Effective multidisciplinary communication is vital to provide safe quality care. It was noted that there was bullying and disruptive behavior present within the OR and the Pre op areas, across disciplines. Employee job satisfaction scores were low.

Senior nursing leaders, recognizing that there was a problem, redesigned the leadership model in the perioperative department. These new leaders took a collaborative and uniform approach in addressing specific behaviors. They provided clear role delineation and performance expectations to each staff member in individual meetings and had each of them sign a contract indicating their understanding of the code of conduct. They met with individual staff weekly to “check in” and provide them with a safe environment to voice their concerns. Trust was established. Frequent coaching took place individually and in group settings. All bad behavior/bullying was dealt with immediately, including any issues with MD’s, Anesthesiologists and others. Violations of in the Code of Conduct were immediately dealt with, utilizing progressive counseling and discipline. Staff members were saturated with education regarding respect in the workplace and teambuilding. The leaders themselves huddled daily for the first 3 months to review progress and modify the action plan.

After a year, employee satisfaction scores showed a marked improvement, as did patient surveys. Clearly, through the use of effective communication, fairness, respect, and consistent coaching and counseling, a workplace free of lateral violence and bad behaviors can be achieved. A team model was discovered to be the most effective in the perioperative environment.