

## Putting the Customer First

Visiting Leon Medical Clinic today was a glimpse into healthcare being done utilizing 21st-century methodology. They are a premier Medicare HMO in the Greater Miami area that offer concierge service catering to the Cuban community. My good friend Hector Estevez is the Administrator for their Hialeah clinic which is the newest of their six centers. We will both be turning 65 later this year, so this was a timely tour.



Hector additionally shares a passion for judo which we have been involved in for 50+ years. Hector was an Olympian as well as an Olympic level referee. I am the past President of the US Judo Association in charge of their National Promotion Board and currently President of the Southern California Judo Black Belt Association. Our roots in judo, and as career executives in the healthcare industry, plus being the same age, are uncanny common denominators.





Upon entering the Leon Medical Clinic, the first impression is this is a more like a resort. The architecture is very open like the lobby of a Hyatt Hotel with glass elevators, lots of plants, fountains, and a greeter dressed like a door man. Each floor is built in the round so that you can walk 360°.



There's a kiosk and a large interactive computer monitor screen that maps out your exact destination; radiology, lab, urgent care, pulmonology, or other specialty. The founder (in the portrait) opened his first clinic in Cuba during the 50's.

Employees are super friendly ascribing to a customer service driven model that parallels the Ritz Carlton. The latest technology is employed at all levels; open MRI, CT, and everything is geared toward maximum efficiency in terms of the patient and physician's time.

Each physician examination room is designed so the physician and patient have the most personal eye contact as possible with the ability to share PC monitors to show patient statistics such as blood work and other vital records with the state of the art Epic IT systems.

Functional job delineation using medical assistants to record data, set up appointments, transcribe notes, enable the physician to have the freedom to focus on the patient as tantamount. Each clinic has a pharmacy, optometry center, and lab, so that the patient can get everything done at one time.



There's also a Cuban style café where members can sit with an espresso or a pastry comparable to a restaurant. I was also very impressed that my friend Hector's office was the first one to the right of the front door and it was encapsulated in glass to allow members and staff access to the administrator anytime.





As we walked around during my tour it was apparent that Hector had personal relationships with all the staff and many of the members stop to talk to him about their conditions and personal antidotes. Hector then noticed some scotch tape from a previous posting on the door of the elevator which he tried unsuccessfully to rub off. So, he politely pointed it out to one of the nearby employees, leading by example.



The employees entrance has a mirror which has in bold the words in Spanish on top “I Am Leon”. They are referred in the company as *Ladies and Gentlemen serving Ladies and Gentlemen, giving personal attention at all times!!*

We discussed managing by walking around and other customer service techniques that Leon Medical Clinics ascribe too. He underscored hiring friendly people to which I mentioned the book *Managing to Keep the Customer*. In a nutshell that book stated, how you treat your employees translates directly to how they’ll treat your customers. It was quite apparent this company offered a premier working environment and had very low turnover.

It was an uplifting experience for me to see such an optimistic future of healthcare for all of us baby boomers!

**Update – in 2022 Hector Estevez was inducted into the [U.S. Judo Federation’s Hall of Fame](#) - [Video Tribute](#).**

Gary Goltz

[Goltz Business Development Group](#)

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