



Can “Quality” Be Sold in a Tour?

By Susan Saldibar

If you know [Sodexo](#), you undoubtedly are familiar with their brand positioning phrase, “Quality of Life Services”. In the senior living space, that’s a concept that is easy to latch onto. And yet, it also raises a few questions; the most obvious one being, “what do you mean by ‘quality of life’?”

Steve Moran sat down with Lindsay Casillas, Sodexo’s new National VP of Sales and Business Development, for a series of Conversation videos. In this one, Steve wanted to know more about how Sodexo is positioning its brand within today’s senior living communities.

So, I’m a senior living community executive director. How is Sodexo going to help me?

I like the way Lindsay responded. She created an image for Steve. It went something like this:

Imagine a really awesome executive director; a truly inspiring leader with an ability to really add value to her community and residents. Lots of great ideas for building the community and engaging new hires. Then, imagine throwing a lot of other stuff her way --- asking her to also be fantastic in the dining room, great at preventative maintenance, a whiz at housekeeping. Obviously, no one can handle all those things and still be great at their core talents. But that’s the idea!

“What if we leveraged the executive director’s strengths and allowed her to focus on those areas where she thrives and is really strong in,” Lindsay suggested. “What if she was able to spend more time growing the other clinicians in the community; mentoring them; spending more time trying to anticipate a move-out before it happens; impact occupancy with her communications skills; recruit the best talent for her team,” she says.

Point well made. Few would argue that executive directors are often spread thin and in too many directions to be truly effective.

And that’s where Sodexo comes in. As Lindsay puts it, “In that same way, Sodexo partners with a provider and helps them focus on their core competency; to help them reach performance,” she adds.

Okay, so Steve gets it but decides to push further. What about “Quality of Life”?

Steve had remarked how Sodexo is still known, by many, primarily for their dining services. How are they impacting other operational areas? Instead of listing things off, Lindsay shifted gears into a sort of virtual “walk through”, starting out in the parking lot and into a community, pointing out each Sodexo Quality of Life touchpoint along the way. And it covered a lot more than dining:

- Grounds maintenance
- Environmental management, energy efficiencies, ambient lighting
- Cleaning services
- Front of the house, professionally trained concierge
- Hydration and snack stations
- Exemplary dining experience, using fresh, local grown produce
- WiFi connected iPads to connect residents to families
- Highly trained, engaged care staff

You really have to watch the video to appreciate Lindsay’s tour. The point she makes, and quite well, is that Sodexo’s services have many “quality of life” touchpoints with the power to improve virtually every corner of a community. And, when that happens, everyone, from entry level staff up to the executive director, is able to concentrate on their core competencies. Everyone benefits.

Steve liked the “tour”. I did too.



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