



SOLUTIONS GROUP
HEALTHCARE FINANCE SERVICES

THE REVENUE CYCLE PLAYBOOK

Q4 of 4 · Coaching the Close: Leading Your A/R & Collections Teams

THE COACH'S CLIPBOARD

Everything our presenters brought to today's session that **would not fit on a slide**. Their notes, their working detail, and the thinking behind each play. Read along as we go.

SESSION

Wednesday, August 26, 2026
1:00 to 1:45 PM CT

ON THE FIELD

Octavious Bishop, Ph.D.
Asbel Montes · Chris Holden
Q&A with Corey Chapman

SERIES HUB

rcwebinar.solutionsgroup.com
Replays, decks and resources

BEFORE WE KICK OFF

HOW TO USE THIS

Our presenters came into this one with more than a slide could hold.

Every coach we put in front of you today has been running a real team for years, and the detail behind their thinking is the part that actually transfers. Dr. Bishop brought a full leadership framework built inside professional and Division I locker rooms. Asbel brought four pillars that translate it into a revenue cycle office. Chris brought the org chart, the partner list and the exact five numbers he looks at before his first coffee.

Putting all of that on the slides would have made them unreadable. So we pulled it out and put it here instead.

THREE WAYS TO USE IT

- **Read along live.** The sections follow the deck in order, and each one is labeled with the slide it belongs to. Keep this open in a second window and you will always know where you are.
- **Come back to it after.** Every link in here is live, including the series hub with all four replays and decks.
- **Hand it to your team on Monday.** Most of what is in here is worth ten minutes in a huddle, not a whole meeting.

WHERE THIS SITS IN THE SERIES

This is Q4, the final session of The Revenue Cycle Playbook. Q1 covered the front end, Q2 covered coding and medical documentation, Q3 covered claims and billing, and today we close it out with the people who work the back end and the leaders responsible for them.

Every replay, deck and resource from all four sessions lives at rcwebinar.solutionsgroup.com. If you registered once, you were registered for all four.

TODAY'S RUNNING ORDER

- **Octavious Bishop, Ph.D.** The Significance of the Locker Room. Five parts and the leadership model underneath them.
- **Asbel Montes.** Setting the stage, then four pillars that move Dr. Bishop's framework into a billing office.
- **Chris Holden.** Coaching all four quarters. How First Priority built a billing operation from scratch and what he measures every morning.
- **Q&A.** Corey Chapman, Dr. Bishop and Chris Holden take your questions live. Drop them in the chat as they come to you.

01

PART ONE · SLIDES 5 TO 11

OCTAVIOUS BISHOP, PH.D.

Lecturer, Steve Hicks School of Social Work, The University of Texas at Austin. Founder and President of Eye Level Consulting. Former Big 12 All Conference left tackle, Atlanta Falcons and Oakland Raiders.

SLIDE 5 · THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LOCKER ROOM

THE HEAD COACH SETS THE STANDARD. THE STAFF EMBRACES THE MESSAGE. THE PLAYERS DELIVER.

That sequence is the whole talk. It only works in that order, and it breaks at whichever link stops holding. A standard nobody reinforces never reaches the floor, and a message the floor never hears cannot be delivered. Watch for which of the three is weakest on your own team as we go.

THE HEAD COACH

sets the standard.

THE STAFF

embraces the message.

THE PLAYERS

deliver.

SLIDE 6

1. THE HEAD COACH SETS THE STANDARD

The locker room reflects what leadership consistently teaches, rewards, and allows.

Not what the handbook says. What actually gets taught, rewarded and tolerated, week after week.

- The head coach establishes the team's standards, principles, and ethics.
- Players learn what matters by watching what the coach does, not only what the coach says.
- Consistency creates clarity. Players know what is expected of them.
- Accountability must apply to everyone: coaches, leaders, and players.
- When standards are clear and consistently enforced, they become part of the team's identity.

"The coach sets the standard. The team decides whether to live by it."

And that decision is not passive. Ultimately, each player must take ownership of their talents. You can set the standard perfectly and still be waiting on someone to pick it up.

