



LEADERSHIP ROUNDING

Purpose: The purpose of Leadership Rounding is to build relationships, trust, and culture in your organization. Research has found that staff often leave organizations because of their supervisor. Leadership Rounding is one helpful way for supervisors to engage with staff and build meaningful connections. While rounding, leaders are *intentionally* interacting with team members in a way that supports and engages individuals, recognizes accomplishments and quality work of individuals and teams, and models behavior that is true to the organization's values.

Research shows that high-trust organizations allow staff to take measured risks, innovate, and express themselves without fear. This is key in organizations pursuing a [fair and just culture](#). Yet, it is important that rounding is an authentic experience. According to a Gallup report, “[Rounding] can easily become a check-the-box task for leaders to speed through amid urgent requests and emergencies. When that happens, the staff knows leaders are just going through the motions, which does nothing to increase engagement,” (Ratanjee & Drenkard, 2019). Consistent moments of authentic individual connection and recognition can help build a culture of trust.

Leadership rounding was originally modeled after the practice of physicians, or clinical teams, rounding on their patients in a hospital setting. In the case of leadership rounding, a leader typically makes rounds independently, with the goal of engaging with individual or small groups of staff. It is not meant to be a structured group conversation, but rather, it is meant to be informal and relational.

Before you begin: Before an organization launches a leadership rounding program, it is important to communicate to staff that they will see their supervisors rounding regularly. Staff should understand the purpose of these conversations, the frequency with which to expect it, and the expectations of the relationship-building and solutions-oriented conversations. Setting the stage in advance can lessen defensiveness, and awkwardness, and reduce instances of venting sessions.

Instructions:

- **Who:** Leaders at all levels should round direct and indirect reports. This includes frontline managers to executives.
- **What:** Rounding means that a leader is out of their office, walking the floor, and purposefully engaging with staff with the intent to empower, recognize, and build relationships and trust.
- **Where:** Depending on your work environment, rounding may include walking the floor, rounding on a variety of shifts or days, driving to a site, or perhaps video chatting with staff in the case of homecare. If rounding is done virtually, it should be brief.
- **When:** Leaders should consider the frequency and time allotment required. This is dependent upon the size of your organization, the physical plant, and the number of staff. A standard example would be to round weekly for 30 minutes. In a single 30-minute rounding session, a leader may engage in several individual conversations and may visit multiple departments. The conversations don't need to be long, but they need to be consistent.

- **Additional recommendations:**
 - **The questions below** are categorized into areas that will contribute to a strong organizational culture. The specific questions are simply suggestions and are not all required with every rounding opportunity.
 - **Rounding is not intended to be an intense interview** or formal conversation with note-taking, but rather an informal conversation with staff who are available. It is important to be fully engaged and display active listening and to create a safe environment where staff is comfortable sharing ideas. To facilitate this experience, leaders may consider jotting notes down *after* each conversation or after they have completed rounding.
 - **It is important to avoid complaint sessions** while rounding. Remember the purpose of rounding is to build trust, relationships, and culture, so leaders should practice a delicate balance of listening to staff while seeking solutions-oriented and empowering conversations.
 - **Questions should be open-ended** so that staff has space to share what they are experiencing. Display curiosity!
 - **Leaders must respond to feedback and establish mechanisms to follow up on suggestions and requests.** Rounding that occurs without follow-through will have a negative impact on an organization's culture and will deteriorate trust.

Ask yourself before you start...	
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Are you feeling calm and ready to listen to others?</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Do you feel ready to accept feedback?</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Do you feel capable of authentic connection with your team right now?</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Are you in a space to share positivity and model your organization's core values?</i>	
Build relationships	
<input type="checkbox"/> How is your family? <input type="checkbox"/> What did you do over the weekend? <input type="checkbox"/> What are your holiday plans? <input type="checkbox"/> How is your stress level today? <input type="checkbox"/> Ask about personal things: Kids, pets, vacations, birthdays, graduations, important life evets	Comments:
Facilitate camaraderie	
<i>* Make sure to pass the compliments on to whoever is named, as this builds an atmosphere of positivity between colleagues.</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Who has helped you today? <input type="checkbox"/> Have any of your colleagues done something exceptional lately? <input type="checkbox"/> Who has been a good role model or mentor for you?	Comments:

Gain insight

- What is working well in your area or on your team?
- Are there any barriers in your job? What can I do to help remove that barrier? Do you have ideas for a solution?
- What systems or processes could be better?
- Do you have any safety concerns?
- Do you have all of the tools you need to do your job?
- Are there any tools that would help you to be more effective, efficient, or accurate in your role?

Comments:

Keep yourself accountable

- I wanted to follow up on...
- Last week you asked me....
- I looked into....
- Thanks for notifying me about that broken machine. Did it get repaired?
- I'm sorry you had trouble logging in last week – were you able to get your password reset?

Comments:

Model values and culture

- Role model positive non-verbal behaviors (facial expression, body language, understand cultural norms of those with whom you are engaging)
- Display your organizations core values through your interactions (hospitality, integrity, excellence, honor, service, innovation, dignity, respect, collaboration)

Comments:

Offer support

- Is there anything I can do to help you right now?
- How can I support you better?
- Can the organization's leadership team do anything extra to support you?

Comments:

Extra tip: Is your team working on a special project? Include a check-in question!	
<input type="checkbox"/> How has the new falls reduction plan been going? <input type="checkbox"/> How long is it taking you to respond to call lights this week? <input type="checkbox"/> Is the new admissions process working as intended?	Comments:
Once your rounding is completed, take a moment to reflect upon your conversations with the following questions:	
Are there any common themes or key words you heard today?	Response:
Do you have any new tasks or requests that need follow up? Resources staff need?	Response:
Are there any staff who need to receive compliments or thank you notes for their outstanding efforts?	Response:
Are there any staff who need additional coaching or mentoring?	Response:
Does anything need to be shared with the leadership team?	Response:
Other notes:	

Resources

<https://www.harvardbusiness.org/good-leadership-it-all-starts-with-trust/>

<https://www.huronlearninglab.com/hardwired-results/hardwired-results-01/rounding-for-outcomes>

<https://www.leadingagemn.org/news/leadership-rounding-new-resource-from-safe-care-for-seniors>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u4bVbn9zhdo>

<https://www.cms.gov/medicare/provider-enrollment-and-certification/qapi/downloads/qapileadershproundingtool.pdf>

<https://www.gallup.com/workplace/268211/strategies-hospital-leaders-rounding-right.aspx>

Hardwiring Excellence: Purpose, Worthwhile Work, Making a Difference, Studor, 2003