Alleviate uncertainty - Build beyond what is possible

Assessing your options improves your outcomes

Laboratory leadership makes difficult decisions daily. In a high-pressure environment, being asked to do more with less is business as usual. However, mitigating risk means assessing options, and not everyone is willing to take the same chance.

As the healthcare landscape changes, laboratories need to follow suit in order to ensure sustainable operations. We acknowledge the great responsibility that comes with managing a laboratory. Together with an open mind, your informed and responsible decisions will have the greatest impact on your laboratory's long-term outlook.

What are the real risks of change?

The biggest barrier for laboratories looking to make changes is the unknown. Apprehension can span from laboratory leadership all the way through to staff, even though that trepidation may be more grounded in perception than reality. However, some concerns surrounding change are legitimate.

- *As science and technology evolve, laboratories must keep up with the latest equipment, advances, and software*
- *New processes and automated workflows can cause laboratory staffers to worry about technology taking over their role*
- *Employees may worry how change will affect their workload*
- *Those making decisions might fear an overall loss of control as the need to change becomes inevitable*

However, despite these concerns, any workforce can adapt to change with the right support and future-facing mindset. Each of the concerns listed above can be quantified and managed with information and encouragement from laboratory leadership.

For instance, concerns about technology affecting staff numbers can be alleviated by reminding them that automation presents tremendous opportunity, and should not be perceived as a threat. In a fully automated laboratory, experienced technicians are more valuable than ever—free to use their time to think analytically and take on value-adding tasks, rather than perform mundane manual tasks.

When laboratory leadership cultivates flexibility and resiliency in its staff, there is potential to grow, learn, and have broader impact.

See the impact of molecular automation on a laboratory in Vigo

What are the risks of avoiding change?

Maintaining current technology and protocols may seem like a safe option, but in today's increasingly competitive healthcare environment, inaction is accompanied by considerable risk. Beyond a laboratory's usual daily workload pressures, there exists a **shortage of skilled** staff, increasing commoditization, new **technologies**, reduced reimbursement and an industry-wide trend toward **consolidation**.

In the future, managing these pressures within an antiquated infrastructure will lead to job-related stress, poor motivation, and reduced staff productivity. Trying to meet increased demands without improving worker satisfaction could, increase error rates which would directly impact patient outcomes.

Meanwhile, cuts in reimbursement and consolidation initiatives will place further strain on laboratory sustainability. Smaller laboratories may struggle to stay in business or stave off being taken over, while large laboratory organizations and hospitals navigate the decision to maintain their own testing or to outsource.

Transform worry about change to a shared vision for success

To stay competitive, clinical laboratories need to continuously deliver the highest quality results, while finding new ways to increase efficiency, reduce operating costs, and elevate satisfaction among patients and staff. One promising approach to enhance organizational performance is looking at technology and process improvements that can help to more efficiently use resources.

Research shows that hospitals and clinical laboratories that integrate an efficiency-based methodology and automation into their process experienced a range of operational benefits, including[1]:

- *Reduced turnaround time from 54 to 23 minutes*
- *Decreased variability in turnaround time*
- *20% higher testing volume*
- *Monetary savings equivalent to four full-time employees*
- *Improved utilization of space with a 25% gain*

High-efficiency processes implemented in combination with the Molecular Work Area, will allow laboratories to make smart, meaningful changes that improve quality and performance.

- *Standardized processes elevate throughput and minimize training*
- *Automation reduces errors, variability and manual steps*
- *Improved worker satisfaction can increase the value provided by staff*

Change can be challenging and it is important to address any concerns that arise. However, when the impact of change is quantified, avoiding it becomes the riskier option. In an environment that demands adaptation and flexibility, it is imperative to involve employees in open, transparent conversations about what is happening. It can also be helpful to ask staff for feedback or technical input on proposed changes, as they will be the end users needing to adapt to new systems. With this type of collaborative approach, the transition to new technologies and processes will be smoother with less objection.

Now is the time to take the next step

Change is not just about assessing risk; it is about assessing opportunity. To help you successfully implement your new initiative, Roche Healthcare Consulting will provide you with expert support that is specific to your organizational needs.

- *Comprehensive assessments*
- *Tailored implementation planning*
- *Change management assistance*
- *Ongoing service and support*

Working together, we you can minimize the burden of change, and maximize the impact the Molecular Work Area has on your laboratory.

For more information about the value of change, talk to your local Roche representative or click here.

Reference:

1. Alkher M, Beker I, Cabarkapa V, Sevic D. Most used lean tools in hospitals and clinical laboratories. XVII International Scientific Conference on Industrial Systems (IS'17) Novi Sad, Serbia, October 4–6 2017. https://www.iim.ftn.uns.ac.rs/is17/papers/50.pdf. Accessed December 2, 2019.