

Louisiana Chapter of HFMA

Effective Leadership in the Midst of Change

Key Leadership Principles for Change Management



Godlee Davis | President, Eligibility Services, Elevate Patient Financial Solutions





Godlee Davis

Regional President
Elevate Patient Financial Solutions

*Active HFMA Member
Across Multiple Chapters*

Wife and mother of five, caregiver, executive leader, and student of leadership.

About Your Presenter



25+ Years of Healthcare Social Advocacy

A career devoted to improving access to care and championing the patients and communities' healthcare finance leaders serve.



20+ Years in Medical Assistance Eligibility

Deep, hands-on expertise in Medicaid eligibility operations and the policy shifts that shape them.



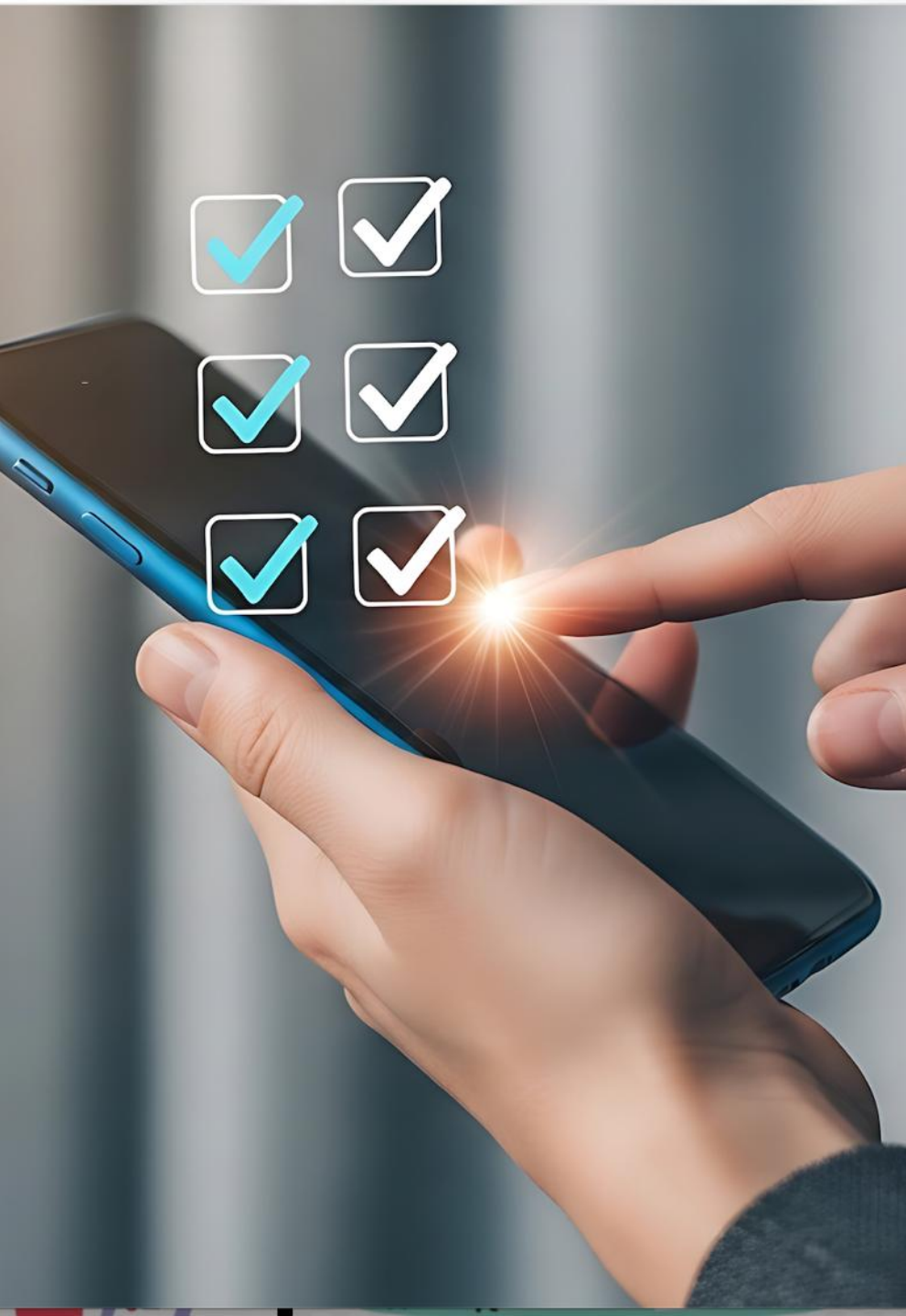
Recognized Industry Thought Leader

A frequent speaker and collaborator with state and federal agencies on eligibility determination and healthcare finance strategy.