SLIDE 7

2. COMMUNICATION TURNS THE MISSION INTO ACTION

People cannot consistently follow a message they do not understand.

A head coach has to clearly communicate five things, and none of them can be assumed:



- Communication should be clear, consistent, honest, and two way.
- Players need opportunities to ask questions and provide feedback.
- When the message is consistent from the head coach to assistant coaches to players, the organization moves in the same direction.
- Poor communication creates confusion, frustration, and division.

"A clear message creates a clear direction."

Integrity is a must. Players have to be willing to ask for understanding. Assumption is the lowest form of understanding, and assumption will get you beat.

SLIDE 8

3. EMPOWERING PLAYERS TO PERFORM

Players perform best when they understand their role and believe their coaches trust them to fulfill it.

- Give players clear roles and responsibilities.
- Teach players what success looks like.
- Provide appropriate freedom to make decisions and learn.
- Build confidence through preparation and constructive feedback.
- Recognize effort, improvement, leadership, and responsibility.
- Allow players to take ownership of their role within the larger mission.

Empowerment does not mean removing accountability. It means giving players the trust, tools, knowledge, and responsibility necessary to succeed.

"You cannot empower someone without giving them responsibility and trust."

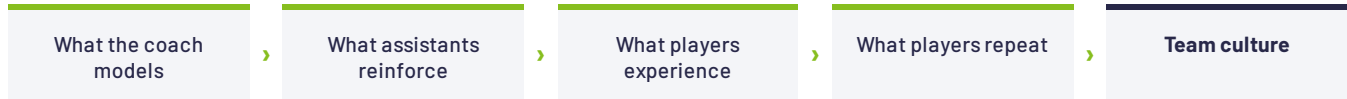
There is a difference between praise and belief, and players hear it. "I believe in you" will get more out of a player than telling that player how great they are.

SLIDE 9

4. THE HEAD COACH CULTIVATES THE LOCKER ROOM CULTURE

Culture is created through repeated behaviors, relationships, and expectations.

Culture develops through repetition, and it moves down the chain whether you are managing it or not:



A healthy locker room culture develops when the team's stated values match the team's daily behavior. If a coach says "everyone matters" but consistently treats people differently, the players will believe the behavior rather than the words.

"Culture isn't what you say your team is. Culture is what your team consistently does."

SLIDE 10

5. RELATIONSHIPS CREATE ACCOUNTABILITY, VALUE AND TRUST

Strong relationships make difficult conversations possible.

Relationships within a locker room let teammates and coaches do three things:

- **Hold each other accountable.** Address problems instead of avoiding them. Challenge teammates to meet the team's standards. Accept correction without seeing it as personal rejection.
- **Make people feel valued.** Understand that every role contributes to the team's mission.
- **Build trust.** Which comes back to the same word this whole framework rests on: consistency.

"Accountability without relationships can feel like criticism. Accountability within relationships can become growth."

THE FIVE PARTS, AT A GLANCE

1. **The head coach sets the standard.** The locker room reflects what leadership consistently teaches, rewards, and allows.
2. **Communication turns the mission into action.** People cannot consistently follow a message they do not understand.
3. **Empowering players to perform.** Players perform best when they understand their role and believe their coaches trust them to fulfill it.
4. **The head coach cultivates the culture.** Culture is created through repeated behaviors, relationships, and expectations.
5. **Relationships create accountability, value and trust.** Strong relationships make difficult conversations possible.

SLIDE 11

THE LOCKER ROOM LEADERSHIP MODEL

Read it from the bottom up. Nothing above a layer holds if the layer beneath it is soft.

TEAM PERFORMANCE

Preparation + confidence +
connection = execution

LOCKER ROOM CULTURE

Belonging. Accountability. Value. Trust.

