

9-13-2024

## Leadership Strategies for Streamlining Employee Protocols in Small Behavioral Health Agencies

Chantelle Walker  
*Walden University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations>

---

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection at ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu](mailto:ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu).

# Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Chantelle Walker

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,

and that any and all revisions required by

the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Kristen Chesser, Committee Chairperson, Psychology Faculty

Dr. Derek Rohde, Committee Member, Psychology Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost

Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University

2024

Abstract

Leadership Strategies for Streamlining Employee Protocols in Small Behavioral Health

Agencies

by

Chantelle Walker

MS, Walden University, 2018

BS, Troy University, 2014

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Psychology in Behavioral Health Leadership

Walden University

August 2024

## Abstract

Streamlining employee protocols in behavioral health agencies are a critical challenge for organizations. Inconsistencies with maintaining protocols can impair an organization's systems developed to ensure accurate and timely documentation, can impede processes for time off, and can decrease service quality. This qualitative case study was grounded in the Baldrige Framework of Excellence to discover leadership strategies for streamlining employee protocols in Behavioral Health Organization U (BHOU). The identified population consisted of mental health clinicians in the Southeast region of the United States. Data collection occurred through interviews with the organization's leader, questionnaires, and secondary data. Thematic analysis revealed six themes: training, communication, engagement, time, accountability, and resistance. The results showed that BHOU had the fundamentals of leadership and working with their team. BHOU can enhance training, engagement, and follow-through on behalf of leadership to improve employee readiness with maintaining protocols in place. Creating new strategies for implementing behavioral health leadership may contribute to sustainability with an agency's process and positive social change by assisting organizations in developing tools needed to integrate employee protocols that can positively impact client care.

Leadership Strategies for Streamlining Employee Protocols in Small Behavioral Health

Agencies

by

Chantelle Walker

MS, Walden University, 2018

BS, Troy University, 2014

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Psychology in Behavioral Health Leadership

Walden University

August 2024

## Dedication

This doctoral study is dedicated to my amazing family. To my mom, sister, and niece, thanks for your continued support throughout this process. To my loving husband, your patience and encouragement have been nothing short of amazing, and I appreciate you. To my son, I love you with all my heart and want you to know that you can do anything you put your mind to, no matter how challenging it may seem. And finally, to my sweet daughter, while you will not get to attend my graduation, I am so glad to have had the opportunity to have you be a part of this process for a little while before you transitioned to heaven. I love you and know that you are looking down, smiling.

## Acknowledgments

I want to thank God, my family, and my faculty for their continued support. Without you, God, this journey would not have been possible. Thank you for giving me the endurance and perseverance to make it through. To my family, you have stood by my side since Day 1, and I appreciate you dearly. Lastly, thanks to Dr. Chesser and Dr. Rohde for your feedback, guidance, and support throughout this doctoral study.

## Table of Contents

List of Tables .....	iv
List of Figures .....	v
Section 1a: The Behavioral Health Organization .....	1
Practice Problem .....	2
Purpose.....	4
Significance.....	4
Summary .....	5
Section 1b: Organizational Profile .....	7
Organizational Profile and Key Factors.....	8
Organizational Background and Context.....	13
Summary .....	14
Section 2: Background and Approach—Leadership Strategy and Assessment.....	16
Supporting Literature .....	16
Organizational Problem .....	17
Leadership Strategies, Hiring Practices, and Organizational Development .....	18
Sources of Evidence.....	20
Leadership Strategy and Assessment .....	21
Clients/Population Served.....	24
Workforce and Operations.....	25
Analytical Strategy.....	29
Summary .....	33



Section 3: Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management Components of	
the Organization.....	34
Analysis of the Organization.....	34
Knowledge Management .....	36
Summary .....	37
Section 4: Results—Analysis, Implications, and Preparation of Findings .....	38
Qualitative Data Analysis .....	38
RQ1	39
RQ2	40
RQ3	41
Additional Organizational Results .....	43
Client Programs and Services .....	43
Client-Centered Workforce.....	44
Organizational Leadership and Governance .....	45
Financial and Marketplace Performance.....	46
Social Impact.....	47
Section 5: Recommendations and Conclusions .....	49
Workforce .....	49
RQ1 Recommendation.....	49
Potential Options to Consider .....	50
RQ2 Recommendation.....	51
RQ3 Recommendation.....	52

Additional Recommendations.....	52
Conclusion .....	53
References.....	55
Appendix A: BHOU Leaders’ Perception of Employee Engagement and Employee/Leader Development.....	65
Appendix B: BHOU Leaders’ and Employees Perspectives of Factors Contributing to Lack of Follow-Through with Current Protocols.....	66
Appendix C: BHOU Leaders’ Perception of Societal Well-Being and Social Change .....	68
Appendix D: BHOU Employee Satisfaction Survey .....	69
Appendix E: BHOU Employee Exit Form .....	70
Appendix F: BHOU Client Satisfaction Survey .....	71

List of Tables

**Table 1** *BHOU Key Performance Indicators* ..... 29

**Table 2** *BHOU Services* ..... 44

List of Figures

**Figure 1** *Workforce Profile* ..... 9

**Figure 2** *BHOU Organizational Chart* ..... 11

## Section 1a: The Behavioral Health Organization

The Southeast region of the United States provides mental health services via community service boards and private behavioral health agencies. When researching how many private behavioral health agencies are providing counseling within the area, I found no specific data on the many services and locations available to community members. The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities website displayed that there are currently six centers that manage 23 community service boards in the region (Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, n.d.).

There has been an increase in the need for therapy to treat anxiety and depression since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Harris et al. (2023) stated that the rates of mental illness in the United States have risen significantly since the pandemic started, with symptoms of anxiety and depression in adults nearly quadrupling. With increased demand comes the need for more clinicians to provide services to adults and children. As companies work to fill positions, orientation, and training are often reduced due to the need to meet the client's needs.

Behavioral Health Organization U (BHO) is a small for-profit counseling agency in the Southeast region of the United States. The agency offers counseling, counseling support groups, and licensing supervision. Counseling is provided to members within the community aged 8 years through adulthood, with most of the clientele consisting of women experiencing depression, anxiety, divorce, grief, stress, behavioral challenges, and more. Clients can meet with their therapist at the center and online by appointment. The counseling support groups are provided to adults 18 and older at no

charge and are ongoing throughout the year (Behavioral Health Leader [BHL], personal communication, June 21, 2023).

The BHL supervises associate clinicians and interns seeking a licensed professional counselor (LPC) license in the region. The team is composed of six members, including one fully licensed clinician, three associate-level clinicians with LAPC status, and two clinical mental health counseling interns. All associate and fully licensed employees hold the National Certified Counselor certification through the National Board of Certified Counselors.

Mission statements are written declarations that summarize and communicate an organization's core values and strategies and present managerial tools that can be used to motivate employees by creating a common self-understanding within an organization (Fegert et al., 2021). BHOU's mission is to provide effective and meaningful mental health services to individuals to assist them with life healing while empowering them to prioritize and maximize their mental wellness. The BHL works from the mantra of "self-care is the best care" and believes this is important for employees and clients to implement within the organization. Information on the mission statement is provided in the employee handbook and during training and is not accessible on the agency website.

### **Practice Problem**

A measurement of an employee's effectiveness is their productivity, and it serves as a gauge for the quantity and quality of an employee's output (Marri et al., 2022). Challenges often arise for employees and BHLs in mental health organizations when managing protocols and processes. This can be from situations such as a lack of training

and orientation or struggles with time management on behalf of the employee. Numerous variables affect the productivity of employees that, in turn, affect the outcome produced by the employee and can be determining factors in the organization's growth and success: mental health and well-being; work-life balance; knowing when employees are burned out and giving them time-tracking tools to monitor themselves to track the balance; having the right tools available for the employees to support them and training the employees to use them properly; having processes, roles, and responsibilities defined and communicated to the employees with continuous checks throughout the year to ensure alignment and clarity; and culture within the organization (Marri et al., 2022). BHO leadership is experiencing inconsistencies with employees completing clinical documentation in the allotted time frame, not following protocols for taking time off, and not appropriately sending follow-up emails to administration and potential client intakes within 24 to 48 hours. Fiaz and Muhammad Fahim (2023) shared that many studies highlighted that positive and supportive workplace relationships induce positive work behavior, such as job satisfaction and work attachment.

Although researchers have investigated the issue of employee noncompliance within organizations, literature regarding organizational practice knowledge needs lacked specific strategies or processes for assisting leaders in behavioral health companies with appropriately implementing protocols for employees. The current study addressed the need for more approaches provided to the leaders in behavioral health organizations in streamlining protocols for employees. The research questions (RQs) that guided this study included the following:

RQ1: What leadership strategies are most effective in streamlining employee protocols in small behavioral health agencies?

RQ2: What challenges do leaders face when implementing strategies to streamline employee protocols in small behavioral health agencies?

RQ3: What are the perceptions of employees in small behavioral health agencies regarding leadership strategies used to streamline protocols?

### **Purpose**

This qualitative case study aimed to explore and identify leadership perspectives and alternative methods for formatting behavioral health protocol processes to promote increased productivity. For my planned research design, I collected data from orientation materials, the employee handbook, clinical documentation protocols, promotional flyers, website content, interviews with the BHL and other secondary data.

### **Significance**

This study may bring value to the organization because the focus was on employee protocols and procedures, which may bring value to the BHOU by streamlining employee processes. Findings may provide a solid framework for leadership to work from and may ensure that employees are adequately trained, which may lead to longevity in the workplace; moreover, findings may increase the quality of services provided to clients and ensure motivated employees. Chong et al. (2018) stated that supportive, task, and change leadership behaviors have an impact on job satisfaction, performance, and commitment.



My research may contribute to social change by helping behavioral health organizations identify strategies to streamline employee protocols that may positively impact client care. Lack of motivation from employees, burnout, lack of time management, and reduced training and orientation times are common problems among behavioral health organizations. Finding new potential solutions may increase the production and quality of client services. Findings may also lead to employee buy-in, longevity in employment, and impact on efficient behavioral health practices and leadership. Driving social change may require the adoption and development of additional skills that are not incorporated into the traditional training of clinicians (Sakran, 2023).

