



Culture They Can Feel

Elevating the Resident Experience Every Day

KRISTYN SPEARS • SCALA

Why did SCALA ask for this topic?

Because surveys now measure more than care tasks. Residents and families remember the whole experience.

LIVE POLL

What has been your favorite part of this conference?

- A The food
- B The people
- C Time away from the building
- D The way you were welcomed

[LAUNCH LIVE POLL](#)

Event code 7245981

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What if someone truly listened and shaped this experience around you before you arrived?

From invitation to arrival to the final goodbye, somebody thought about the whole person.

The experience starts before the front door

- The first phone call sets the emotional temperature
- The tour tells families what your team notices
- The handoff proves whether departments talk to one another
- The first night answers: Did I make a mistake?

Red carpet does not require red-carpet spending

Expensive

Renovation
Gift baskets
Technology nobody uses

Intentional

A name used correctly
A favorite drink ready
A familiar photo placed
A staff member expecting them

Which welcome touch creates the biggest return?

- A Favorite snack or drink ready
- B Door sign with preferred name
- C One familiar item placed first
- D A scheduled family update

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Could a stranger tell who lives here?

Preference becomes culture only when it changes what the team does.

PART TWO

Make the invisible obvious

Confusion creates repeat questions. Good design gives residents a usable playbook.

“Bro... did they really ask me that again?”

If the same question appears 15 times, the system may be asking for a better answer.

Give residents a Who's Who guide

Because “Who is the culinary director again?” should not become a daily scavenger hunt.

The playbook

- Photo + name
- What they handle
- How to reach them
- Best time to connect

Meet Your Community Leadership Team

Celebrity Edition Training Sample

Use this guide to quickly find the right person for your question or concern.

Fictional training sample only. The featured celebrities are not affiliated with or employed by this sample community.

	Dolly Parton Executive Director How I can help Come to me for the big picture. I help with community operations, resident and family concerns, service recovery, leadership decisions, and anything that needs coordination across departments. Email dolly.parton@example.com Phone (803) 555-0101
	Ryan Reynolds Director of Sales How I can help I help future residents and families learn about the community. Contact me for tours, apartment availability, pricing, deposits, move-in planning, and questions before admission. Email ryan.reynolds@example.com Phone (803) 555-0102

Yes, Dolly is the ED. Training sample only.

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	Sandra Oh Director of Nursing How I can help I oversee resident health services and the care team. Contact me about changes in condition, care plans, medication concerns, clinical questions, or communication with medical providers. Email sandra.oh@example.com Phone (803) 555-0103
	Steve Carell Business Office Manager How I can help I help with the business side of community life. Contact me about statements, payments, billing questions, insurance paperwork, account updates, and general office forms. Email steve.carell@example.com Phone (803) 555-0104
	Dwayne Johnson Maintenance Director How I can help I keep the building safe and working properly. Contact me about repairs, heating or cooling, plumbing, lighting, appliances, room setup, safety concerns, or maintenance requests. Email dwayne.johnson@example.com Phone (803) 555-0105

	Snoop Dogg Activities Director How I can help I plan programs that bring people together. Contact me about the activity calendar, outings, celebrations, clubs, spiritual programs, volunteer opportunities, and personal interests you want us to know. Email snoop.dogg@example.com Phone (803) 555-0106
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If you are unsure who to call, start with the Executive Director or Business Office. We will help you find the right person.

Photo Sources

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The resident playbook

- Who can help me?
- What happens on a normal day?
- How do I ask for something?
- When should I expect an answer?
- What choices are actually mine?

Hey... so, how has your conference experience been?

Scooch into the empty seat. Commit to the silence. Then: “Feels like church when they make you greet your neighbor, doesn’t it? You’re welcome.”

PART THREE

Listening that changes something

A resident council meeting counts when residents can see what happened next.

Resident council beyond the minutes

- Ask to be invited and listen in person
- Name what you heard without defending it
- Assign an owner and a realistic date
- Close the loop, including when the answer is no

What breaks trust fastest?

- A No answer
- B A vague answer
- C A different answer from each leader
- D An answer with no follow-through

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A five-minute listening loop

Ask

What is working?
What feels harder than it should?
What would make tomorrow better?

Then respond

What I heard
What I can do
Who owns the next step
When I will follow up

The employee experience leaks

Residents feel the emotional weather of the building, even when nobody names it.

How are your leaders, really?

The people shaping resident experience bring an outside world to work every day.

Care staff need context, not just correction

- Name the hard interaction without labeling the resident
- Explain the clinical limit and the safe alternative
- Share the resident pattern and the approach that works
- Check back after the next attempt

Experience = what happens + how it feels + what happens next

Every department contributes. Every handoff tells a story.

PART FIVE

Family Feud, senior living edition

Two volunteers. Rapid answers. Mild chaos. Useful truth.

[LAUNCH THE LIVE GAME](#)

Keep the HTML game file beside this PowerPoint

Round one: Name something residents ask repeatedly

- Who is working today?
- What time is the activity or meal?
- Who handles this problem?
- When will somebody get back to me?

Round two: Which moments become stories?

- Move-in day
- A meal that missed the mark
- A call that went unanswered
- A small kindness nobody expected

Round three: Fix it for under \$25

Scenario

A new resident arrives anxious. Family is leaving. Dinner starts in 45 minutes.

Your challenge

Create one personal touch
Prevent one confusion
Plan one follow-up

Turn moments into a system

A great experience should survive the day your best employee is off.

The daily experience huddle

- Who needs extra reassurance today?
- What promise must we close?
- What preference can we honor?
- Where might the day create friction?

Measure moments, not just complaints

Leading signals

Welcome calls completed
Promises closed by due date
Resident names and preferences known

Lagging signals

Formal complaints
Survey results
Move-outs
Online reviews

Choose one moment. Redesign it. Measure whether residents feel the difference.

Start with move-in, meals, medication pass, maintenance requests, or resident council follow-up.

LIVE POLL

What will you change first?

- A The welcome
- B The Who's Who guide
- C The listening loop
- D The daily huddle

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What will residents feel because you were there?

Culture becomes real in the moment someone feels known, safe, respected, and worth the trouble.

References and further reading

- **CMS: Person-centered care planning and resident goals**
- AHRQ: Patient and family engagement through communication
- Alzheimer's Association recommendations summarized in CMS materials
- 2026 systematic review: social participation and quality of life