ElevatePFS: Largest Privately Held RCM Company

Best in KLAS and rated the #1 Black Book partner for Eligibility & Enrollment Services.



What We'll Cover Today

A practical path through the principles of leading change in healthcare finance

01

The Reality of Change

Why healthcare finance leaders face constant transformation

02

Foundations of Change Leadership

Communication, transparency, and consistency

03

Managing vs. Leading Change

Moving teams from compliance to genuine commitment

04

Navigating Resistance

Understanding pushback and responding with empathy

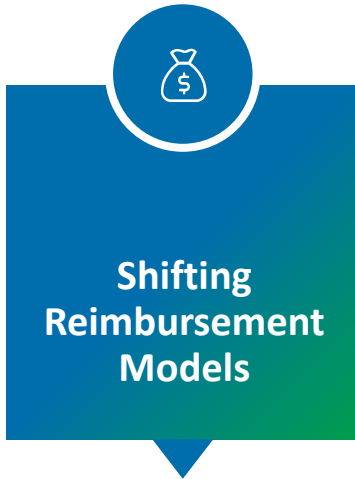
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Sustaining Change

Making new behaviors and mindsets stick

The Reality of Change in Healthcare Finance

Four forces reshaping the work of every healthcare finance team



Payment structures continue to evolve, requiring teams to adapt processes quickly and accurately.



Regulations and compliance standards shift regularly, and teams must adjust with confidence.



Staffing changes, turnover, and evolving skill needs place new demands on every leader.



Patients and communities expect more clarity, compassion, and responsiveness than ever before.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

Identify the core principles of effective change leadership

including communication, transparency, and consistency, and understand how each builds trust during uncertainty.

Distinguish between managing change and leading change

and apply leadership strategies that inspire genuine buy in rather than simple compliance.

Recognize common sources of resistance to change

within healthcare finance teams and apply practical techniques to address concerns with empathy and confidence.



The Foundations of Change Leadership

Communication, transparency, and consistency build the trust every change effort depends on.

Change Management, As Advertised

A look at the leadership clichés we have all sat through

“

This isn't a layoff.
It's a right-sizing
opportunity!

”

*(Corporate translation: more
work, less headcount.)*

“

Great question!
Let's circle back after
we synergize.

”

(Translation: never.)

“

Behold!
A bold new org chart!

”

*(...same three boxes,
rotated 90 degrees.)*

Sound familiar? Real change leadership means honesty and follow-through — no synergy required.

The Core Principles of Change Leadership

Each principle reinforces the others, and together they build trust during uncertainty

Communication

Share the why behind the change early and often. Silence invites speculation; clarity invites confidence.

Transparency

Be honest about what is known, what is still unfolding, and what has not yet been decided.

Consistency

Align your words and actions over time. Trust is built through steady follow through, not a single announcement.

Practical Exercise: Communication

Practice sharing the why behind a change clearly and early

Step 1

Draft the Message

In two minutes, write down the change, why it's happening now, and who it affects. Keep it to three sentences.

Step 2

Deliver It Out Loud

Partner with a colleague and deliver your message as if presenting to your team. Ask what questions it raises.

Step 3

Reflect

Did your message answer the why? What questions came up that you should address before the real announcement?

Practical Exercise: Transparency

Practice separating what you know from what is still unfolding

Step 1

Sort the Facts

List a current change into three columns: what is known, what is still unfolding, and what has not yet been decided.

Step 2

Write a Transparent Update

Draft a short update to your team using all three columns honestly, without over-promising on the undecided items.

Step 3

Reflect

Where were you tempted to soften or omit the unknowns? What would build more trust instead?

Practical Exercise: Consistency

Practice aligning your words and actions over time

Step 1

Run a Consistency Audit

Review your last three communications about a change. Do your actions since then match what you said?

Step 2

Plan Your Follow Through

Identify one commitment you made and schedule a specific, visible follow-up action this week.