### **Summary**

Behavioral health organizations are experiencing an increase in the need for therapy services, requiring more clinicians. As more employees are hired, orientation and training often fail to meet clients' needs. BHOU is a small for-profit agency providing counseling services, groups, and clinical supervision. The organization works to provide effective and meaningful mental health services to individuals to assist them with life healing while empowering them to prioritize and maximize their mental wellness. In Section 1B, I provide detailed information on the organizational profile:

- workforce profile;
- assets;
- regulatory environment;
- structure;

- patients, other customers, and stakeholders;
- suppliers, partners, and collaborators;
- organizational structure;
- clients, customers, and stakeholders;
- competitive environment; and
- strategic context and performance.

## Section 1b: Organizational Profile

BHOU leadership was noticing inconsistencies in the organization, including noncompliance with maintaining required time frames for completing clinical documentation and decreased follow-through in managing time-off requests and responding to emails within 24 to 48 hours. The current qualitative case study explored leadership perspectives and alternative methods for formatting behavioral health protocol processes for employees. The research questions that guided this study were the following:

RQ1: What leadership strategies are most effective in streamlining employee protocols in small behavioral health agencies?

RQ2: What challenges do leaders face when implementing strategies to streamline employee protocols in small behavioral health agencies?

RQ3: What are the perceptions of employees in small behavioral health agencies regarding leadership strategies used to streamline protocols?

An agency's organizational profile provides the context for understanding how the organization functions, aids in addressing unique facets of the company, recognizes gaps in critical information, and focuses on essential performance requirements and outcomes (National Institute of Standards and Technology, 2023). The current study explored BHOU's profile to gather detailed information on the agency's mission and core competencies, workforce profile, assets, regulatory environment, organizational structure, clients and stakeholders, suppliers and partners, competitive environment, and strategic context. The findings of this study may provide knowledge to address the practice

problem. Findings may offer guidance on identifying leadership strategies for streamlining employee protocols within small behavioral health agencies.

### **Organizational Profile and Key Factors**

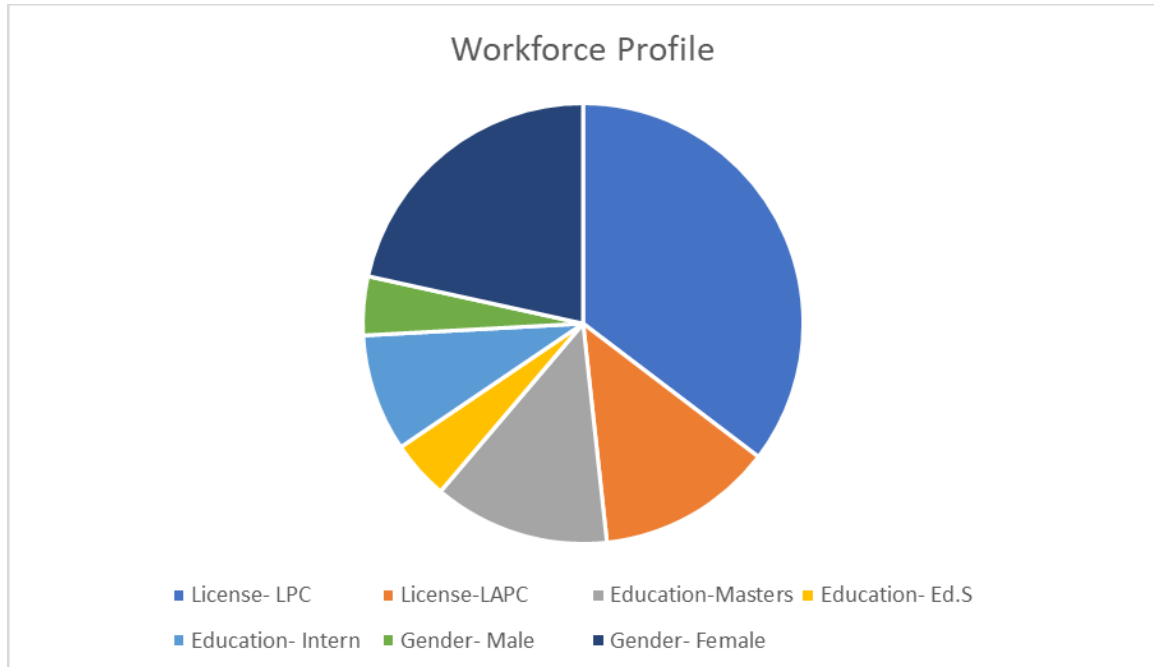
BHOU provides counseling and support groups to members within the community age 8 years and older who are experiencing depression, anxiety, divorce, grief, stress, behavioral challenges, and more. Services are rendered electronically via telehealth or in person at the center. To ensure the implementation of quality services, BHOU leadership and staff follow their mission statement of “providing effective and meaningful mental health services to individuals in the efforts of assisting them with life healing while simultaneously empowering them to prioritize and maximize their mental wellness.” The core competencies that align with this mission statement include reliability and communication. Additionally, there is a high level of competency and knowledge from employees within the agency on mental health (BHL, personal communication, October 13, 2023) The mission statement is the foundation of an organization and should be impressed upon those who have any connection with the organization (Play Up the Importance of Your Mission Statement, 2022).

BHOU had six team members at the time of this study. These team members consisted of one fully licensed clinician with an EdS, three master’s-level associate licensed clinicians, and two interns. The educational requirements involve each clinician holding a master’s degree. Of the six individuals, five identified as females and one as male.

Strategies to manage employees' health and safety are enhanced communication; formulation and enforcement of policies, rules, and regulations; education and training; and management commitment (Obuobisa-Darko, 2022). The special health and safety requirements provided to employees at orientation and thereafter are an essential section of the workforce profile (see Figure 1). BHOU conducts a PowerPoint presentation for new clinicians and interns at the start of employment. During this presentation, the BHL covers information on identifying emergencies, confidentiality and limitations, scenarios to practice, whom to consult during an emergency, how to create a follow-up plan with a client safety plan in place, and guidance on the documentation process for a crisis.

**Figure 1**

*Workforce Profile*

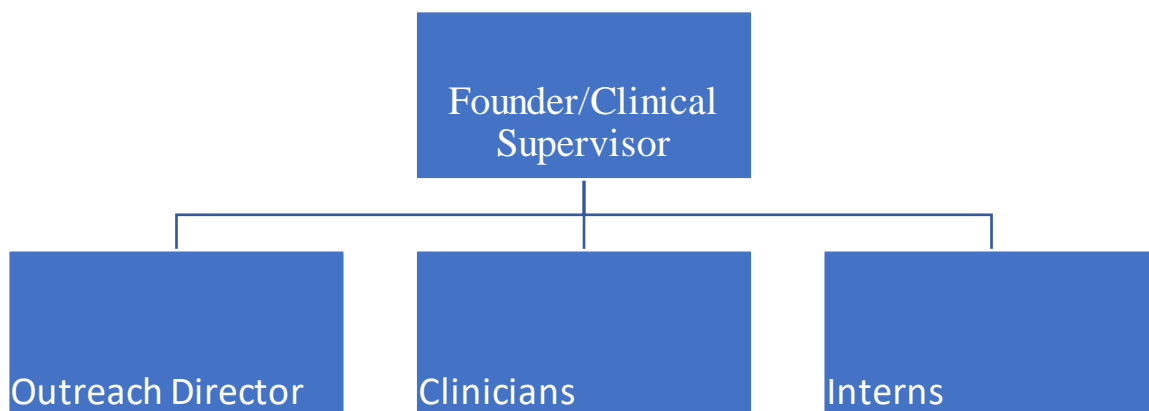


Remotely-delivered treatment offers an alternative delivery modality with independent benefits in terms of population reach, costs, and pragmatics for clients, staff,

and institutions (Vinci et al., 2022). BHOU provides services to clients and community members via a telehealth platform (Simple Practice) or in person at the center located in the Southeast region of the United States. The telehealth platform allows clients access to scheduling, intake documents, and session video links. Clinicians can also manage scheduling, complete billing (for administrators), use templates for treatment plans and documentation, and more. Simple Practice is accessible from any electronic device, phone, laptop, desktop, or tablet. The agency uses other equipment including standard office equipment such as copy machines.

BHOU operates under the Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage & Family Therapists, in the Secretary of State's office. Under the board, the agency must ensure that each employee adheres to guidelines regarding education, supervision, hours earned, continuing education, and more. There were no accreditations listed under the organization at the time of this study.

The leadership structure in the organization consists of the BHL, who is the founder and serves in the essential role of clinical supervisor. Within this role, the BHL oversees and manages the outreach director, clinical staff, and interns (see Figure 2). The governance system in the organization runs parallel to the overall leadership structure of the organization, with the BHL making and enforcing decisions. Beigpourian et al. (2019) shared that team processes are team-level attributes influencing the team's effectiveness and reflect team members' collective attitudes, values, cognitions, and motivations; various factors can affect these processes, including leadership roles and structure.

**Figure 2***BHOU Organizational Chart*

The organization's clientele consists of individuals age 8 years and older who are experiencing depression, anxiety, divorce, grief, stress, and behavioral challenges. The key market segment is composed of mostly women. Other customers receive counseling support group services. The stakeholders in the organization are the staff, clients, and individuals seeking supervision for licensure. Stakeholders outside of the organization are members of the community. Key requirements and expectations for the organization's mental health services provided to clients are detailed in the organization's employee handbook. An emphasis is placed on the standard of care and professionalism provided to clients.

Partnerships and suppliers are limited within this small agency; however, the organization has collaborated with Simple Practice, an electronic health record (EHR) system, to provide a seamless process to clients when completing intake paperwork,

scheduling, conducting telehealth services, appointment reminders, and billing. The EHR contains information about the past, present, and future; however, the primary purpose of the EHR is to support the continuous, efficient, and quality delivery of health services and care (Köse et al., 2023). The EHR system provides a competitive advantage to the organization due to the accessibility and ease for the client's use. Clients can use Simple Practice on their desktops and laptops or download the app to their phones. Additionally, the BHL employees or clients can communicate with customer service representatives over the phone, via chat, or via email.

There are several competitors in the Southeast region of the United States that provide mental health services. These companies include inpatient and outpatient centers, private practice, residential programs, and community service boards. BHOH holds a positive competitive edge due to the variety of services provided, populations served, and flexibility of services with the option of in-person or virtual services available to clients. Although the organization is small, a constant flow of clients is provided to the employees.

