



# Empowering Nurse Leaders

Best Practices for Influencing  
Workforce Technology Decisions





# Elevating the Role of Nurse Leaders in Workforce Technology Decisions

Selecting a new healthcare workforce management solution is a critical decision that affects clinicians and staff across your hospital or health system. Registered nurses, who account for more than 1 out of every 5 healthcare workers<sup>1</sup>, represent a significant percentage of workforce management technology users. However, while chief medical officers (CMOs) are routinely involved in new technology decisions, nursing leaders are too often excluded – even though there are more than four times as many RNs in the U.S. as physicians.<sup>2</sup>

Failure to include nurse leaders in workforce technology decisions increases the risk of choosing a solution that falls short in meeting your organization's needs. Why? Nurses bring an in-depth understanding of how day-to-day processes work and how technology can support quality care and staff satisfaction through flexible scheduling, proper care team alignment, improved intraday staffing decisions, and data-driven workforce planning.

Given the cost and effort involved in implementing a new workforce management solution, your organization will likely be living with your decision for the next 5-10 years. That means the solution needs to deliver the right functionality via a seamless and intuitive experience in order to achieve widespread acceptance and advance your business goals. With so much at stake, it's time to empower nurse leaders with a strong voice in workforce technology decisions.

**17%** of nurse leaders ranked adopting new technologies and innovation as one of their top challenges.<sup>3</sup>



# How To Get a Seat At the Decision-Making Table

Participating in workforce technology decisions involves both risk and reward. Before asking for a seat at the table, you need to be prepared to dedicate time, perform upfront work, and accept responsibility for the collective decision made by the selection committee – no matter what the outcome. Most importantly, you must approach the decision objectively and have the confidence to speak out on behalf of the nursing team.

**Here are some tips to help you get a seat at the table and add significant value during the evaluation and decision-making process.**



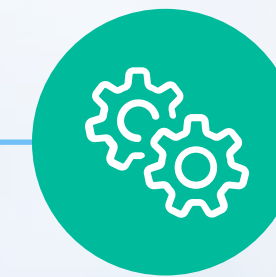
## **Be informed about the problem and potential solutions**

Collect input from clinicians and staff – both on your team and across the organization – about what’s lacking in your existing workforce management approach and what they'd like to see in the new solution. Speak with nurse leaders at other health systems to understand the choices they made and their level of satisfaction.



## **Be willing to take a risk**

If you want to be part of the decision-making process, you need to be confident and willing to stick your neck out. Getting a seat at the table involves attaching your name to the decision and taking responsibility for the outcome – even if the project doesn’t meet expectations.



## **Help optimize the technology your teams are currently using**

Take an active role in ensuring that your existing technology is being used optimally by everyone on your team. This may involve expanding training, improving workflows, or making suggestions about how the solution could better drive efficiency. This will help you gain expertise and make a name for yourself as someone who is passionate about using technology to improve clinical operations.



## **Make involvement in tech decisions part of annual reviews and career pathing**

Elevating the role of nurses in workforce technology decisions starts with establishing clear career paths. Managers can coach tech-savvy nurses toward getting a seat at the table by making involvement part of their career goals and professional development plan so they can acquire appropriate knowledge and skills.



# Setting the Stage for Success

Before you issue a request for proposal (RFP) to prospective technology partners, you should make sure your organization has done the work to establish governance, set a project budget and timeline, and define specific evaluation criteria. This upfront preparation and consensus-building will allow for a more thorough and objective evaluation process, accelerated decision-making, and a smoother implementation that is completed on time and on budget.

## What should your organization have in place before you develop and distribute your RFP to vendors?



Clear statement of the business problem(s) you're trying to solve



Key decision makers at each step in the process



Dedicated, approved project budget



Ambitious, but reasonable timelines



Project owners (pre- and post-implementation)



Method for measuring success including key metrics and benchmarks



## Essential evaluation categories to include in your RFP

- Scheduling
- Time and attendance
- Compensation management
- Reporting and analytics
- Integrations
- Implementation
- Change management
- Training
- Support
- Pricing



# Best Practices for Choosing the Right Technology Partner

In order to maximize your impact in the decision-making process, it's helpful to familiarize yourself with best practices for choosing a best-fit workforce technology provider. After all, you want to select a vendor that will not only meet your solution requirements, but one that will also partner with your organization to ensure the project's success – during the implementation process and beyond. This decision involves more than checking boxes on a list of requirements; it requires a deep understanding of how each vendor partners with customers to ensure their solution delivers on its promises.