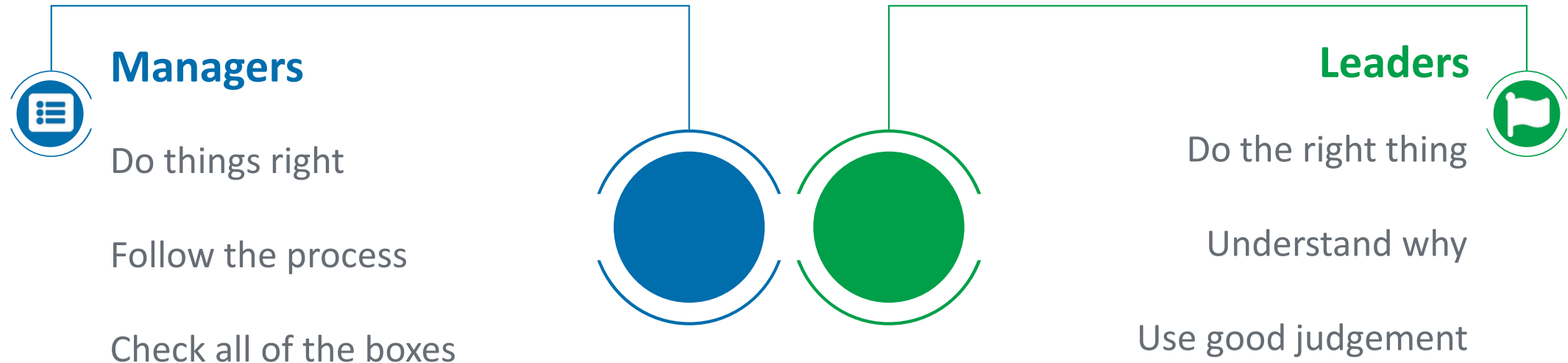
Step 3

Reflect

Where has inconsistency crept in? What single habit would most strengthen trust with your team?

Leaders vs. Managers

Doing things right is not the same as doing the right thing



Managers keep the process moving. Leaders make sure it is moving in the right direction.

Managing Change vs. Leading Change

Compliance gets a change implemented.
Commitment makes it last.

Managing Change

- Focuses on tasks, timelines, and process
- Aims for compliance with new procedures
- Treats change as a one-time event to complete

Leading Change

- Focuses on people, purpose, and buy in
- Aims to inspire genuine commitment
- Treats change as an ongoing leadership practice

Strategies that inspire buy in. Communicate the vision, engage stakeholders at every level, and involve teams in shaping how change happens, not just when.



Navigating Resistance with Empathy

Resistance is not a leadership failure. It is a signal asking to be understood.

Understanding and Responding to Resistance

Common Sources

- 1 | Fear of the unknown and what change means for their role
- 2 | A sense of losing control over familiar processes
- 3 | Fatigue from past changes that were not well managed
- 4 | An unclear understanding of why the change is happening