The organization offers fee-reduced rates for therapy, and associate-level clinicians can use a sliding scale for up to 25% of their caseloads, resulting in a key strategic advantage of the services offered. A challenge that often presents is the employees' noncompliance with responsiveness and engagement with clients within 24 hours. The BHL conducts 6-month evaluations of all employees to identify strengths and areas where improvement is required. An emphasis is placed on completing documentation exercises and training in clinical writing. The BHL shared that this



ensures a system of checks and balances. The purpose of employee performance reviews is to provide constructive feedback on how well a person is doing in their position, highlight areas for development, and highlight achievements (Prasad et al., 2023).

### **Organizational Background and Context**

BHOU leadership requested recommendations from me as the scholar-consultant to streamline and implement employee processes in the organization. Scott et al. (2022) reported that an organization can ensure successful onboarding and support employees by adapting three fundamental factors for success: (a) building knowledge and confidence, (b) creating social connections, and (c) supporting employee well-being. The current study explored essential methods for structuring behavioral health protocol systems for employees. In doing so, three research questions were answered: (a) What leadership strategies are most effective in streamlining employee protocols in small behavioral health agencies? (b) What challenges do leaders face when implementing strategies to streamline employee protocols in small behavioral health agencies? (c) What are the perceptions of employees in small behavioral health agencies regarding leadership strategies used to streamline protocols?

Rates for services vary per clinician credential and services provided to the clients. At the time of this study, the fully licensed clinician with an LPC credential provided individual therapy for \$150 an hour. An LPC at this organization could accept Tricare, Humana, Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield, Cigna, Aetna, and United Healthcare. Associate-level therapists offered family and couples therapy at a rate of \$140 an hour and individual therapy at a rate of \$125 an hour. Associate-level therapists at this

organization could accept Cigna, Aetna, and Blue Cross Blue Shield. All counseling support groups were free, and licensure supervision services were provided at agreed upon rates between the licensee and supervisor. Additional information on the organization's budget was not available.

BHOU operates through the Secretary of State's Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage & Family Therapists to ensure compliance with the Southeast region's behavioral health policies and laws. The BHL ensures that each employee adheres to the required guidelines on education, supervision, hours earned, continuing education credits, and telehealth requirements. Harris et al. (2023) shared that tele-behavioral health policy decisions are best addressed by Congress and the administration to close the gap between what Americans need and what services are available.

### **Summary**

BHOU is a small counseling private practice in the Southeast region of the United States operating with a team of six employees consisting of fully licensed clinicians, associate-level therapists, and interns. The organization operates through the region's secretary of state, which provides guidelines, behavioral health policies, and laws for clinicians to follow. Within the organization, the BHL oversees the outreach director, clinicians, and interns and is responsible for making and enforcing decisions about the organization. In Section 2, in-depth information about the background and approach is provided in the following areas:

- supporting literature,

- sources of evidence,
- leadership strategy and assessment,
- clients/population served,
- workforce and operations, and
- analytical strategy.

## Section 2: Background and Approach—Leadership Strategy and Assessment

BHOU leadership was encountering challenges with the productivity of team members concerning completing clinical documentation, submitting time-off requests within the allotted time frame, and responding to emails within 24 to 48 hours. This qualitative case study explored leadership perspectives and alternative methods for formatting behavioral health protocol processes for employees. Section 2 contains the background and approaches of the organization. In addition to reviewing the supporting literature and sources of evidence, I provide extensive information on BHOU's leadership strategies and assessment, the clients and populations served, workforce and operations, and analytical strategy.

### **Supporting Literature**

Several databases were used to conduct a comprehensive literature review of recent (within the last 5 years) peer-reviewed articles on leadership strategies for streamlining employee protocols in small behavioral health agencies. These databases included APA PsycArticles, APA PsycInfo, ProQuest, and SAGE Journals through the Walden University Library. Search terms included *employee protocols*, *employee productivity*, *strategic development*, *employee new hire process*, *timely documentation*, *behavioral health* and *policies and organizations*, *mental health leadership strategies*, *employee performance problems*, *employee discipline and termination*, *leadership strategies*, *recruitment*, *leadership challenges in the workplace*, *leadership challenges with employees*, and *employee perceptions of leadership*.

## **Organizational Problem**

Employee engagement is crucial to the survival of organizations because engaged employees increase profits, productivity, and sustainability (McCutcheon, 2019). BHOU leadership has experienced employees' lack of follow-through in implementing current protocols including timely documentation. High-quality clinical documentation is essential for any health service, but it places a considerable administrative burden on staff including clinicians, such as nurses, who could otherwise be providing direct patient care; this burden is linked to stress, burnout, and attrition, so services need to streamline their workflows and other processes (Ayer, 2023). Three research questions were used to address the organizational problem of this study. The first research question addressed the leadership strategies that are most effective in streamlining employee protocols within small behavioral health agencies. Ayer (2023) reported that there are opportunities for improvement to address the factors constituting the burden of administrative tasks on clinical staff, such as providing more time to complete tasks, adding more efficient processes, providing relevant training, employing systems that function properly and that staff can understand, and receiving support from administration and colleagues.

The second research question addressed the challenges leaders face when implementing strategies to streamline employee protocols in small behavioral health agencies. Thompson and Jones (2022) shared that the greatest challenges faced by organizational leaders over the last 2 years have been retaining staff, keeping their levels of commitment high, and motivating them to keep focused on achieving their tasks. The third research question addressed the perceptions of employees in small behavioral health

agencies regarding leadership strategies used to streamline protocols. Research demonstrated that positive organizational support (employees perceive that their needs are fulfilled) increases job satisfaction and decreases turnover intention, and when organizations offer individuals opportunities (resource gain for personal improvement), employees feel the organization supports them, and a potential resource gain the workers' interaction with their environment, coworkers, or leader strengthens this process (Uzum et al., 2024). I collected and analyzed data to provide recommendations to the leadership team to assist in streamlining the implementation of employee protocols for BHOU. Small business leaders who can develop and use strategies to increase employee productivity, improve employee morale, and lower employee turnover rates can help a business succeed and grow (Rodgers, 2022).

### **Leadership Strategies, Hiring Practices, and Organizational Development**

Literature relevant to the problems addressed in this case study provided insight into leadership strategies, hiring practices, organizational development, and recruitment. Literature review is an essential feature of academic research and establishes the foundation of academic inquiries (Xiao & Watson, 2019). The information retrieved in the current study provided knowledge in specific areas of the study and aided in developing a foundation for continued research.

#### ***Leadership Strategies***

An organization needs to develop, maintain, and implement leadership strategies for the success of the company and for employees. Failure to implement a leadership strategy is often due to teams at the middle and lower levels of the organization lacking

commitment to the strategy (Ateş et al., 2020). An organization's leadership strategies, along with the leadership style, are critical factors. Lee and Seol (2021) stated that knowledge management strategies and transformational leadership can be ways of enhancing the two components of individual creativity (domain-relevant skills and creative-thinking skills) and examining the mediating role of knowledge sharing. Knowledge management strategies focus on many factors such as knowledge sharing and creativity in the workplace. Like knowledge management strategies, transformational leadership creates a supportive environment that promotes innovation. Effective leadership styles provide structure for an organization and can reinforce the team's overall efficiency. Miranda (2019) suggested that there is a need for a transformational leadership style to lead business organizations more effectively.

### ***Hiring Practices and Recruitment***

Hiring practices and recruitment are essential elements in BHOU. Bellucci (2020) focused on hiring and the longevity of employment for millennials and reported that communication and proper care are essential because millennials are eager to give ideas and assist in expanding an organization but need to feel valued and ensure some level of freedom within their work.

An appropriate onboarding process is necessary and will ensure that employees can receive the tools needed to complete job tasks and for sustainability. Research evidence indicates that role clarity (understanding of what and how of the job requirements), self-efficacy (confidence in performing one's new role), and social acceptance (feelings of being a part of an ingroup) are crucial to the newcomer

adjustment process (Scott et al., 2022). Retention efforts should establish a culture of inclusivity, promote faculty development, and evaluate biases in the promotion and tenure process (Davenport et al., 2022).

### ***Organizational Development***

Leadership and organizational culture are essential components of organizational development. A strong culture is characterized by core values that are clearly ordered and widely shared and communicated by members of the organization (Chong et al., 2018). Within BHOU, essential factors such as values, vision/mission, expectations, open communication, and goals are communicated to employees by leadership. This results in a more cohesive environment and offers a trusting space for employees to be open and creative. Implementing team development strategies can encourage an organization to incorporate teamwork to increase the productivity and performance of small businesses (Wolfson, 2023).

Despite efforts to resolve the situation, BHOU was experiencing challenges with employees completing documentation within the provided time frame set by leadership, including pushing back the due date from 48 hours to 72 hours. Sufficient time should be provided to the staff to complete the documentation in time, supported by timely audits (Kahn et al., 2020). Weatherly (2021) reported that monthly self-audits and quarterly clinical team oversight audits can achieve documentation compliance.

### **Sources of Evidence**

I interviewed the behavioral health leader for this study. I also sent and analyzed questionnaires, read literature, and retrieved secondary data. Conducting interviews with



the organization's leadership team provided the opportunity to receive data directly from the BHL's experiences. Six interviews were conducted via video and over the phone. The initial meeting was conversational and focused on learning about the organization and its needs. The other interviews were more structured, in which open-ended questions were asked to inform the study.

In addition to interviewing the director, I collected, read, and analyzed various data sources provided by the behavioral health leader to learn more about the organization. The background information aided in creating additional questions for questionnaires and interviews. The data sources included the organization's website, orientation materials, employee handbook, clinical documentation protocol, promotional flyers, and audit forms.

### **Leadership Strategy and Assessment**

Senior leadership at BHOE established its vision by identifying the purpose of the organization and the direction where they wanted the company to go in assisting community members. BHOE's mission is to provide effective and meaningful mental health services to individuals to assist them with life healing while empowering them to prioritize and maximize their mental wellness. As the leadership team continues to display commitment to maintaining ethical and professional behaviors, they also work to set clear expectations for employees regarding compliance with rules and regulations and provide in-depth training on ethics. McNeish and Tran (2020) stated that leadership qualities should be at the forefront to strengthen organizational capacity for delivering services.

Communication and employee engagement are essential. Employees need to be able to effectively communicate within the organization to each other, their bosses, and their associates outside the organization including customers, clients, and vendors (Wienclaw, 2023). BHOU leaders maintain an open line of communication for employees by providing the opportunity to communicate in meetings or training via one-on-one, phone, video, or in-person communication. Employees are encouraged to share grievances, questions, concerns, ideas, or comments. Another critical component of the organization's communication style is offering a space for collective team effort on decision making and goal setting.

