

ROI Culture Code

Radiology of Indiana (ROI) is a corporation by which we, the radiologists, use our expertise and abilities to help our referring clinicians and patients, lead and develop our staff and work together to accomplish the success for ROI. The challenge: We are all different. We all bring to ROI a unique set of skills, backgrounds and beliefs that, if we use and are allowed to use properly, will not only make ROI a successful corporation, but, more importantly, will cause each individual to feel valued, respected and part of a team. Our goal is to take all this diversity and blend it together into one highly functional and unified team.

We recognize that there are one of two management styles that will be pervasive throughout a corporation. These are fear or trust. In all things, we want to create an environment that is centered around trust, not fear.

By its very nature, a corporation has internal departments or divisions. For ROI, that includes things like support staff, technical staff and subspecialty expertise for the radiologists. Within each one of those different departments or subspecialties, there are decisions being made and practices done that only those people in that area know best how to do. All of us respect their expertise in their field. We recognize that there has to be an innate trust that those within that subspecialty or department are doing their best to make decisions and recommendations that will bring about the success for ROI. We are trusting those individuals to make their decisions with the overall needs and objectives of the corporation in mind. And, we recognize this can really only happen successfully when there is frequent and clear communication in all areas of the corporation and that this communication is much more likely to happen in an environment of trust.

Each of us can really only know ourselves, our own hearts, dreams, ambitions, etc. To that end, each of us should evaluate our own motives and desires before speaking or writing an email or making a decision on behalf of the corporation. We should ask ourselves, "Is what I'm about to say, write or do going to be constructive or contributory and will it be for the overall betterment of my patients, fellow workers and ROI? Or, is what I'm about to do or say really just for something I want done for the betterment of me or for my agenda?" Tough questions. However, it's not too hard to imagine the good things that could happen when we put this into practice; stronger relationships with one another, improved corporate moral and better chances for ROI's success.

So, practically speaking, what steps are we taking or what things can we implement to carry out this mission of creating a work atmosphere of trust? We definitely won't achieve this by practicing a culture of "suppression of dissent" nor will it be done by squelching or policing each partner's ability to speak 'freely'. We do recognize that disagreement is going to happen and that's okay. Opposing views are actually a healthy thing. When there is an environment of trust and open communication, disagreeing causes us to work through the problem together and most of the time leads to a better solution.

When it comes to emails, everyone should be able to communicate with whomever they like, as freely and as often as they like. However, the things we should strive for in our communication are the following; respect, to state our opinion or point of view clearly and, if we are disagreeing with something said or written, why we disagree and what facts or figures support our position. We all agree that it is never, never appropriate to personally attack or make snide comments about the person we may be disagreeing with. We agree that this latter type of correspondence will not be tolerated and we ask that it be addressed by the Board, at the times it should occur.

When it comes to meetings, there is no better time for us to help each other maintain a decorum of professionalism, civility and respect. We all choose to adhere to the ROI Meeting Ground Rules listed below. There should be one person selected who is responsible for the running of the meeting, usually the chairman. The goal of the person running the meeting is not to squelch opinions or ideas, but to maintain the desired decorum and to make sure the meeting follows the agenda provided. That being said, we have all seen those times when a meeting got “uncomfortable” and it could be paralyzing to act or say anything. If that is to occur in the future, anyone should feel free to speak-up. Whoever speaks up should not direct their concern to the person speaking, but to the leader of the meeting. The leader will then bring the meeting back to order and will review the points, not the emotions, being discussed with the goal of establishing a common understanding and to get everyone back to the task of solving the issue at hand. If the leader of the meeting is involved in the situation, there is an understanding that the meeting will be suspended and the leader shall remove himself or herself from the meeting for at least 5 minutes, regroup and return to carry out the steps previously mentioned. If the leader feels they cannot do this, they will select a neutral party, someone not involved in said discussion or conflict, to moderate the meeting and discussion with the goal of seeking resolution.

ROI Meeting Ground Rules:

1. Start on Time and end 10 minutes early
2. Follow an agenda, including time allotted – no agenda, no meeting. If there needs to be a change to the agenda either in time allotted or a new item added, then this needs to be acknowledged and voted on by those present at the meeting with a majority rule.
3. Introduce guests
4. Silence electronic devices
5. Avoid noisy distractions, such as typing
6. Assign meeting roles
7. Be present, be prepared and be respectful
8. Participate actively and stay on topic
9. Critique processes, not people
10. Maintain confidentiality as appropriate
11. Follow ROI values – *To be added, once the Board, working with the input of the Shareholders, completes later this year.*

12. Conclude with clear direction, summarize, and assign the task(s) to accomplish, if any, to specific individual(s), who will be responsible to complete the task(s).

Finally, we are all fallible and we all make mistakes. There will be those times of stress, weariness, and burnout that may cause each of us to act in a way or say something we may not normally do or say. If one of our partners personally offends us, we should, if we can, do our best to try to understand the context of the offense and, if at all possible, try to extend grace to that person and let the matter slide. If we can't, then we will take the time to personally speak with that person to let them know how what they said or did bothered or offended you. If, after that conversation, there is still an unresolved tension or issue, then please ask one or two other individuals to go with you to speak to the person. Those one or two individuals are not "on anyone's side" but are there to listen to both sides and to see if a mutual understanding and a restoring of the relationship can be obtained. If, after that, there is still unresolved conflict, the matter should be brought before a representative of the Board of Directors and they will talk with the parties previously involved and will bring the matter to the other BOD members with the ultimate goal of restoration.

Here's the bottom-line...when all is said and done, when we all step away from our profession, we will probably look back and remember some of the patients we helped and a few clinicians who grew to become our friends or acquaintances, but most of all we will remember our fellow partners, technologists and the staff at ROI. The ones who strove alongside us to provide the best radiology services and patient care possible and who all wanted and tried to make ROI the best radiology practice we could. We want to value each other more than the practice. We want to put people first and the success of ROI second, because, if we do that, no matter what the future holds for ROI, we will have been successful.