PLAYERS

Build trust, take ownership, and embrace responsibility

ASSISTANT COACHES & TEAM LEADERS

Reinforcement + modeling + accountability

HEAD COACH

Vision, standards, and communication lead to wins

THE LOCKER ROOM IS MORE THAN A ROOM

It is where a team's values become behaviors. It is where players learn what we stand for and what is expected of us. Whatever your version of the locker room is, the morning huddle, the shared inbox, the group chat where your A/R team actually talks, that is where your culture is being decided. Not in the handbook.

CARRY THIS INTO PART TWO

Dr. Bishop's five parts are the **why**. What follows from Asbel is the **how**, translated out of the locker room and into a revenue cycle office where the game film is your denial rate and the depth chart is your FTE plan.

As you listen, keep one question open: of the five, which one is your weakest right now? Standard setting, communication, empowerment, culture or relationships. Most teams already know the answer and have been working around it.

02

PART TWO · SLIDES 13 TO 17

ASBEL MONTES

Co-Founder and Managing Partner, Solutions Group. Host of The Leadership Lab.

SLIDE 13 · SETTING THE STAGE

THE COACH'S REAL JOB

A coach's job is not to play the game. It is to put the team in a position to win it.

The same is true in revenue cycle leadership. The leader's job is not to do every bill, every code, every call. It is to build a team that executes without the leader in the room.

That is a harder standard than it sounds, because most revenue cycle leaders got the job by being the best biller in the building. The instinct to grab the hard claim yourself is the instinct you have to unlearn. Four pillars, and they are cumulative.

SLIDE 14 · PILLAR 1

CALL THE PLAYS CLEARLY

- **Documented SOPs.** Put the playbook in writing so the assignment does not live only in one person's head. If your best coder wins the lottery tomorrow, what leaves with them?
- **Clear KPIs.** Define what winning the play looks like in numbers, not just intent. "Work the aging" is not a play. "Nothing over 60 days without a documented touch" is.
- **Daily and weekly huddles.** Say the play out loud on a set cadence so it holds up under pressure. Cadence is what makes a standard real. A standard you mention twice a year is a preference.

"Clear is kind, unclear is unkind."

BRENÉ BROWN

SLIDE 15 · PILLAR 2

BUILD THE DEPTH CHART

- **Match the FTE to the job description.** The right person in the right role, not just a body in a seat. Most billing offices are carrying at least one person who is quietly doing a job nobody hired them for.
- **Build infrastructure for career growth.** Structure the office so people have somewhere to move, not a dead end. If the only way up is for someone to leave, your best people will be the ones who leave.
- **Succession planning, especially in a legacy billing office.** Are you training the people underneath you for what comes next? This is the one that gets skipped, and it is the one that costs the most when it is skipped.
- **Incentives equal innovation and adaptation.** People solve for what you actually reward. If you reward volume, you get volume. If you reward clean claims, you get clean claims.

SLIDE 16 · PILLAR 3

ADJUST AT HALFTIME

- **Allow for the pivot in a process workflow.** Do not wait for perfect. Perfect is the enemy of good. Find your strategy and implement it. A workflow you ship this month and fix next month beats a workflow you are still designing in Q2.
- **Always look at the replay.** Treat days to bill, denial rate and collection rate as game film. Reviewed weekly, not just once a month or once a quarter.

Monthly review is autopsy. Weekly review is coaching. The difference is whether you can still do something about it.

THE THREE PIECES OF FILM

- **Days to bill.** How fast the work leaves your building.
- **Denial rate.** Whether the work that left was right.
- **Collection rate.** Whether being right actually turned into money.

Any one of them alone will lie to you. Watched together, weekly, they tell you where the breakdown is before the month closes.

SLIDE 17 · PILLAR 4

OWN THE LOCKER ROOM, THEN HAND OFF

- **Be consistent.** Show up the same way on good weeks and bad ones. Your team is reading you far more closely on the bad weeks.
- **Be visible.** Time on the floor, not just time in dashboards. You cannot coach a team you only see in a report.
- **Celebrate in public, criticize in private.** The reverse of this is the fastest way to lose a locker room, and most leaders who do it do not know they are doing it.