In creating an environment for success, the organization's leader focuses on the present and future. This is done by executing goals and working from the values; forming a cohesive team; providing quality services; understanding the needs of employees, clients, and other stakeholders; ensuring a positive work culture; and offering ongoing training to employees. Achieving the organization's mission requires focusing on action by training employees on the mission, setting expectations for the employees, establishing goals, maintaining open communication, and confirming that the organization's values align with leadership action.

Policy change evolves slowly because mental health reform is often contested among professionals and advocates and politicized within national governance fora shaped by different historical, institutional, and political contexts with divergent allocation of authority (Wiktorowicz, 2020). BHOU maintains governance through prioritizing purpose (mission and vision), creating a strategy with follow-through, and

bestowing transparency with rules and regulations of the organization and outside governing agencies such as the state's counseling board.

Establishing a work culture that fosters an environment of trust, clear expectations, and fairness can aid leadership in promoting ethical behaviors within a small behavioral health agency. BHOU's administration implements guidance through a demonstration model for employees to maintain knowledge and understanding of ethical conduct. Sustaining an ethical environment is another way the organization promotes societal well-being. Additionally, providing affordable care through a sliding scale, offering group services, and establishing a supportive and open communication environment for employees aligns with societal well-being and fosters social change.

Phoenix and Chapman (2020) reported that it is crucial to recognize regulatory restrictions at the state and federal levels. Concerns may arise as agencies run the day-to-day responsibilities of operating and providing services. In such cases, it is essential for leadership to have plans in place to address grievances of all types including legal, regulatory, and community concerns. Ensuring an organization operates from an ethical point of view can help alleviate or reduce legal, regulatory, or community concerns.

BHOU has implemented many vital practices to reduce the risk of raised problems:

- the use of a HIPAA-compliant EHR system and protecting clients' privacy;
- maintaining confidentiality;
- ensuring compliance with state regulations and counseling boards;
- maintaining up-to-date knowledge of the state's regulations, laws, and changes; and

- ongoing training for employees.

### **Clients/Population Served**

BHOU offers counseling and counseling support groups to members of the community age 8 years through adulthood, with most of the clientele consisting of women. Therapists in the agency provide services for clients experiencing depression, anxiety, divorce, grief, stress, and behavioral challenges. Clients can meet with their therapist at the center for in-person or virtual services. All sessions are by appointment only. Counseling support groups are provided to adults 18 and older at no charge and are ongoing throughout the year. Clients can seek information and support online via the organization's website, email, or phone.

The programs and services offered are determined by the community's needs and each therapist's experience. BHOU works closely with community members to assess the needs for services, such as providing affordable and reduced-fee therapy. Cherry et al. (2017) stated that limits on timely appointments, care continuity, and specialty care reduce access to care for some individuals in rural areas. To meet the community's needs, the administration hires and orients therapists qualified to work with the presenting diagnosis of current clients. Additionally, when the administration conducts its hiring process, therapists' interests, experience, and backgrounds are considered to safeguard sustainable client–therapist relationships.

Relationship building and engagement are essential components at BHOU and are done by creating an open line of communication with clients and maintaining positive client relationship management. Promoting positive relationships with clients provides

more effective and satisfying care when employees foster comfortable, communicative, harmonious relationships with their clients (Schumann et al., 2022). An open line of effective communication offers clients the comfort of sharing their needs and concerns with team members, including providing valuable feedback. BHOU administration connects with clients to identify the problem and ensure resolution. Maintaining a positive client relationship in the organization involves providing person-centered services, handling clients' needs within the 24-hour time frame, giving open and effective communication, and completing client check-ins.

Improving workplace feedback should have a multiplier effect, giving far more payoff than ongoing investment; feedback can be a gift that keeps on giving, with improved team member performance and improved acquisition outcomes (Gadeken, 2023). BHOU determines clients' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with services through receiving feedback from individuals served. Clients can offer feedback to employees during their sessions via phone calls, website contact forms, talking with a team member, or via email. By revealing what is working for clients and identifying strengths within the agency, more insight is provided to the administration team. This may increase employees' motivation due to receiving praise from the administration for promoting positive client satisfaction. As client complaints arise, they are governed exclusively by the BHL within BHOU, by identifying the issue and implementing corrective action.

### **Workforce and Operations**

Davenport et al. (2022) state that improving recruitment, retention, and leadership advancement is a priority to ensure excellence in patient care, research, and health equity.

BHOU recruits and retains employees in various ways, including via the website, referrals from current employees, and through their social media platforms. As new hires enter the organization, they participate in the orientation process and explore and learn more about the agency through the employee handbook. Time is allocated to review and practice sample notes using the EHR system, client safety and treatment plans, and emergency protocols.

Assessing employees for capability and capacity is completed in the initial stages of interviewing. As leadership gains a sense of the employee's strengths and limitations, it guides the clinician in building an appropriate caseload. This, in return, has resulted in tremendous success with client-therapist matching. Ongoing training is provided to employees throughout the year to maintain continuing education and knowledge. Additional training specific to current challenges or limitations is offered to each employee. This helps the employee grow and develop while meeting the client's needs.

Workplace safety is a critical factor within BHOU. Safety climate interventions focus on safety-related education and training (e.g., awareness of risks and hazards) and communication (e.g., discussion of safety issues), and often include safety-specific leadership trainings, and developing communication skills to signify the importance of safety (Brossoit et al., 2023). Leadership has implemented a portion of the orientation to train new employees on emergency protocols. Annual trainings are also conducted as a refresher for current staff to ensure everyone is up to date on what to do in an emergency. Presenting the training helps to ensure the health and safety of employees and clients.

The work culture at BHOU places a heavy emphasis on expression. The administration within the organization works from an open-door policy perspective in which open communication is encouraged. Because of this level of communication, it results in more engagement within the team. Other ways of fostering engagement at BHOU include providing feedback, creating a welcoming and comfortable environment, and providing opportunities for growth and development.

Ongoing training is provided to employees throughout the year to ensure personal and professional development. During the training and one-on-one meetings, leadership gains more knowledge of employees' goals and passion. Strategic planning and goal setting promote career progression, whether it is moving into a leadership position, gaining skills in a new population, or setting goals outside the agency; the BHOU administration is there to help.

BHOU implements strategic planning within staff meetings to ensure transparency and offer a more inclusive environment for staff and administration. Harrington (2023) describes strategic planning as goal setting on a firm level, although goal setting is done on an individual level. In implementing strategy, the BHL assigns tasks following the discussions or meeting with employees, sets deadlines, and completes follow-ups to ensure progress. When assigning tasks and deadlines, the information is discussed collectively as a team, providing employees with a clear and concise understanding of expectations before the strategic meeting ends. An open-door policy exists for employees who need to talk with the administration further regarding grievances or concerns. The administration conducts check-ins with the employees to

confirm the progression of tasks. These check-ins can occur weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, or quarterly, depending on the task assigned and the needed outcome.

BHOU has witnessed the benefits of conducting team strategic meetings, including learning more about employees' passion and vision in therapy. This provides a space for the employees to be creative and display innovative ideas. The administration has implemented a SWOT analysis method to gather and evaluate appropriate data for the strategic planning process. The SWOT analysis assesses an agency's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Jiang (2023) reports that a SWOT analysis would assist in determining significant and relative strategies.

BHOU's key strategic objective is to implement new processes on employee protocols effectively. The administration would like changes to be implemented within six to 12 months. Key performance indicators will be used to track employee success (see Table 1 BHOU Key Performance Indicators).



**Table 1***BHOU Key Performance Indicators*

Goal time frame	Goals and action plan	Key performance indicator
Within 6 months (short-term goals)	Create and implement protocols for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• timely documentation</li> <li>• submitting time off request and placing it on the calendar</li> <li>• responding to emails within 24 hours/completing intake process</li> </ul>	Staff complete 100% of notes within the required time frame. Staff complete time requests within the required time frame and report it on the calendar 100% of the time. Staff respond to client and agency emails within required time frame 100% of the time.
Within 12 months (long-term goals)	Create new handbook and update information	

**Analytical Strategy**

A qualitative case design is concerned with approaches such as ethnography, grounded theory, mixed methods, and case study; it is concerned with data gathering techniques, tools, and analysis, as well as ethical procedures and methods of ensuring research trustworthiness (Kekeya, 2021). The research design specified for this doctoral study is a qualitative case study. This design method allows me, the researcher, to observe the organization leaders' experiences and provides more insight into the practice problem. Interpretive case studies are ideally undertaken in natural settings without

manipulating the participants, and the meanings are drawn from the perspectives of participants to present a complete picture of a particular social setting (Kekeya, 2021).

The development of a strong conceptual framework facilitates the selection of appropriate study methods to minimize the bias inherent in qualitative studies and help readers to trust the research and the researcher (Johnson et al., 2020). The Baldrige Excellence Framework was selected for this study to safeguard research integrity. The Baldrige Excellence Framework and its Criteria for Performance Excellence incorporate proven practices on current healthcare leadership and management issues into a set of questions that help leaders rise to challenges, leverage strengths, and manage all the components of the organization as a unified whole to achieve your mission, ongoing success, and performance excellence. This view of an organization is called a systems perspective (National Institute of Standards and Technology, 2023).

Qualitative strategies, such as interviews, observations, and examination of documentation, are used to gather rich descriptive data of lived experiences of the participants and their direct actions associated with experiences to enhance understanding of the study inquiry (Kekeya, 2021). I display triangulation within this doctoral study through interviews, secondary data, and analysis. Triangulation is recommended in conducting case study research and is traditionally envisaged as offering validity through convergence of findings, sources, or methods (Farquhar et al., 2020). Structured and semi-structured interviews were conducted with leadership team members via video conference and phone discussions. Part, one interviews and questionnaires covered BHOU's information on services, mission, core competencies; workforce profile; assets

and regulatory requirements; organizational structure; clients and stakeholders; suppliers and partners; competitive environment; and strategic context and performance improvement systems. Part two of the interviews and questionnaires covered BHOU's information on assets and regulatory environment; strategic context and performance improvement systems; leadership; governance and societal responsibilities; strategy development; client information, engagement, and relationships; workforce environment and engagement; organizational operations and effectiveness.

The team is made up of the owner and clinical director (BHL1) and the outreach director (BHL2). BHL1 was the main point of contact for the case study. Members of the leadership team were provided with questionnaires as a structured way to gain more knowledge on current practices implemented within the organization. The questionnaires are located in the appendix section of this study.

