Paper Title: Leadership and culture of continuous improvement

Lessons from The Royal Hospital Quality Initiatives

Background: Leading employees through change and reinforcing improvement are difficult and cumbersome challenging tasks. Therefore, leadership support and buy-in, involving employees and stakeholders early in implementation process, and continuously adjusting for improvement are critical to success.

Approach: The leadership approach in managing change and human resources in the process of implementation of quality initiatives, accreditation standards and culture change is demonstrated.

Findings: Although there is a plethora of literature on transformational leadership today, the experience of the Royal Hospital is an outstanding enriching experience with various learning lessons to be shared.

The lessons include real examples of challenges, success and failure on handling issues such as employee de-motivation, resistance, and failure to sustain improvements in the face of scarce resources. Drawing on a wide range of insightful real case studies from challenging, complex, inter-connected and unpredictable hospital work environment and a range of seemingly insoluble problems of the largest tertiary care hospital in Oman, the application of theories of leadership and change management are well challenged.

Conclusion: The experience of the Royal hospital in improvement efforts, highlights the crucial role of effective visioning, strong leadership, communication, motivational practices and participative leadership style. It provides a real-world understanding of several dimensions of leadership to bring about deep and lasting changes.