

Travelers vs. Locals

Have you ever stopped to put into words the differences between locals and travelers? Is there a difference? How would you explain it? The following are a few general subtle differences that I have noticed and put into words.

Knowledge

Locals

Locals have knowledge of how all the players (doctors and nurses) work together and the regular routine. They know their way around the hospital and where most all supplies are located. Also, locals know the local lingo. The other day I was at a new facility. The anesthesiologist said, "ok, a 325 please." I had a delayed response before I realized that it was the local lingo to ask me to give my patient (child) a 325mg Tylenol suppository.

Travelers

Travelers know that many daily work activities can be done in different ways. This makes them highly adaptable. They can usually come up with alternative solutions quickly.

Attitude

Locals

Often locals gossip about one another and do a great deal of talking and joking around while they work. Some places are filled with a group of people who work well with each other and are supportive. Meanwhile, other places have lots of tension in the air. You can feel the difference almost immediately when you walk in the door. I have found more often than not, the attitude of the work place can be tracked down to the style of the manager. I once did a study that found that assertive OR nurses are not necessarily more satisfied with their jobs than other nurses, but that most all OR nurses were more satisfied if their manager *promotes* assertiveness.

Travelers

Travelers are often more carefree in the workplace. They are not weighed down with hospital politics and each others business. Travelers often have a more objective perspective on their situation and the roles other people play in the work place. They may often be able to see humor in a situation and can often be more flexible in a given environment.

Together locals and travelers can make a great combination in the work place if they can learn to see and respect each others strengths and gifts they bring to the work environment. It provides a balance and a more complete picture.