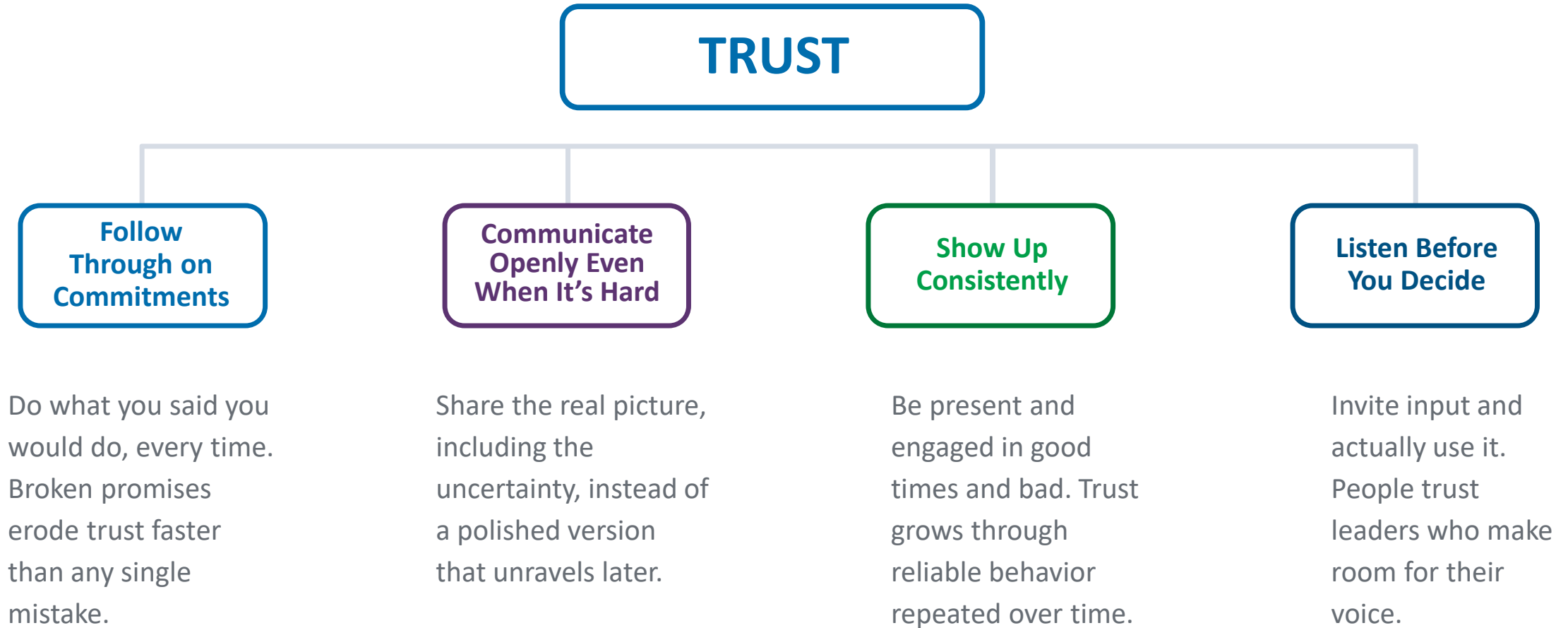
Responding with Empathy and Confidence

- 1 | Listen first, and acknowledge concerns as valid before responding
- 2 | Repeat and reinforce the why behind the change, consistently
- 3 | Involve teams early so they help shape how change unfolds
- 4 | Stay steady and confident, even when questions get hard

**The key to overcoming resistance isn't more information — it's trust.
When people trust their leader, they lean into change instead of against it.**

Building Trust with your Team

Trust is earned through consistent, visible behavior, not declared in a memo



The TRUSTING Framework

Say it, spell it, live it. Habits that build lasting trust

T

Truth

Speak plainly,
even when it's
hard

R

Respect

Value every
voice on the
team

U

Understanding

Seek to know
before being
known

S

Safety

Make it safe to
be wrong

T

Transparency

Share the why,
not just the
what

I

Invest Time & Emotions

Show up, not
just show
interest

N

Niceness

Kindness costs
nothing,
means
everything

G

Genuineness

Be the same
person in
every room

Respect is earned. Honesty is appreciated. Trust is gained. Loyalty is returned.

Five Principles for Leading Through Change

1

Lead with clarity

and confidence,
even when the
path is not fully
defined

2

Build trust

Build trust
through
consistent, honest
communication

3

Empower teams

to see change as
opportunity, not
disruption

4

Sustain momentum

and accountability
beyond the initial
rollout

5

Keep the patient

and organizational
mission at the
center of every
decision

Sustaining Change Beyond the Rollout

The real work of change leadership begins after the announcement ends

Reinforce new behaviors

Recognize and celebrate the small wins that show the change is taking hold.

Track progress honestly

Use real data and feedback to see what is working and what still needs support.

Keep leadership visible

Stay engaged well past the launch date. Momentum fades fastest when leaders step back too soon.

Leadership Is a Lifestyle

Like staying in shape, the work never ends — keep showing up so your team takes care of each other and feels valued long after the change is behind you.



Leading change is not about having every answer.

It is about giving people a reason to trust you while the answers take shape, and never losing sight of the patients and communities we are here to serve.

Make a Difference. Be the Difference.

Louisiana Chapter of HFMA

Thank You!

Let's Continue the Conversation

Godlee Davis

President, Eligibility Services
Elevate Patient Financial Solutions

Godlee.Davis@elevatepfs.com

O (301) 560-2865 | C (443) 956-5772