

speech & script writing



Organization Saint Luke's Health System

Event Employee Town Hall, Fall 2017

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“Celebrate the Kind”

A Call for Compassion and Kindness in Care

Good morning and thank you for joining me today because I have something serious I want to talk about.

As you saw in our introductory video, we've covered a lot of ground so far this year. I hope you saw just how many different ways Saint Luke's continues to show our commitment to our Vision 2020 mission.

Whether it's the grand openings at Mission Farms and Blue Springs, Epic being implemented at our critical access hospitals, or our partnership with the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts—each one of the highlights you saw in that video plays a role in our Saint Luke's story.

I say “our” Saint Luke's story because we are now the caretakers of this institution. Since the 1800s, Saint Luke's has seen thousands of health care leaders, physicians, nurses, accountants, board members, you name it. Through new centuries, the Great Depression, world wars, and incredible advancements in technology—Saint Luke's has weathered its challenges and flourished year after year, decade after decade.

Early this year we published the third edition of *Presence of Care*—the complete history of Saint Luke's. In it there are stories of successes and failures, challenges and opportunities.

You can read it and see how the decisions made had ripples that carried over years and changed the essential core of Saint Luke's. Admitting the first African American patient, naming our first woman to head a medical staff, the introduction of the first heart-lung machine, the expansion from one hospital at the city core to 10 hospitals and campuses and dozens of practices, serving 67 counties and employing more than 11,000 professionals.

Now it's our turn to write a chapter of the story and do something so powerful that it will help shape who Saint Luke's grows to be for the next generation. What impression will we leave behind? What standard of excellence will we set for the next 100 years?

I know what I want it to be, and I want to share that idea with you.

We saw just now that as we continue to progress toward our Vision 2020 mission, we are hitting the high notes. Grow, Innovate, Integrate, and Compete. We're doing it all.

We're opening new locations, we're launching apps and installing self-service kiosks, the Saint Luke's Physician Group is successfully up and running with a new CEO, and our U.S. News rankings continue to place us among the very best in the city, metro, region, and country.

When I look at our accomplishments, it's clear that they are wide-ranging and substantive. Sometimes they are the high-profile, high-impact initiatives like building our new Community Hospitals. That's the "what."

But often, it's the understated and under-the-radar things that have just as much of an impact. The personal interactions, the compassionate moments, the selfless acts.

That's the "how."

Not What, But How

Today I want to spend some time focusing not on the what, but on the how. How do we achieve our vision? How do we make a difference in the lives of our patients? How do we create a culture that not only attracts new patients, but also new team members; professionals who want to work for Saint Luke's because they've heard we value our mission, our patients, and each other above all else?

You all know the answer to this because you're living it already. It's not just the "what," it's the "how." And I believe that by embracing this way of being we are effectively determining how far we will go on our journey toward being the region's premier health care provider.

We all know that "not what, but how" means we can open a hundred Convenient Care clinics across Missouri and Kansas. But if patients are met by an unhelpful staff member, they're not very likely to come back a second time.

You understand that "not what, but how" means we could finally meet the challenge of our nursing shortage—become fully staffed in every hospital and practice. But if the interpersonal climate in those hospitals and practices is unfriendly or overly competitive, it's only a short matter of time before those nurses move on to the hospital across town.

"Not what, but how" is a philosophy worth celebrating precisely because it's not a top-down mandate. It's not something leadership and managers "make happen." It's an idea that needs to be nurtured so that it can grow within each one of us. And it needs to be felt with every interaction.

And it is. It's what has driven us for more than 130 years, and I want us to be conscious of it in our work every day. My hope is that we can operate with a "not what, but how" mentality—not because it's "good business" but because it's who we are naturally.

And it's why each of us chose Saint Luke's. We wanted to be around others who felt and acted the same way. We wanted to be challenged in positive ways that affect others for the better.

The Patient Experience

Do me a favor and take a moment to think about the question you get asked more than any other in your job. It could be anything from "Where's the nearest bathroom?" to "Is this going to hurt?" to "Did you get that email I sent yesterday?"

