Most of us who work in OR applications in healthcare are frustrated by the fact that planners, managers and decision makers do not seem to be suitably impressed with the mathematical beauty of our models. The literature abounds with hundreds of application papers; but when we take a closer look, few of them describe implementation. The problems in the healthcare industry are generally very similar to corresponding problems in any other sector. Hospitals have staffing issues, budget constraints, purchasing decisions, scheduling, planning, etc. The differences are subtle and often related to the culture. Over the years, I have encountered many challenges and I have been able to design approaches to deal with many of them. A few years ago, I was asked to pick the five top challenges. I can easily rattle off thirty, but selecting five was itself a challenge. In this talk, I will outline my perception of the major hurdles, provide a few examples and discuss strategies for overcoming them.

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