Secondary qualitative data analysis can be a powerful method by which to gain insights that primary data analysis cannot offer (Cheong et al., 2023). In collecting this study's evidence, I investigated, analyzed and looked at the organization's website, orientation materials, employee handbook, clinical documentation protocol, promotional flyers, and audit forms. The methods allow the researcher to gain more insight into current training practices provided to employees and recent processes implemented and provide more credibility to the study.

I then performed thematic analysis, a method which contributes to the study by revealing patterns or themes of the data collected. Thematic analysis involves the identification and reporting of patterns in a data set, which are then interpreted for their

inherent meaning; these patterns can be found based on understanding the meaning of keywords used by participants (Naeem et al., 2023). The software Nvivo was used to conduct coding, in which data from the interviews were placed into documents within the system and autocoded. An iterative process occurs when researchers build their patterns, categories, and themes from the bottom up, by organizing the data into increasingly more abstract units of information. This inductive process illustrates working back and forth between the themes and database until the researchers have established a comprehensive set of themes (Kekeya, 2021).

I collected and interpreted the study data and presented the evidence to the committee. Emphasis was placed on two key areas: integrity and bias reduction. To ensure this, I exuded openness and honesty throughout the study (credibility) and consistently collected and analyzed data (dependability). Reflexivity, the idea that a researcher's preconceptions and biases can influence decisions and actions throughout qualitative research activities, is a critical aspect of rigor, even at the earliest stages of the study (Johnson et al., 2020). The organization's and its leader's identities were kept confidential throughout this process. Efforts at minimizing harm and monitoring researcher bias were at the forefront of this study. While I also own and work as a clinical director for a small behavioral health agency, I worked to ensure that subjectivity was curtailed and not included in the data collected. I have no professional or personal connection to any member or employee of BHOU.

The establishment of a Research Ethics Committee is a significant step to ensure the standard procedures in the ethics review process that protect human participants

(Abrera, 2023). For this study, I participated in various steps implemented by the university to ensure ethical practices during the project. My committee is composed of scholars, including the chair, a second chair, and a program director. Documents, such as the informed consent form, were completed on behalf of the BHL, providing permission for the researcher-consultant to conduct interviews and collect data. Walden University's institutional review board (IRB) approved the research for the doctoral study.

### **Summary**

BHOU sets a foundation for maintaining an open communication style and having a collective team environment where everyone works together. An essential factor of the organization's leadership strategy involves ensuring that the team fulfills the organization's mission of providing effective and meaningful mental health services to individuals served. To set this precedent, leadership focuses on hiring and training clinicians and ensures their strengths align with the client caseload. Moreover, BHOU has transitioned strategic planning into staff meetings to safeguard transparency and offer an inclusive environment for all employees. In section 3, the measurement, analysis, and knowledge management components of the organization will be evaluated within the analysis of the organization and knowledge management.

### Section 3: Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management Components of the Organization

The leadership team at BHOU faced challenges with managing employee protocols implemented in the organization. This study focused on three RQs to guide the study:

RQ1: What leadership strategies are most effective in streamlining employee protocols in small behavioral health agencies?

RQ2: What challenges do leaders face when implementing strategies to streamline employee protocols in small behavioral health agencies?

RQ3: What are the perceptions of employees in small behavioral health agencies regarding leadership strategies used to streamline protocols?

Data were collected via interviews, questionnaires, and secondary data sources to obtain the necessary evidence. Members of the leadership team completed interviews and questionnaires to provide information regarding the practice problem, organizational structure, and current practices. Secondary data were used to inform the research further.

#### **Analysis of the Organization**

The leadership at BHOU maintains awareness of the importance of a positive work environment. Employee engagement, safety, communication, clear goals, and objectives create and sustain an effective workforce. Inclusivity and diversity are other critical components to the success of the organization's supportive setting. Assessing diversity and inclusivity is the next frontier in mental health (Kotera et al., 2023).

Engagement entails concentrating on work-related tasks, investing energy in meaningful behavior at work, actively participating in meetings, having productive conversations with colleagues and clients, and other behaviors that serve the organization's goals and mission (Froiland, 2023). The BHLs at BHOU implement employee engagement in various ways including decision making and strategic planning, assisting with defining goals for personal and professional growth, promoting transparency through an open line of communication, and modeling the mission. Many companies fail to invest in enhancing leadership communication styles, which are important for promoting motivation, engagement, and happiness in the workplace (Froiland, 2023).

BHOU provides various services including counseling, group counseling, and clinical supervision. The leadership team designs services and work processes through strategic planning and goal setting. To ensure that these procedures are managed, reviews are conducted weekly, monthly, and quarterly. Such reviews look at what is working and not working within different areas of the agency, including customers, employees (following protocols), systems (EHR), documentation, and human resources (hiring, training, orientations, time-off requests). The improvement of key services and work processes is essential for BHOU. This is completed by working to identify the problem, reviewing current processes, creating and implementing solutions, and continuously monitoring the situation. Beer (2022) stated that because leaders are focused on solving organizational problems, they must deal with the process of answering the questions of how to solve the problem.

## **Knowledge Management**

Maintaining an agency's daily operations and performance is an essential process of knowledge management. Ermine (2018) reported that the objective of knowledge management is to optimize the resources and analyze the added value brought to a company. BHOU uses a practice management software system to manage the organization's day-to-day tasks. The system gives the leadership team an overview of employee schedules for the day, week, or month; client caseloads; user activity; client requests; and reminders. Financials are also maintained in the system, providing detailed information on client card transactions and balances, invoices, insurance, and upcoming payouts. The analytics section reports the monthly income of the organization and the projected income based on future scheduled appointments in the system. Private, secure messaging with employees and clients is available along with various marketing features. The information provided in the practice management software is always available to the leaders. Routine updates are performed, and the software company works to ensure that they comply with regulations.

BHOU uses informational data to maintain details on the organization's overall performance and daily operations. The leadership team recently implemented a referral tracking protocol to streamline current referrals and provide a more efficient process for clients and employees. As information is gathered from the performance reviews, the findings are used to create steps for improvement. Accumulated profit and loss are one of the types of permanent financial statements for economic entities, even very small companies (Shahani et al., 2022). The BHOU leadership team uses profit and loss



performance reviews to highlight overall spending in the organization and determine where a cost reduction can occur.

### **Summary**

BHOU provides and maintains a positive work environment that is diverse and inclusive. Employee engagement is a critical factor in the organization. A significant emphasis is placed on evaluating how the organization manages its knowledge assets to ensure a solid knowledge management foundation. BHOU can obtain daily operations and performance information through its HIPAA-compliant practice management system and performance reviews. In Section 4, results, analysis, implications, and preparations of findings are provided in the following areas:

- analysis, results, and implications
- strengths and limitations of the study

#### Section 4: Results—Analysis, Implications, and Preparation of Findings

The BHOU leadership team faced challenges in managing employee protocols implemented in the organization. Three RQs guided this study:

RQ1: What leadership strategies are most effective in streamlining employee protocols in small behavioral health agencies?

RQ2: What challenges do leaders face when implementing strategies to streamline employee protocols in small behavioral health agencies?

RQ3: What are the perceptions of employees in small behavioral health agencies regarding leadership strategies used to streamline protocols?

The BHL completed interviews and questionnaires to provide information regarding the practice problem, organizational structure, and current practices. Secondary data were also used to inform the research.

#### **Qualitative Data Analysis**

Riazi et al. (2023) reported that data coding done appropriately will lead researchers to develop patterns or themes and make final inferences about the research problem. The data analysis software, NVivo, was used to code transcripts retrieved from the interviews and questionnaires with the BHL. Following the input of data, the system provided an array of options to apply in beginning the coding process, such as creating different projects within the system, providing a space to store all codes once determined to see in one space visibly, and offering the selection to use auto themes.

## RQ1

What leadership strategies are most effective in streamlining employee protocols in small behavioral agencies? Three themes were identified from the data analysis system regarding RQ1: training, communication, and engagement. BHOU ensures each employee attends the orientation process upon entering the agency and provides a high level of open communication within the organization. It is also essential for the BHL to implement time and activities where the employees can engage and have fun.

- “An orientation program is provided to all new employees when they begin. During this time, they receive training on the handbook, policies and procedures, documentation, and much more.” (BHL)
- “We have a great team, and I appreciate the open line of communication and transparency from the clinical director.” (Staff 1)
- “I love the engagement and team outings.” (Staff 2)

Regarding effective leadership strategies with streamlining protocols, recent literature shared the importance of knowing the employee and doing so through effective communication to understand the ins and outs of their feelings, including barriers present. Froiland (2023) reported that managers or supervisors should communicate with employees in an autonomous, supportive way. Training and development are essential in fostering a learning environment, increasing skills with employees and engagement, and offering continual support from leadership. Autonomy-supportive communication meets the universal needs for relatedness and autonomy by acknowledging employees’ feelings, explaining the underlying purpose for assignments or tasks, clarifying how tasks

contribute to an inspiring vision, providing employees with opportunities to help develop innovative practices, highlighting the interesting aspects of tasks, and using noncontrolling language (Froiland, 2023).

The Baldrige Framework tied into RQ1 in Section 1.1 Senior Leadership Section B and Section C. Section B covers communication and reports that leadership encourages frank, two-way communication; communicates key decisions and needs for organizational change; and takes a direct role in motivating the workforce toward high performance. Section C discusses the mission and organization in which the leader creates an environment for achievement (National Institute of Standards and Technology, 2023).

## **RQ2**

What challenges do leaders face when implementing strategies to streamline employee protocols in small behavioral agencies? Three themes were identified from the data analysis system regarding RQ2: time, accountability, and resistance. Time presented as an obstacle for the team members when it came to completing clinical documentation, taking time off, and responding to emails. The BHL shared that during a staff meeting, four team members shared that the 48-hour time frame for completing documentation was not enough.

- “Employees asked for an additional day to submit documentation. I provided the extra day, and they are still late.” (BHL)
- “48 hours are not enough time; can we have an additional day to complete documentation?” (Staff 1, 2, 3, 4)

- “Employees are not following protocol.” (BHL)
- “They like to pass off consequences and repercussions.” (BHL)
- “They always want to negotiate and give pushback.” (BHL)

Regarding challenges leaders face when implementing protocols, recent literature stated that an authentic leader (one who has achieved high levels of authenticity in that they know who they are, including what they believe and value, and they act upon those values and beliefs while transparently interacting with others) can stimulate various cognitive mechanisms in followers that are beneficial for navigating change and facilitating its successful implementation (Zhu et al., 2023). Time management struggles, employees’ lack of understanding of protocols, having complex protocols in place, lack of enforcement from management, and overall resistance from employees are a few potential challenges that leaders can face when implementing protocol strategies. The Baldrige Framework tied into RQ2 in Section 2.2 Strategy Implementation, 5.2 Workforce Engagement, and 6.1 Work Processes. Section 2.2 covers workforce plans and performance measures in an agency. Section 5.2 focuses on performance management and development. Section 6.1 looks at the process management and improvement of the organization (National Institute of Standards and Technology, 2023).