For me, these days, it's "When are we getting better coffee?" I get asked that question... a lot. (By the end of this year, by the way.)

Now, if you're like me, you're tired of answering it. You see someone who's about to ask it and you brace yourself for what's coming. But here's the critical piece: How do you react? How do you answer?

Do you answer like someone who's already answered it five times today? Or do you take a moment to understand that for this person, it's a brand new question? For this person, it doesn't matter how many other people have asked it. They want to know and they deserve a kind and compassionate answer.

At the end of someone's time at a Saint Luke's facility—they will remember how they were cared for at every turn. From the person who helped schedule their appointment all the way to their drive back home—every interaction counts. Every interaction adds to the totality of their experience.

And a week later, when they see someone at the grocery store wearing their Saint Luke's name badge or scrubs—believe it or not—that counts, too.

How we act and treat others—not just within our entities and offices—but always, is the way people see Saint Luke's. It's what has set us apart for years. And each of you understands that it matters just as much as the ribbon cuttings, the technology, and the breakthroughs.

We are each, always, a reflection of Saint Luke's. So, I want to ask: what does your reflection look like?

Brand Ambassadors

When people think of a brand, they often think of the logo. The golden arches, the swoosh, the bitten apple, the bullseye. They are easily identifiable and so ingrained in our culture that we don't need more than that to know who we're talking about.

But that's not all a brand is. For Target, it's not just the bullseye—it's also how clean and well-stocked the store is, how helpful the clerks are when you can't find something, and how much their mobile coupon app helps you save. And it's even the way they removed gender-based signage because they realized that not all girls like dolls and not all boys like dump trucks.

All of those things clearly say “Target” because they live their brand at all times. Would it surprise you to learn we're not that different? We have a brand, too.

In our clinical settings where we treat patients; in our offices where we shepherd the overall strategy and manage the behind-the-scenes execution; at the College where we shape the health care professionals of tomorrow; and at the Foundation where we accept the kindness and generosity of our donors and turn their giving into life-saving tools for the next patient.

It's everywhere. And it's all of us.

And here's the piece that makes us distinct among our peers: You all understand that you're an essential part of it. You're not just an employee. You're a Saint Luke's ambassador.

And as such, it's on us to continue our rich heritage and history; to set us apart from the rest by being the compassionate and kind professionals we already are—and shaping Saint Luke's around that.

So, who do we want Saint Luke's to be in the future? How do we want to be better? How do we want to be unique? It's up to us.



[\(Watch "Celebrate the Kind" Video\).](#)

These stories are Saint Luke's. If you don't believe that we live a culture of kindness, I have proof right here. And I'm confident that we each have our own stories of kindness—big and small.

I'm sending you all out of here today with one of these: a "Celebrate the Kind" card. And that's exactly what I want you to do with it: celebrate the kind.

I see it happen regularly, and I know you do, too. The kindness of this organization is everywhere we look. But often it goes unnoticed. Instead, let's celebrate it.

Go be that person who inspires others. Be compassionate. Be caring. Be courageous. Be kind. It doesn't have to take much. You don't have to go the extra mile—just go the extra step.

Put a smile on someone's face and make them grateful that they know you—or that they happened to cross your path today. When you do, others will notice and they will respond in kind.

And when you see it happen, honor that kindness. Let them know you saw it and that it meant something to you. Tell others exactly how you saw a co-worker or colleague make someone's day better or easier.

Let's show everyone that—now more than ever—in this world and climate that's filled with judgment, internet trolls, and scary headlines—that there are the people of Saint Luke's who truly live their mission.

And that we don't confine that mission to inside the walls of our hospitals, clinics, practices, and offices. Instead we spread it everywhere we go.

Let's continue and spread our culture of kindness in and around Kansas City. Let's make it a movement to celebrate the kind in everyday acts, and let's let them know this movement was born at Saint Luke's.

Thank you.