Public Safety.

He says, "We have a solid, talented team of directors, but they definitely work in disparate areas, and there are some diverse personalities."

### Customized Directors' Retreat

In order to work with everyone on their leadership style, Kristi had each person take the DiSC assessment before the start of the retreat. She had several conversations with each of the individual directors, as well, to discover their thoughts, opinions and areas of concern.

With the information from the assessments, and her understanding of each person and the team dynamics gleaned from conversations with all participants, Kristi customized a concise, focused agenda for the retreat.

### Leadership Skills, Teamwork & Communication

"We really needed to work on getting the directors to separate a bit from their relationship with me, see the big picture in their own departments, and become stronger and more strategic within their divisions," says Amador.

### Columbia UMC Facilities & Campus Services

**Industry:** Higher Education

#### Challenges:

- Lack of cohesive teamwork
- Limited communication w/in group
- Lack of ownership/accountability
- Need better understanding of other's Leadership Styles

#### KLR Solutions:

- Directors' team retreat
- DiSC assessment & coaching
- Leadership development
- Teamwork & communication skills development
- Strategic planning basics

#### Benefits of KLR Programs:

- Improved communication within the group
- Actively taking ownership/Increased accountability
- Understanding of other's styles improves communication & teamwork
- Team & personal action plans created



Kristi's agenda for the retreat included:

- Exercises to help participants understand themselves and their priorities better
- Learning about teammates styles and methods and how to use that knowledge to increase communication and collaboration
- How to adjust leadership styles when necessary
- How to engage in and manage healthy conflict to improve communication and teamwork
- Defining each department's mission or purpose
- Develop team and personal SMART action plans

Over the course of the one-and-a-half days, the group participated in many other activities to support what they were learning, and to help them accomplish their individual and departmental objectives. The "critical few" priorities identified by the end of the retreat were:

- Redefine organizations structure
- Change internal & external culture
- Enhance training programs
- Improve performance management

To keep them moving forward, Kristi also suggested that the group start working with the concepts in *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* (Patrick Lencioni) in monthly follow up meetings.

### **Increased Accountability, Communication & Enthusiasm**

Amador says that it was difficult in the past to get the group to slow down and come together. "One of the outcomes [of the retreat] is that the department heads are now having regular meetings, as a group, without me. They talk about ways to increase their interactions and communication with each other." The group is also working to hold each other accountable, rather than having the boss do it.

Although he is making a point of staying out of the way, Amador says, "I understand that the meetings have been going well. They are really trying to create an environment that is safe, where they can say anything to each other, address any issues, without judgment or criticism."

Another thing that has come out of the retreat is that Amador is scheduling regular meetings with a small, rotating group of people from within each of the departments.

He says, "Most of those people don't get to see me often, and then only in big division meetings. These smaller group meetings are a way to encourage people to participate, to offer valuable feedback, and for their voices to be heard. The people on the front lines have a different view, and it's important to hear about it."

Amador and his directors have invited Kristi back to measure their progress and success, and to help them focus on their next growth opportunities.

*"I'm not the easiest person to please, and Kristi did a great job. I've been through many retreats, and this is one of the best. Kristi's ability to get my people engaged, participating and motivated was outstanding."*

*~Amador Centeno, V.P., Facilities & Campus Services, Columbia University Medical Center*

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