### **RQ3**

What are the perceptions of employees in small behavioral health agencies regarding leadership strategies used to streamline protocols? Two themes regarding RQ3 were identified from the data analysis system: communication and training. The BHL at BHOE ensures that she maintains an open line of communication with all employees and

provides in-depth orientation and continual training. Employees at BHOU attest to having a leader who exhibits effective communication and support and provides the necessary levels of training to conduct the daily responsibilities of their jobs.

- “I have an open-door policy. I am transparent with my employees and always here to talk when they need me.” (BHL)
- “We love our BHL; she is easy to talk to and supportive.” (Staff 1, 2, 3, 4)
- “We are satisfied with orientation training.” (Staff 1, 2, 3, 4)-

Regarding challenges leaders face when implementing protocols, recent literature stated that good communication can be a complex process with many potential barriers that can distort the message that one is trying to send and a skill that can be learned and improved; organizations should offer training courses that help employees know how to improve their communication skills with each other as well as with customers and clients to enhance their effectiveness and the organization’s success (Wienclaw, 2021). In addition to communication and training, leaders must use transparent processes that include simple instructions when implementing strategies and wanting employees to follow such protocols. The Baldrige Framework tied into research question three within section 1.1 Senior Leadership Section B, which covers communication and reports that leadership encourages frank, two-way communication, communicates key decisions and needs for organizational change, and takes a direct role in motivating the workforce toward high performance (National Institute of Standards and Technology, 2023).

## **Additional Organizational Results**

### **Client Programs and Services**

Measuring the quality of health care in a country is one of the essential features of health quality improvement systems (Dyachuk et al., 2022). BHOU offers quality services to clients who need individual, family, and couples therapy, both virtually and in-person (see Table 2). Counseling support groups are also available at no cost to the client. Reduced-fee therapy is an option for clients experiencing financial hardships. The organization has implemented health care processes to increase the effectiveness of client programs. The leadership team worked to emphasize two key areas: the phone intake process and safety and emergency preparedness. The phone intake process has become more effective for the organization because a system has been implemented to ensure clients are called within 24 hours and matched with the most appropriate therapist. Leadership reported that the emergency preparedness safety plan protocol has been beneficial. However, employees must still implement the processes within the required time frame. Employees have expressed dissatisfaction with turnaround time for phone calls and emails during staff meetings (BHL, personal communication, June 21, 2023).

**Table 2***BHOU Services*

Therapy	Group	Supervision
Intake/evaluations	Supportive counseling groups	Clinical supervision for individuals, pairs, groups, or mental health organizations
Evidenced-based therapy practices	Variety of topics	License designations: school counselor, school-based mental health professional, LPC; Additional licensee types are welcome
Client centered	Group centered	

**Client-Centered Workforce**

Patient satisfaction with mental health services has for several decades been considered an important component when evaluating service quality and is often assessed in the context of monitoring the quality of care and developing or evaluating newly implemented interventions or changes in practice (Pedersen et al., 2023). BHOU has a system to ensure that clients are contacted within 24 hours and matched with the appropriate therapist. During the intake process, detailed information is gathered from the client regarding current needs and diagnoses to aid in the decision-making process regarding pairing with the proper professional. Results on client satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and engagements were not provided during the course of the current study.



## **Organizational Leadership and Governance**

Leadership in public organizations is a topic of much academic interest, and studies have found positive correlations between leadership behavior and desired outcomes such as performance and satisfaction, and negative correlations with detrimental outcomes; thus, leadership is an important factor in the provision of well-functioning and effective public organizations (Jacobsen et al., 2023). Employee engagement and relationships with leaders are at the forefront of BHOU. Leadership at BHOU reported a high level of engagement among employees and described the atmosphere as family-oriented and casual. The BHL reported that relationships between the leadership team and employees are positive and mostly trusting (see Appendix A).

Employees are provided with a handbook and trained on daily implementation protocols during their orientation. The leadership team has experienced challenges with employees' need to follow through with emails/intake, turn in documentation within the required time frame, and complete time-off requests and calendar management appropriately. The BHL shared employee perceptions and feedback on current policies put into place, and noted that employees reported 48 hours as not enough time to complete documentation and requested 72 hours as sufficient time to place in documentation (BHL, personal communication, October 13, 2023; see Appendix B).

Clinical governance relates to a variety of activities intended to improve the health care experience for patients and includes several interrelated factors for patient care, including quality improvement, leadership, patient focus, staff focus, and information focus (Dziak, 2023). The governance system at BHOU runs parallel to the

overall leadership structure of the organization, with the BHL making and enforcing decisions. The BHL oversees and manages the outreach director, clinical staff, and interns. Progress has been noted in the areas of organizational strategy and action plans. The leadership team works to assess the organization's needs with ongoing analysis to review employee engagement and operational effectiveness. Goals are defined, and critical focus areas are identified to execute change and employ new strategies. Consistent monitoring occurs to ensure progress and sustainability are tracked.

### **Financial and Marketplace Performance**

As new strategies are implemented and proven successful, leaders can make way for social change. BHOU's mission is to provide effective and meaningful mental health services to individuals to assist them with life healing while empowering them to prioritize and maximize their mental wellness. The organization offers reduced rates for clients experiencing financial hardships and works with community partners to meet the needs of the individuals served.

Employees in BHOU are all part-time and make an average of \$3,500 to \$4,000 monthly. The average pay is based on several factors including the number of clients seen during the month and which services are provided. Hourly pay rates vary per session depending on whether the employee works with individuals, couples, or families. Overall, the organization brings in roughly \$18,000 to \$20,000 per month. BHOU's financial goals were not a focus of the current study; however, the leadership team reported that they need to meet the financial goals set for the strategic planning year. BHOU's economic performance is essential for the leadership team, and processes are

being implemented to ensure sustainable change. Subjectivity does not apply to cash flow, which suggests that the cash flow reflects more objectively and more accurately the financial performance of the economic entity (Mihalcea et al., 2019).

### **Social Impact**

Key contributors to social change in the study included building effective community partnerships to increase access to affordable or free mental health services within the organization's region and assisting behavioral health organizations to identify strategies in streamlining employee protocols that can positively impact client care and provide a positive work culture for the employee (see Appendix C). Doing this starts with leadership, practical training and development, and a healthy work–life balance. Humble leadership provides open communication, solves problems, and promotes innovation.

Humble leadership is essential at all levels and in all working groups to foster the creativity, adaptability, and agility that organizations need to survive and thrive (Bah et al., 2024). Practical and effective training and tailored course development are necessary to meet the employees' needs in areas requiring more training. Maintaining a healthy work–life balance includes employing health practices for employees to reduce stress and burnout (i.e., implementing time frames for clinical documentation completion to decrease pileup). Driving social change may require the adoption and development of additional skills that are not necessarily incorporated into the traditional training of clinicians (Sakran, 2023).

### **Strengths and Limitations**

Throughout this qualitative case study, strengths and limitations were present. A central strength included encompassing the participant's experiences and having an in-depth view of their leadership styles. The leadership team at BHOU displays transformational and participative leadership styles. It works to inspire the team by following the organization's mission and each employee's vision for their personal and professional goals. Growth is a crucial component within the organization. A collaborative effort is present when making certain decisions, and a considerable emphasis is placed on employee engagement.

Limitations were revealed throughout the study. BHOU is a small agency with a leadership team of two clinicians. The study can benefit from additional leaders providing a more diverse perspective. Time constraints with schedules did not allow dyadic interviews to better understand the leadership team together as a whole. Szulc & King (2022) report that Dyadic interviews involve two participants who simultaneously interact in response to open-ended questions and share that this technique has emerged as a successful research tool. A lack of information was available regarding client satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and engagement results, as the organization still needs to implement processes to receive client feedback.

## Section 5: Recommendations and Conclusions

In Section 4, data analysis was described, and the study results were provided, including strengths and limitations of the study. In Section 5, I present recommendations to provide potential solutions for BHOU leadership to consider.

### **Workforce**

#### **RQ1 Recommendation**

What leadership strategies are most effective in streamlining employee protocols?

- clear communication/defining employee roles
- engaging environment
- ongoing training

BHOU currently encompasses a team environment that fosters open and transparent communication, an engaging environment and work culture, and training. BHOU leadership should continue to provide these foundational components to employees and enhance them where needed. BHOU has established an orientation process that all new employees must undergo. Retraining and refresher courses are also provided to all employees throughout the year. To reduce the challenges experienced in completing timely documentation, it is recommended that leadership develop a course module in the current orientation training that covers clinical documentation. Professional clinical supervision and training provides practitioners and supervisors with the time and space to refine and develop professional identity and knowledge and skills, and to reflectively examine the challenges faced in everyday practice (Sithole & Shokane, 2023). Within this module, leadership can reiterate that there is a 72-hour time frame for

completing documentation, discuss consequences and potential barriers associated with clinical documentation, and provide strategies to achieve this task without having to work late and avoid notes piling up. It would be beneficial for this course to be interactive to include asking new employees about barriers they have experienced or think would contribute to late submissions, and engaging with employees to identify ways that they can complete their clinical documentation by the end of the workday.

### **Potential Options to Consider**

- Regarding time frame, I recommend maintaining the current time frame for completing documentation in 72 hours. If a client has experienced an emergency during the session (i.e., suicidal ideation), documentation should be completed within 24 hours.
- Regarding auditing, I recommend leadership use interns to complete daily documentation audits and, by Day 2, send reminders to employees via email regarding their upcoming 72-hour deadline.
- Regarding consequences, I recommend that leadership inform employees during orientation of potential consequences for late submission and follow-through. For example, leadership can notify employees that they are paid per signed and locked note. If notes are not completed, signed, and locked, the notes will be moved to the next pay period.
- Regarding interactive employee engagement, I recommend that leadership engage with employees during orientation, by asking interactive questions such as the following: What barriers do clinicians face with completing timely

documentation? What methods could clinicians implement to complete notes promptly or by the end of the day? For example, the clinician could end the session at 53 minutes to complete the notes during the last 7 minutes or schedule 1 hour at the beginning of the next day to complete the documentation from the previous day's sessions.