**The following best practices will help you perform a thorough evaluation process that leads to an informed, objective purchase decision:**

- 1 Seek vendors with experience in large-scale software deployment and support:** A limited track record of enterprise-scale deployments might be a sign of over-customization or lack of scalability.
- 2 Look for a solution vs. a product:** Make sure your evaluation focuses not on purchasing a product, but on selecting a solution to specific challenges.
- 3 Choose a partner – not just a vendor:** Look to establish a partnership built on trust with a solution provider with values that align with those of your organization.
- 4 Take a hard look at process:** Ensure your chosen partner has a proven, field-tested methodology for deployment that spans implementation, change management, and user adoption.
- 5 Align on the pricing model – not just the price:** Look beyond the dollar total on the proposed contract and ensure alignment with the pricing model – whether it's SaaS or traditional.
- 6 Have a clear business case:** Make sure the solution provider understands your business needs well enough to create ROI models – not just sell you cool tech features.
- 7 Make workflow integration non-negotiable:** Ensure the software integrates seamlessly into your existing workflows, processes, and healthcare IT ecosystem.
- 8 Prioritize technological sustainability:** Ask about the solution's architecture to validate that it can scale as your organization grows and evolves as well as opportunities to shape the future of the tech through user groups, customer advisory boards, and more.



# Assessing and Weighting Evaluation Criteria

Once you've received vendors' responses to your RFP, it's time to dig into the details and compare vendors across several factors — weighting criteria based on your organization's priorities. Aside from carefully evaluating responses, you'll want to meet with vendor's teams and see their products in action. Only then will you be in a strong position to compare vendor scorecards and make an informed, objective selection.

**Here are the key functional and technical assessment factors to include on your scorecard.**



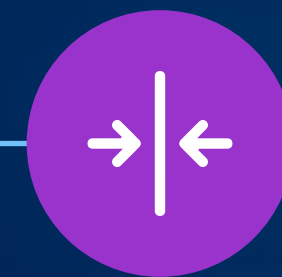
## Functionality

The solution's functionality should meet the business needs outlined in your RFP. For features that are not included, ask about workarounds for achieving your objectives. Request to see how each solution handles your most challenging use case scenarios.



## Usability

Live demos are a great way to evaluate the user experience including the interface, clicks required to perform routine tasks, and what it takes to generate reports and visualize data. Beware of offline demos that focus only on what the vendor wants you to see.



## Technical Alignment

Understand the effort required to achieve seamless integration with other systems — HRIS, ERP, EHR, etc. — across your organization. Inquire whether the vendor provides out-of-the-box integrations to or whether they will have to build them from scratch.



## Vendor Background

Assess each vendor's financial stability and track record for success in healthcare-only workforce management. Ask about their implementation methodology, training options, and approach to customer support. Check customer references to validate the vendor's claims.



## Total Cost of Ownership

For on-premise solutions, you'll need to factor hardware costs and ongoing IT management into your overall costs. For cloud solutions, ask about license fees and any additional costs for implementation, training, tiered support, or professional service.



# Stay Involved to Maximize ROI

When you get a seat at the decision-making table, you have a vested interest in making sure the chosen solution delivers the desired outcomes – whether you’re looking to reduce labor costs, increase workforce productivity, or improve nurse satisfaction and retention. By continuing your involvement even after the solution goes live, you can use your influence to drive adoption rates and optimize usage for better business results and higher return on investment.

## What can you do post-implementation to ensure ongoing solution success?



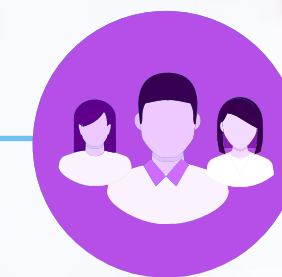
**Develop super-users** within the nursing workforce to champion the solution and help other users increase proficiency.



**Survey users** across the organization to measure their satisfaction with the new workforce management solution and identify issues or obstacles to adoption.



**Celebrate successes**, such as positive survey results, adoption milestones, the launch of mobile scheduling, or a streak of flawless payroll cycles, to demonstrate the value of the solution and spread enthusiasm enterprise-wide.



**Participate in customer advisory boards** to influence solution enhancements and encourage nurses to participate in user groups and online communities to share tips and tricks.



**Share user feedback** with your customer success team to strengthen your partnership and drive continuous improvement.

**Nurse leaders bring valuable experience, expertise, and understanding of clinical practices to workforce management technology decisions, helping ensure their organizations choose a solution that will satisfy users and solve business needs for maximum ROI. It's time to amplify nurses' voices, so step up, embrace best practices, and get your seat at the decision-making table. The entire healthcare workforce will be glad you did.**



# About QGenda

QGenda revolutionizes healthcare workforce management everywhere care is delivered. QGenda ProviderCloud, a purpose-built healthcare platform that empowers customers to effectively deploy workforce resources, includes solutions for scheduling, credentialing, on-call scheduling, room and capacity management, time tracking, compensation management, and workforce analytics.

More than 4,500 organizations partner with QGenda to advance provider scheduling, optimize capacity, and improve access to care. QGenda is headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia.

Visit [www.qgenda.com/nurse-and-staff-scheduling-software](https://www.qgenda.com/nurse-and-staff-scheduling-software).



- 1 Sean Smith and Andrew Blank, *Healthcare Occupations: Characteristics of the Employed*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (June 2023).
- 2 American Association of Colleges & Nursing, *Nursing Workforce Fact Sheet* (April 2024).
- 3 American Organization for Nursing Leadership Foundation, *AONL Longitudinal Nursing Leadership Insight Study* (November 2023).