Then hand off. The point of the first three pillars is that the fourth becomes possible. If the plays are documented, the depth chart is real and the film gets reviewed weekly, the team can run without you standing over it. That is the whole job.

"The leader's job is not to do every bill, code, or call. It is to build a team that executes without the leader in the room."

PART TWO · THE STANDARD TO LEAVE WITH

03

PART THREE · SLIDES 19 TO 25

CHRIS HOLDEN

CEO and Founder, First Priority Mobile Healthcare. 28 years in EMS. Founded the organization in 2012 with a single ambulance operating out of his garage.

SLIDES 20 AND 21 · FIRST PRIORITY

COACHING ALL FOUR QUARTERS

2012

Founded, Columbia, South Carolina

78,000

Calls answered per year across the Midlands of South Carolina

220+

Employees, and a fleet of 60 plus vehicles

First Priority partners with all the local hospital systems in its region. Chris is known for people first leadership and for the work he has put into workplace culture and the employee experience in EMS. Above all, he considers his greatest role to be being a father to his daughter, Shelby Jean.

SLIDE 22

REIMBURSEMENT REALIZATION

EMS and the employee experience are my true passion. But I came to the realization that all the great things I wanted to accomplish were dependent on a strong revenue stream.

Cash really is king. As a private EMS agency we receive no subsidies and no government funding. We rely one hundred percent on claim reimbursements to operate, which is exactly what makes an effective billing process so important.

We started off using a third party billing company, the way most small agencies do. But as we grew and got more knowledgeable about the revenue cycle process, we realized there was a lot of money being left on the table.

- **No transparency** in the claims process.
- **No stop loss or deductible management** being performed.
- **No insurance discovery.** We were strictly relying on facility face sheets and then waiting for the claim to be denied.
- **Very little follow up** on denials or filing with secondaries. They were grabbing the low hanging fruit and moving on.

That increased knowledge, combined with how far billing software had come, told us we could do it better. So we brought the billing in house, and First Priority Billing Solutions was born.

SLIDE 23 · BUILDING THE TEAM

THE FIRST STRING LINE UP

As the CEO, I am the coach. I am responsible for providing the mission and the vision, and for placing the right people in the right spots.

When you are recruiting the team you have to be intentional. Every position has a specific focus and an intentional job. The org chart breaks down our positions and the specific job each one performs.

- **CEO. Coach.**
- **Director of Billing.** Assistant coach.
- **Research Specialist.** Clearinghouse and insurance follow up.
- **Research Specialist.** Denials, setoff and GEAR management.
- **Billing Lead and Compliance Officer.** Claims assignment manager, risk assessments, claims processor.
- **Customer Service and Admin.** Patient relations, facility communications, probate, prior authorizations.
- **Billing Specialist.** Claims processor.

CREDENTIALS ARE NOT OPTIONAL HERE

Every team member holds NAAC certifications of CADS (Certified Ambulance Documentation Specialist) and CAC (Certified Ambulance Coder). The Director of Billing and the Billing Lead hold CACO (Certified Ambulance Compliance Officer). On top of the certifications, every team member has EMS experience as either a clinician or in communications. That gives them extra insight into the industry and makes them that much more effective.

SLIDE 24

SPECIAL TEAMS: PARTNERS HELPING ON THE BLITZ

Once you have assembled the team, you have to add the right equipment and support.

- **Billing software.** Take your time selecting the software that works best for you. We use Zoll.
- **Consulting.** We surround ourselves with the best support coaches out there. We partner with Solutions Group for our consulting to make sure we are creating the best game plan and staying on track with it.
- **Third party auditing.** We use an outside company for our auditing to make sure we stay compliant.
- **Stop loss and deductible monitoring, plus insurance discovery.** Software and partners that handle both. Solutions Group has amazing solutions to help with this.

Everything and everyone is intentional. But we all know things change quickly and you have to be prepared to call an audible. We operate with the **next man up** mentality: train the person next to you well enough to do your job if needed.

SLIDE 25 · GAME TIME

BE INTENTIONAL. BE STRUCTURED. BE DISCIPLINED.