### **RQ2 Recommendation**

What challenges do leaders face when implementing strategies to streamline employee protocols in small behavioral health agencies?

- resistance to change
- employee barriers (i.e., personal, miscommunication, lack of training or understanding of roles)

BHOU should consider implementing ongoing employee surveys to identify challenges and barriers employees may face in the organization. I recommend that BHOU leadership offer biannual surveys to employees to gauge their level of satisfaction with the work culture, caseload, and leadership and add a component to determine work-life balance. Employee job satisfaction is vital for ensuring the quality of work, services, productivity, and performance of a health care organization and plays an effective role in employees' performance, which is translated into health, well-being, and satisfaction of the patients (Muhammad et al., 2024). The survey should include a section where employees can share current barriers experienced in the workplace (see Appendix D).

**RQ3 Recommendation**

What are the perceptions of employees in small behavioral health agencies regarding leadership strategies used to streamline protocols? BHOU should consider implementing exit surveys to assess employees' perceptions of leadership and the organization. I recommend offering exit interviews to each employee in person or by phone, video, or email to gain insights into their overall experiences with BHOU. Mchenga et al. (2023) reported that exit interviews are conducted immediately after employment ends and provide an opportunity to capture routine performance and level of service quality. As employees transition out of the organization, getting a better sense of their view of the agency's strengths and limitations can further guide the hiring processes. Exit interviews can be conducted on the employees' last day of work or within a week after by interns or members of the leadership team (see Appendix E).

**Additional Recommendations*****Workforce***

BHOU is experiencing challenges with employees requesting time off within the required time frame. Schonfeld (2019) reported that centralized time-off tracking systems allow employees to request and manage paid time off and managers to track attendance and hours worked. I recommend that leadership use interns to complete monthly check-ins via email to the clinicians regarding time off. On the last day of each month, interns can email each employee to inquire about upcoming planned time off. If the employee needs time off, this is a great time for the intern to remind the employee of the time-off protocols, add this information to the calendar (if necessary), and inform the BHL.



### ***Client Recommendations***

Patient satisfaction with mental health services has for several decades been considered an important component when evaluating service quality (Pedersen et al., 2023). Having a sense of a client's needs and satisfaction can be helpful in the mission of providing quality services. I recommend that leadership provide surveys annually or biannually to all clients via email or phone to identify and retrieve feedback to improve service delivery and the overall experience. Patient satisfaction with mental health services has for several decades been considered an important component when evaluating service quality and is often assessed in the context of monitoring the quality of care and developing or evaluating newly implemented interventions or changes in practice (Pedersen et al., 2023; see Appendix F).

### **Conclusion**

As small behavioral health agencies work to streamline their protocols and processes for employees, it is essential to remember to provide clear and concise communication, offer ongoing training, ensure regular engagement with the team, and follow through. Literature showed that leadership style plays a significant role in the effectiveness of employee motivation to follow protocols. Literature stated that an authentic leader can stimulate various cognitive mechanisms in followers that are beneficial for navigating change and facilitating its successful implementation (Zhu et al., 2023).

BHOU's leadership exemplifies many solid qualities that demonstrates standards of excellence, effective communication, a positive work culture, and a strategic vision.

Although the organization has experienced the challenges addressed in the current study, positive outcomes can occur by implementing small changes in current processes. An executive summary of the findings and recommendations for the organization's problems will be provided to the behavioral health leader.

## References

- Ateş, N. Y., Tarakci, M., Porck, J. P., van Knippenberg, D., & Groenen, P. J. F. (2020). The dark side of visionary leadership in strategy implementation: Strategic alignment, strategic consensus, and commitment. *Journal of Management*, *46*(5), 637–665. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206318811567>
- Ayer, M. (2023). Relieving administrative burden on clinical staff with streamlined workflows and speech-recognition software. *British Journal of Nursing*, *32*(Sup16b), S1–S9. <https://doi.org/10.12968/bjon.2023.32.Sup16b.S4>
- Bah, M. O. P., Sun, Z., Hange, U., & Edjoukou, A. J. R. (2024). Effectiveness of organizational change through employee involvement: Evidence from telecommunications and refinery companies. *Sustainability*, *16*(6), Article 6. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16062524>
- Baldrige excellence framework. (2016). *NIST*. <https://www.nist.gov/baldrige/publications/baldrige-excellence-framework>
- Battle, L., & Ottley, A. (2023). *What exactly is an insight? A literature review* (arXiv:2307.06551). arXiv. <http://arxiv.org/abs/2307.06551>
- Beer, M. (2022). Developing strategic human resource theory and making a difference: An action science perspective. *Human Resource Management Review*, *32*(1). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2017.11.005>
- Beigpourian, B., EbrahimiNejad, H., Ohland, M. W., & Ferguson, D. M. (2019). The effect of preferred leadership role and preferred team leadership structure on students' perception of team processes and outcome. *2019 IEEE Frontiers in*

*Education Conference (FIE)*, 1–6.

<https://doi.org/10.1109/FIE43999.2019.9028453>

Bellucci, M. L. (2020). *Improving small business hiring practices in the millennial era* [Walden University]. Scholarworks.

<https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/8263/>

Brossoit, R. M., Hammer, L. B., Crain, T. L., Leslie, J. J., Bodner, T. E., & Brockwood, K. J. (2023). The effects of a Total Worker Health intervention on workplace safety: Mediating effects of sleep and supervisor support for sleep. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 28(4), 263–276.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/ocp0000357>

Cheong, H., Lyons, A., Houghton, R., & Majumdar, A. (2023). Secondary qualitative research methodology using online data within the context of social sciences. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 22.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069231180160>

Chong, M. P. M., Shang, Y., Richards, M., & Zhu, X. (2018). Two sides of the same coin? Leadership and organizational culture. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 39(8), 975–994. [https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-05-2017-](https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-05-2017-0122)

[0122](https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-05-2017-0122)

Cherry, S., Robinson, A., Jashinsky, J., Bagwell-Adams, G., Elliott, M. & Davis, M. (2017). Rural Community Health Needs Assessment Findings: Access to Care and Mental Health. *Journal of Social, Behavioral, and Health Sciences*. 11. 268–277. 10.5590/JSBHS.2017.11.1.18.

- Davenport, D., Alvarez, A., Natesan, S., Caldwell, M. T., Gallegos, M., Landry, A., Parsons, M., & Gottlieb, M. (2022). Faculty recruitment, retention, and representation in leadership: An evidence-based guide to best practices for diversity, equity, and inclusion from the council of residency directors in emergency medicine. *The Western Journal of Emergency Medicine*, 23(1), 62–71. <https://doi.org/10.5811/westjem.2021.8.53754>
- Dyachuk, D. D., Lishchishina, O. M., Zyukov, O. L., & Gandzyuk, V. A. (2022). Quality indicators in health care systems: National resources focus on results, processes and productivity. *Клінічна Та Профілактична Медицина*, 1, 90–101. [https://doi.org/10.31612/2616-4868.1\(19\).2022.11](https://doi.org/10.31612/2616-4868.1(19).2022.11)
- Dziak, M. (2023). Clinical Governance. *Salem Press Encyclopedia of Health*.
- Ermine, J.-L. (2018). *Knowledge management: The creative loop*. ISTE Ltd. : John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Farquhar, J., Michels, N., & Robson, J. (2020). Triangulation in industrial qualitative case study research: Widening the scope. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 87, 160–170. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2020.02.001>
- Fegert, J., Peukert, C., & Weinhardt, C. (2021). Mission statement accomplished: Promises and challenges in using e-participation for mission statement development. *IADIS International Journal on Computer Science and Information Systems*. [https://doi.org/10.33965/ijcsis\\_2021160103](https://doi.org/10.33965/ijcsis_2021160103)
- Fiaz, S., & Muhammad Fahim, S. (2023). The influence of high-quality workplace relational systems and mindfulness on employee work engagement at the time of

crises. *Heliyon*, 9(4), Article e15523.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e15523>

Froiland, J. M. (2023). Employee Engagement. *Salem Press Encyclopedia*.

Gadeken, O. (2023, April). Energize your workplace feedback. *Defense Acquisition Magazine*, 52(2), 27–30.

Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities. (n.d.). *Find a community service board*. Georgia.Gov. Retrieved June 28, 2024, from

<https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/locations/community-service-board>

Harrington, J. (2023). From reflection to visualization: A framework for goal setting and strategic planning: Firm owners' end-of-year planning should include time for evaluating the previous year to prepare for the next. *Journal of Financial Planning*, 12, 44–47.

Harris, J., Bhatnagar, S., & Serafini, M. (2023). Why getting tele-behavioral health policy right is so important for Medicare. *Families, Systems, & Health*, 41(1), 117–120.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/fsh0000793>

Jacobsen, C. B., Hansen, A.-K. L., & Pedersen, L. D. (2023). Not too narrow, not too broad: Linking span of control, leadership behavior, and employee job satisfaction in public organizations. *Public Administration Review*, 83(4), 775–792.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.13566>

Jiang, H. (2023). A SWOT analysis of smart governance applications amid the COVID-19 pandemic. *Information Polity*, 28(3), 377–393. [https://doi.org/10.3233/IP-](https://doi.org/10.3233/IP-220030)

[220030](https://doi.org/10.3233/IP-220030)

- Johnson, J. L., Adkins, D., & Chauvin, S. (2020). A review of the quality indicators of rigor in qualitative research. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, 84(1), 7120. <https://doi.org/10.5688/ajpe7120>
- Kahn MG, Callahan TJ, Barnard J, et al. A harmonized data quality assessment terminology and framework for the secondary use of electronic health record data. *EGEMS (Wash DC)* 2016; 4 (1): 1244.
- Kekeya, J. (2021). *Qualitative case study research design: The commonalities and differences between collective, intrinsic and instrumental case studies*. 36.
- Köse, İ., Cece, S., Yener, S., Seyhan, S., Özge Elmas, B., Rayner, J., Birinci, Ş., Mahir Ülgü, M., Zehir, E., & Gündoğdu, B. (2023). Basic electronic health record (EHR) adoption in \*\*Türkiye is nearly complete but challenges persist. *BMC Health Services Research*, 23(1), 987. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-023-09859-w>
- Kotera, Y., Rennick-Egglestone, S., Ng, F., Llewellyn-Beardsley, J., Ali, Y., Newby, C., Fox, C., Slade, E., Bradstreet, S., Harrison, J., Franklin, D., Todowede, O., & Slade, M. (2023). Assessing diversity and inclusivity is the next frontier in mental health recovery narrative research and practice. *JMIR Mental Health*, 10(1), e44601. <https://doi.org/10.2196/44601>
- Lee, J., & Seol, H. D. (2021). An inquiry into transformational leadership, knowledge management strategies, and employee creativity. *Knowledge & Process Management*, 28(4), 364–376. <https://doi.org/10.1002/kpm.1689>
- Marri, A. A., Jarn, B. B., Mansoor, W., Atalla, S., & Miniaoui, S. (2022). Measuring

employee productivity through copresence using rfid within the workplace. *2022 5th International Conference on Signal Processing and Information Security (ICSPIS)*, 129–133. <https://doi.org/10.1109/ICSPIS57063.2022.10002497>

McCutcheon, T. N. (2019). *Leadership strategies that promote employee engagement* [Walden University]. Scholarworks.

