

## Northwest Healthcare

### Employee Referral Program

#### ASSESS

Northwest Healthcare is comprised of two hospitals, one in Tucson and one in Oro Valley, which employ over 4,500 individuals. To meet the challenges of a dramatic nursing shortage and a growing population, Northwest Healthcare partnered with Hodes to develop a comprehensive staffing strategy that included an employee referral program (ERP) used to attract new employees ranging from nurses to allied health professionals.

#### STRATEGIZE

Hodes designed an employee referral program that focused on the employees' relationships outside of the work environment, in their very own backyards. The campaign "Now you're cooking," focused on the casual southern Arizona lifestyle as a way to encourage employees to refer their friends for openings. Employees received \$500 - \$5,000 per referral that was hired (depending on the position) and a chance to win a new backyard barbecue entertainment center. The more people they referred, the stronger the chance to win the grand prize along with unlimited cash awards.

#### IMPLEMENT

The program launched in May to help capture the excitement of earning vacation money and a chance to win an entire backyard barbecue makeover for the summer. Employees received a letter from the CEO along with a rules brochure. The hospitals were decorated with posters and hanging mobiles. Soon after the program launched, clinical leaders received e-mail card reminders with tips on motivating their employees to make referrals. And leadership received a new card/tip every two weeks. At the same time, employees received postcards throughout the duration of the program thanking them and encouraging them to keep making referrals. Towards the end of the program, a letter went out to employees as a reminder.

#### MEASURE

Northwest Healthcare received approximately 600 applications and hired approximately 200 professionals. 50% of these hires were for nursing and hard-to-fill positions. The average cost-per-hire was a mere \$150 (for promotional costs) and \$1,925 when payouts were added. These figures were significantly lower than national averages, which range from \$5,000-\$10,000. In just six months, Northwest Healthcare hired 82 more individuals through their ERP than they had the entire year before.