Once we had assembled the team, trained it and added the right equipment and support, it was time to start billing. I approached coaching the billing team with the same mentality I use with mobile healthcare operations.

Every morning I look at five key KPIs to tell me how well we are doing. This is the morning pulse.

i CURRENT WORKLOAD Do we have adequate capacity for completing the work?	ii DAYS TO BILL One day turnaround to send claims to payers and the clearinghouse. Three to five days to process through them.	iii DENIALS How many, where they are coming from, and for what reason.	iv COLLECTIONS Are collections staying consistent with claim processing volume?	v AGING A/R Monitored from yield as well as days aging.
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Once you develop a baseline for these metrics, you can quickly and easily identify any abnormality or trend. That is your indicator that there may be an issue, and it lets you take a deeper look into the situation before it becomes a month end surprise.

37%

Increase in collections per claim in our first year, using these strategies

We became efficient enough that we brought on outside billing clients, to help other agencies change their revenue cycle and put more money into their agencies.

More at [FirstPriorityBillingSolutions.com](https://www.FirstPriorityBillingSolutions.com).

THE THREE WORDS HE KEEPS COMING BACK TO**INTENTIONAL**

Every position has a specific focus and an intentional job.

STRUCTURED

The org chart, the certifications, the one day turnaround.

DISCIPLINED

Five numbers, every single morning, without exception.

BRING YOUR QUESTIONS

Q&A closes the session with **Corey Chapman** (Consultant, Solutions Group), **Dr. Octavious Bishop** and **Chris Holden**. Drop questions into the chat as they occur to you rather than saving them to the end. The ones asked live get answered live.

SPECIAL TEAMS

CHRIS SAID IT OUT LOUD: SURROUND YOURSELF WITH GOOD SUPPORT COACHES.

Every leader in this session was clear that the plays only work if the support around them is real. Here is what that looks like on our side of the field, and where each one tends to fit.

nCite Audit**FIND IT BEFORE THEY DO.**

A clinically informed review of your coding, documentation, and compliance, pinpointing where earned revenue is slipping away before a payer or auditor finds it first.

FITS WHEN

Your denial rate is telling you something and you cannot yet name what.

RevClarity**CALL IN REINFORCEMENTS.**

Project based support across coding, data entry, and A/R follow up, clearing backlogs and stabilizing production without adding permanent headcount or a long term commitment.

FITS WHEN

Your depth chart is short and the aging keeps growing while you hire.

SGS Consulting**BUILD A
BETTER PLAYBOOK.**

Pairs your leadership with our revenue cycle experts to turn findings into lasting improvements in process, documentation, and reimbursement.

FITS WHEN

You know what is broken and need the SOPs, KPIs and cadence to actually hold.

NO PITCH REQUIRED

NOT SURE WHICH ONE FITS YOUR PROCESS?

That is the normal starting point, and it is usually a fifteen minute conversation rather than a proposal. Griffin Hebert will walk you through what each one actually does and tell you plainly if none of them is the answer for where you are right now.

[CONNECT WITH GRIFFIN >](#)griffin.hebert@solutionsgroup.com**ONE MORE THING WORTH DOING TODAY**

Q1 through Q3 replays and every deck are sitting at rcwebinar.solutionsgroup.com. Registering once got you all four.

THAT'S THE FINAL WHISTLE.

Four quarters, four sessions, and one point underneath all of them: the revenue cycle is a team sport, and it performs the way it is coached.

SERIES HUB

rcwebinar.solutionsgroup.com

Replays, decks and resources from all four quarters.

THE LEADERSHIP LAB

youtube.com/@AsbelMontes

Asbel's podcast, where a lot of today's thinking started.

TALK TO US

griffin.hebert@solutionsgroup.com

Griffin Hebert, on anything from today's Special Teams block.

CHRIS HOLDEN'S TEAM

FirstPriorityBillingSolutions.com

First Priority Billing Solutions, built exactly as described in part three.

NEXT SEASON

COVERING ALL THE BASES

The SGS vendor management series. Four sessions, dates coming soon.

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