



a fierce case study

Emeritus Targets Executive Directors & Strengthens Communication Across Entire Organization

Background

Emeritus Senior Living is a leader in the assisted living industry, with one of the largest networks of assisted living, retirement, and Alzheimer's care communities in North America.

This study shows how Emeritus improved communication within and across communities by targeting one audience first: Executive Directors (EDs).



One Organization — Hundreds of Communities

With over 500 locations in 45 states, Emeritus Senior Living is a single organization made up of multiple, autonomous communities. While every community shares the same high standards and commitment to residents, each one is also completely unique and operates as a family-owned business.

Emeritus recently took steps to ensure every community has one thing in common: **clear, authentic, results-driven communication.**



CHALLENGES

- Improve communication at all levels
- Prepare Executive Directors to set culture for communities
- Build and enhance leadership skills

SOLUTIONS

- Partnered new Executive Directors with Fierce-trained mentors
- Dedicated full day of Executive Director Orientation to Fierce Conversations
- Began open enrollment workshops for divisional leaders

RESULTS

- Reduced turnover
- Established common language and expectations
- Strengthened relationships and increased trust with employees, residents, and families

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Challenges

"One of our Wildly Important Goals (WIGs) is the development of Executive Directors," said Adora Brouillard, Training and Development Manager at Emeritus Senior Living. "As the leaders of individual business units, EDs set the tone, culture, and example for the employees in their communities. They are in the perfect position to influence—from the top-down and the bottom-up."

In the past, the emphasis has always been on tactical training, yet feedback from EDs—especially those promoted to their positions—uncovered a desire for more personal leadership training.

Solutions

1 PARTNERED NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS WITH FIERCE-TRAINED MENTORS

"Executive Directors learn best from each other," said Liberty Stansberry. "Development sticks because it's relevant, immediately applicable, and hands-on." New EDs job shadow with mentors for two days and then stay connected with visits, phone calls, and 30-, 60-, and 90-day check-ins. Because mentors have been trained in Fierce Conversations, they are able to model coaching and other conversations for their mentees—preparing them for their upcoming Fierce Conversations workshop.

2 DEDICATED FULL DAY OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ORIENTATION TO FIERCE CONVERSATIONS

After three months on the job with a mentor, Executive Directors are brought to the home office in Seattle for Orientation where they meet senior management and departmental representatives, learn about leadership and Family Values, and go through financial training.

On day two, new Executive Directors go through the Fierce Conversations workshop. Fierce Conversations shows new leaders how to live according to the Emeritus Family Values by providing practical approaches for conducting **TEAM**, **DELEGATION**, **COACHING**, and **CONFRONTATION** conversations.

3 BEGAN OPEN ENROLLMENT WORKSHOPS FOR DIVISIONAL LEADERS

The success of Fierce Conversations in ED Orientation led many to request their leaders go through the same training. As a result, Emeritus began open-enrollment workshops for divisional leaders. In this way, EDs have not only influenced down within their business units, they've also influenced up, and improved conversations with their leaders.

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Results

EDs report their frontline staffs are more confident sharing ideas and openly describing reality—rather than just saying what they think leaders want to hear. They're also reporting productive 360 feedback, development planning, and coaching conversations.

Many are also seeing an impact on turnover. Sue Van Tuinen, Executive Director at Chesterley Meadows Senior Living in Yakima, Washington has had very little turnover in her five years in management. And she attributes some of that to Fierce. “We have a very close-knit management staff,” said Van Tuinen. “And we’ve done some hands-on training with our frontline staff to help them have productive conversations with each other and with residents. Fierce has given us a solid foundation as a group for how to approach different situations.”



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LIBERTY STANSBERRY
Senior Vice President
of Human Resources

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“Shared language and shared experiences create and define a culture,” said Brouillard. “Our leaders come out of the leadership program knowing what’s expected. They know what it means to have a Fierce conversation. They’re ready to ask and be asked ‘What’s the most important thing we need to talk about today?’ And the results are powerful.”

Better communication has increased trust and improved relationships among employees, families, and residents. Each community within the Emeritus Senior Living umbrella will continue to maintain its unique personality and retain what makes it special. And they’ll do so with a common bond: **clear communication.**

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ADORA BROUILLARD
Training and Development Manager
at Emeritus Senior Living

add fierce to your training toolkit

Our diverse, global client list underscores a basic truth: Business is fundamentally an extended conversation—with colleagues, customers and the unknown future emerging around us. Whether your focus is on implementing key initiatives, managing top talent, improving customer acquisition and retention, developing leaders, or simply igniting productive dialogue that generates clarity and impetus for change—success occurs one conversation at a time.

For more information about how Fierce can help your business, visit fierceinc.com or contact us at 206.787.1100.

