Speaker 1: Step seven in patient journey analysis is implement. Prioritizing your objectives is a critical step in making strategic business decisions. This means focusing on the most attainable rather than the ones that have the greatest business impact. Lou is going to talk about the importance of prioritizing your objectives and how the small achievable steps can actually be the most impactful.

Lou: Have you ever seen a small dog choose a very large bone rather than picking a smaller one? They struggle to pick it up and carry it around and they aren't sure of really what to do with it. But they seem happy. But as a result, they never really gain the benefit and enjoyment from the experience. They spend too much time digging around, dragging the bone around, rather than really getting down to business and chewing on it. Analytics can be a lot like that dog. It's easy to lose focus on the objectives and the value that can be obtained because you try to do too much where you bite off more than you can chew. It's an easy trap to follow into. We have limited budgets, short timelines, everyone is trying to squeeze more into each and every project thinking that volume is the ultimately goal. Quite simply, it's not.

Lou: The key in patient journey, as well as other analytics, is to identify a concise set of achievable objectives. Prioritize them in such a way that when accomplished, their completion provides momentum within your organization that continuously builds upon each success. The key is to weigh each objective against three key factors. The benefit that the organization obtains, what the effort, i.e. time and cost, and capabilities are required to achieve that objective. Then using that information, prioritize the objective. Focusing not necessarily on the one with the greatest business impact, but on the ones that are most attainable. It might seem counterintuitive, but it's essentially in order to develop long lasting change in how the organization looks at the ultimate customer and uses that information to guide strategic business decisions.

Lou: Ever make a New Year's resolution? Think about them for a moment. Over the years, how many of them took and became part of your daily life? 20%? 10%? 1%? None of them? For many folks, that answer is not too many. Organizations are no different than individuals with their resolutions. They all start with good intentions, but in many cases, the change is something less than permanent. That is why it's essential to start small. Achieve a quick win or two. Demonstrate the results through monitoring and modifying the change brought about from the patient journey analytics. Enable the organization time to embrace the change and make it part of the fabric of its culture. Then move on to the next objective.

Lou: Let's take a couple of examples. Remember that healthcare system that was analyzing patient journey in the ER? They had long wait times and low customer satisfaction scores. When it comes to urgent and emergency care, you don't have the facilities to accommodate the demand for all the folks that show up to the ER. Option one would be to expand the ER. A large and potentially expensive proposition. Option two might be to leverage some vacant space in a building you own three miles away where you can build out a small urgent care facility for significantly less. Option three might be an educational program to the surrounding community and what constitutes emergency care to shift demand to traditional healthcare practices within the organization. All will likely achieve the objective of reducing overcrowding and improving the patient experience to some degree. But the educational option may ultimately be that small step that enables the organization to see the benefit of the analytics, track the progress, the business decision that resulted from the analysis.

Lou: For a life sciences company, one issue that many continue to struggle with is product positioning when it comes to line of therapy. Many do products get relegated to third or fourth line initially due to cost and other pair related factors. Again, patient journey analytics may demonstrate what is occurring in the market and enable the organization to develop some options. Depending on when the analysis is done, this may vary from clinical development with a head-to-head arm, with an in-market product, to creative contracting options with risk with a single payer. Again, the objective of the implementation should be to achieve some level of impact with a small level of effort easily handled by the organization. And then take that benefit and the value that is obtained from it and utilize it as a springboard to bigger and better changes.

Lou: Change takes time as we all know. And it's difficult to move individuals from their comfortable zone. Taking small steps and thoughtfully deciding what the organization can handle is essential to moving towards a customer focused organization.