

Making the case to go social mission

When the [Healthcare Insurance Reciprocal of Canada](#) (HIROC) changed its vision to focus on partnering to create the safest healthcare system, CEO Peter Flattery says it was like getting a new job and purpose. A HIROC staff-member suggested the new cause was worthy of being remembered for and inscribed on her epitaph.

Organizations that articulate their mission in social terms position themselves to make a difference in the world through their services and can expect to better motivate and retain employees.

“Businesses who treat their employees well – who honour them as individuals and who provide them with a sense of purpose and the understanding that the work they’re doing is bettering the lives of others – are rewarded by happier, more productive and more committed team members, who love their jobs and feel dedicated and fulfilled in their work,” says [Siona van Dijk](#), synchronicity co-ordinator for the California-based social networking company Zaadz.

In the last 12 years or so, OMNI Health Care, a private long-term care company, has evolved from pursuing excellence to experiencing hope, purpose and belonging in long-term care. The company has created a definitive approach, dubbed the OMNI way, which is essentially about celebrating the lives, contributions, joy and love of people.

[Maureen Imamovic](#) has spent her entire career at an OMNI home, beginning as a nurse’s aide and moving on to become the home’s current administrator and director of care. She describes the long-term care home as a rewarding place to work, with multiple opportunities to make a difference in the lives of residents, to promote good teamwork among staff, and to make the greatest use of her strengths and talents.

“What I’d like people to understand is the amount of growth I’ve gone through professionally here,” she says. “That’s what makes OMNI a choice employer over others. OMNI believes in its people.”

With its focus on filling social needs, OMNI’s mission of experiencing hope, purpose and belonging in long-term care is of the highest order, and encompasses other inspiring purposes such as doing one’s best or helping others.

A range of studies in recent decades has shown that once personal wealth exceeds a certain amount, (experts differ on that exact amount though agree it must cover basic needs) more money produces no increase in happiness. From 1958 to 1987, for example, income in Japan grew fivefold, but researchers could find no corresponding growth in life satisfaction.

One study found that of the top ten job expectations, type of work is most important to workers. People are looking for careers that make the best use of their abilities and give them a feeling of accomplishment.

“Enriched jobs that provide (people) with recognition, responsibility, autonomy, achievement, and opportunities for advancement are more satisfying for most people than ‘unenriched’ jobs, and hence, reduce voluntary turnover,” the Canadian Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology states.

Self-actualization is our highest need and organizations that choose to define themselves in social terms, providing people with an opportunity for meaningful work, have taken an important first step in positioning themselves to successfully engage and support the personal development of their people.