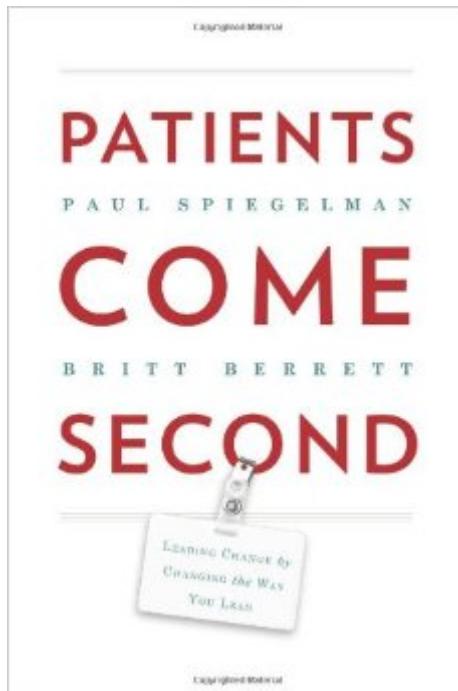


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# Patients Come Second: Leading Change By Changing The Way You Lead



## Synopsis

Americans enjoy the finest healthcare delivery system in the world, but most people will tell you that we still have a long way to go. Far too frequently, patients leave the doctor's office or hospital feeling confused, angry, or neglected. Healthcare leaders recognize this problem, but in their focus on patients (and sometimes financials), they often overlook the true key to lasting patient loyalty and satisfaction: their employees. *Patients Come Second* shakes up the traditional healthcare model, arguing that in order to care for and retain patients, leaders must first create exceptional teams and find ways to engage nurses, administrative staff, physicians, supervisors, and even housekeeping staff and switchboard operators. By connecting employees' work with a higher purpose and equipping them with the tools to become leaders themselves, patient care can be dramatically transformed. And with continuing healthcare changes on the horizon and ever-rising pressure to acquire and keep patients, doing so now is more important than ever. Britt Berrett, president of an 898-bed hospital, and Paul Spiegelman, founder and CEO of a successful patient-experience company, are the perfect guides to the changes needed in healthcare leadership. With a rich combined experience in their field, they have filled each chapter with an abundance of engaging, insightful stories and write with a humor and friendliness that balances and enhances the urgency of their message.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

If you're serious about enriching the patient experience and building loyalty, start from the inside out. Research clearly demonstrates that employee engagement is closely correlated with patient

satisfaction and yet many healthcare leaders are still applying the traditional model that puts financials and customers' needs ahead of even some of the most basic employee needs. In recent years there has been a flood of attention paid to improving the patient experience particularly now with value based purchasing, but these attempts will not be successful without attention to the employee. In a culture of scarcity, deprivation or neglect, employees may be too depleted to deliver the type of care that leads to an impeccable reputation, patient loyalty and a healthy bottom line. In their new book, *Patients Come Second - Leading Change by Changing the Way You Lead*, (2013, Greenleaf Book Group Press), authors Paul Spiegelman (founder and CEO of BerylHealth) and Britt Berrett (President of Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital) focus on the importance of fostering a culture that puts employees' needs first, patients second and financials third. If this order makes you cringe or question the author's sanity, you need to read this book for yourself. They eloquently state the case through stories shared by numerous leaders from high-performing organizations punctuated with personal anecdotes that bring the points home. The authors point out that employees want to feel valued. They want to feel a part of something bigger and more important than their list of job duties. And it's up to the organization's leaders to find ways to make this happen. Lesson number one is that it won't happen by wishing it were so.

Former chairman and CEO of Southwest Airlines, Herb Keller, provided the title for this review. Paul Spiegelman and Britt Berrett fully agree with him about having an employee-centric organization within which everyone is customer-centric. It is no coincidence that many of the same companies that are annually ranked among the most highly admired and best to work for are also annually ranked among those that are most profitable with the greatest cap value in their respective industry segments. That is certainly true of The Beryl Companies, of which Spiegelman is founder and CEO, and of all other organizations that are employee-centric, whose workers are customer-centric. He co-authored *Patients Come Second* with Berrett. In it, he develops in greater depth several of his thoughts about leadership, previously shared in his book, *Why is Everyone Smiling? The Secret Behind Passion, Productivity, and Profit* (2012). As Joseph Michelli explains in his book, *Prescription for Excellence: Leadership Lessons for Creating a World Class Customer Experience* from UCLA Health System, effective leadership in health care (or in any other industry or profession) must be developed at all levels and in all areas. As Spiegelman and Berrett observe, "Building the kind of organizational culture where everyone thrives is a shared passion of ours, and our goal in writing this book is nothing less than changing the entire U.S. health care system along these lines. Look, there's a crisis going on in health care, and everyone is looking in the wrong places for a cure."

Where to look?

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