<https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/7557/>

McNeish, R., & Tran, Q. (2020). Leadership that promotes successful implementation of community-based mental health interventions. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 48(5), 1500–1511. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22343>

Mchenga, M., Burger, R., & von Fintel, D. (2023). Can women’s reports in client exit interviews be used to measure and track progress of antenatal care services quality? Evidence from a facility assessment census in Malawi. *PLoS ONE*, 18(7), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0274650>

Merriam, S. B., & Grenier, R. S. (2019). *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis* (2nd ed). John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated.

<https://public.ebookcentral.proquest.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=563025>

[7](#)

Miranda, S. R. (2019). Preferred leadership styles by gender. *Journal of Management Development*, 38(7), 604–615. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-01-2019-0034>

Muhammad, A., Anoop, D., Syed H., Minhaj Q., & Farah A. (2024). Determinants Of Employee Satisfaction: A Survey Of Healthcare Workers Of A Group Of Hospitals In Karachi. *Pakistan Journal of Medicine and Dentistry*, 5(2).



Naeem, M., Ozuem, W., Howell, K., & Ranfagni, S. (2023). A step-by-step process of thematic analysis to develop a conceptual model in qualitative research.

*International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 22, 16094069231205789.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069231205789>

National Institute of Standards and Technology. (2023, July 31). *Baldrige excellence framework*. Retrieved from U.S. department of commerce:

<https://www.nist.gov/baldrige/publications/baldrige-excellence-framework>

Obuobisa-Darko, T. (2022). Managing employees' health, safety and anxiety in a pandemic. *International Journal of Workplace Health Management*, 15(2), 113–

130. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJWHM-09-2021-0178>

Pedersen, H., Skliarova, T., Attkisson, C. C., Lara-Cabrera, M. L., & Havnen, A. (2023).

Measuring patient satisfaction with four items: Validity of the client satisfaction questionnaire 4 in an outpatient population. *BMC Psychiatry*, 23(1), 808.

<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-023-05310-w>

Phoenix, B. J., & Chapman, S. A. (2020). Effect of state regulatory environments on advanced psychiatric nursing practice. *Archives of Psychiatric Nursing*, 34(5),

370–376. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apnu.2020.07.001>

Play up the importance of your mission statement. (2022). *Nonprofit Communications Report*, 20(4), 3.

Prasad, U., Chakravarty, S., Singh Bisht, Y., Prusty, A., Nijhawan, G., & Lourens, Dr. M.

(2023). Using natural language processing and blockchain for employee performance evaluation. *2023 3rd International Conference on Advance*

*Computing and Innovative Technologies in Engineering (ICACITE)*, 311–315.

<https://doi.org/10.1109/ICACITE57410.2023.10182524>

Rodgers, C. (2022). *Improving employee productivity using effective leadership strategies* [Walden University].

<https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/13722>

Sakran, J. V. (2023). The Roger T. Sherman lecture: How health care professionals drive social change. *The American Surgeon*, 89(7), 3024–3028.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/00031348231175448>

Schumann, K., Koetke, J., & Ludwig, J. M. (2022). Intellectual humility in the health and well-being context: Implications for promoting positive client relationships, client receptivity, and unbiased information gathering. *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 36(8), 1414–1418. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08901171221125326e>

Scott, C. P. R., Dieguez, T. A., Deepak, P., Gu, S., & Wildman, J. L. (2022). Onboarding during COVID-19: Create structure, connect people, and continue adapting. *Organizational Dynamics*, 51(2), 100828.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orgdyn.2021.100828>

Shahani, A. A., Ahmadi, H., & Jamali, G. (2022). Investigating the impact of board of directors' characteristics in choosing the accumulated profit and loss method for financing the company (evidence from Tehran Stock Exchange). *JOURNAL OF ALGEBRAIC STATISTICS*, 13(3), Article 3.

Sithole, M. S., & Shokane, A. L. (2023). Workplace learning in the contemporary supervision landscape: The case of supervision in a social service organisation.

*Social Work/Maatskaplike Werk*, 59(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.15270/59-2-1125>

Szulc, J., & King, N. (2022). The practice of dyadic interviewing: Strengths, limitations and key decisions. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 23(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-22.2.3776>

Thompson, M. J., & Jones, S. (2022). Leadership challenges in motivating employees during Covid-19 pandemic: An example from Germany. *Effective Executive*, 25(2), 31–45.

Üzüm, B., Özkan, O. S., & Huertas-Valdivia, I. (2024). Employees' perceptions of responsible leadership in private security: A mediation model. *Academia Revista Latinoamericana de Administración*, 37(1), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ARLA-04-2023-0060>

Vinci, C., Hemenway, M., Baban, S. S., Yang, M.-J., Brandon, K. O., Witkiewitz, K., Unrod, M., Brandon, T. H., Wetter, D. W., & Sutton, S. K. (2022). Transition to telehealth: Challenges and benefits of conducting group-based smoking and alcohol treatment virtually. *Contemporary Clinical Trials*, 114, 106689. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cct.2022.106689>

Weatherly, Stephanie Lou, "Behavioral Health Audit Tool Implementation and Health Care Documentation" (2021). *Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies*. 11141. <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/11141>

Wienclaw, R. A. (2023). Communication in the Workplace. *Salem Press Encyclopedia*.

Wiktorowicz, M. E., Di Pierdomenico, K., Buckley, N. J., Lurie, S., & Czukar, G. (2020).

Governance of mental healthcare: Fragmented accountability. *Social Science & Medicine*, 256, 113007. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2020.113007>

Wolfson, J. (2023). *Strategies for developing effective teams within small businesses* [Walden University].

<https://www.proquest.com/docview/2818733662/abstract/1FB6881D02544C8PQ/>

1

Xiao, Y., & Watson, M. (2019). Guidance on conducting a systematic literature review.

*Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 39(1), 93–112.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X17723971>

Zhu, Y., Long, L., Liu, W., Shu, P. and Chen, S. (2023), "How and when does authentic leadership reduce employee resistance to change? An explanation from uncertainty management theory", *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, Vol. 44 No. 8, pp. 969-993. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-03-2023-0155>

Appendix A: BHOU Leaders' Perception of Employee Engagement and  
Employee/Leader Development

**Quotes from the Behavioral Health Leadership Team**

- “The staff environment appears to be relatively family-oriented and casual.”
- “Staff are pretty engaged with one another for the most part.”
- “Staff and leadership relationships are positive and mostly trusting.”

Appendix B: BHOU Leaders' and Employees Perspectives of Factors Contributing to  
Lack of Follow-Through with Current Protocols

Themes	Leadership Statements
Training	<p>(BHL)- “An orientation program is provided to all new employees when they begin. During this time, they receive training on the handbook, policies and procedures, documentation, and much more.”</p> <p>(Staff 1, 2, 3, 4)- “We are satisfied with orientation training.”</p>
Communication	<p>(Staff 1)- “We have a great team, and I appreciate the open line of communication and transparency from the clinical director.”</p> <p>(BHL)- “I have an open-door policy. I am transparent with my employees and always here to talk when they need me.”</p> <p>(Staff 1, 2, 3, 4)- “We love our BHL; she is easy to talk to and supportive.”</p>
Engagement	<p>(Staff 2)- “I love the engagement and team outings.”</p>
Time Management	<p>(BHL)- “I am experiencing challenges with employees not turning in their documentation within the allotted time frame, submitting time off and placing it on the calendar, and responding to emails within 24 hours.”</p>

	<p>(BHL)- “Employees asked for an additional day to submit documentation. I provided the extra day, and they are still late.”</p> <p>(Staff 1, 2, 3, 4)- “48 hours are not enough time; can we have an additional day to complete documentation?”</p>
Accountability	<p>(BHL)- “They like to pass off consequences and repercussions.”</p>
Resistance	<p>(BHL)- “They always want to negotiate and give pushback.”</p> <p>(BHL)- “Employees are not following protocol.”</p>

Appendix C: BHOU Leaders' Perception of Societal Well-Being and Social Change

**Quote from the Behavioral Health Leadership Team**

- “With our established community partnerships and offerings of reduced rate and free therapy, we are able to increase mental health accessibility for our local community.



## Appendix D: BHOE Employee Satisfaction Survey

<b>EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION SURVEY</b>					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have a clear understanding of the organization's goals and objectives.					
I have a good work-life balance.					
I know what is expected of me when it comes to the organization's goals and objectives.					
Leadership recognizes my full potential and capitalizes on my strengths.					
The leadership team displays willingness to teach and provides open communication					

## Appendix E: BHOE Employee Exit Form

<b>EMPLOYEE EXIT FORM</b>
1. What did you enjoy most and least about your job?
2. What changes can be implemented to create a better working environment?
3. Were your duties clearly defined? Please explain in detail?
4. Do you feel that you received adequate training during your time at the organization? What could we add to enhance the overall experience?
5. Were health and safety requirements met? Please provide examples.
6. How would you describe the work culture and leadership morale? Please share in detail.
7. How do you feel about the pay and benefits for the position served?

## Appendix F: BHOU Client Satisfaction Survey

CLIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I experienced a seamless intake process.					
A member of the team returned my call or email within 24 hours to 48 hours.					
My clinician was prepared for the session.					
My clinician understood my concerns.					
The session began and ended at the scheduled times.					
The practitioner focused on achieving my goals for treatment and therapy.					