

Healthy Workplace PRACTICES

The CEO's Communication Practices Regarding Wellness

The first characteristic of exemplary senior level support is communication.

From a purely generic perspective, it is not difficult to understand why effective communication is a requirement for any leader who wishes to get things done. Without clear and regular communication from the organization's leader, people at all levels will struggle with what's important and what's a priority. This has certainly been the case with many wellness programs in all types of organizations throughout the Canada and United States. In fact, many organizations claim that wellness programs are "priority one," however their CEOs and senior level executives are virtually silent when it comes to communicating the importance of protecting and enhancing the health and well being of all people (and their families) throughout the organization.

Plain and simple, from our experience over the last 7 years in helping companies to build

Results-oriented wellness programs, one thing is for sure, CEOs who communicate the wellness message clearly and frequently have more effective wellness initiatives.

When it comes to effective communication on behalf of your CEO regarding your organizations

Wellness initiative, it is important to understand that there are four distinct levels of communication. The first is written correspondence. The second is CEO public addresses and presentations. The third way CEO's communicate wellness is by making it a part of the company's overall strategic plan. Perhaps the highest form of CEO communication is incorporating wellness and health management into the vision/mission of the company.

An excellent example of strong CEO communication is Steve Martin of BlueCross BlueShield

of Nebraska. To advance wellness throughout his organization of 1,000 employees, Steve communicates with written messages and has delivered numerous wellness presentations at "all employees" meetings. Most notably, Mr. Martin has incorporated wellness metrics into the company's Balanced Scorecard, as well as made it a part of the company's overall vision/mission statement.

The CEO's Resource Allocation Practices

The second characteristic of exemplary senior level support for wellness is resource allocation.

For years, many business leaders and health experts have wrongly suggested that wellness programs ought not to cost any money or should require little resources up front. However, we now know from numerous studies that, in order to be effective, wellness initiatives do require a more substantial investment in order to improve Employee health and ultimately contain modifiable health care costs within an organization. According to Dr. Ron Goetzel, a world-class expert on ROI, the ideal investment for an organizational wellness initiative is somewhere in the neighborhood of \$100 - \$150 per eligible employee per year. From an investment perspective, it is realistic to think that if you invest this amount you should return approximately \$3:1 to \$16:1 according to the health management literature. From a leadership perspective, it has been our experience that exemplary champions of worksite wellness programs will work hard to free up the resources necessary to keep employees healthy and productive. In terms of resource allocation, it is important to understand that there are four areas that the CEO must consider funding. These include staffing,

programming, space, and time—keep in mind that each of these areas has a distinct dollar value associated with it.

A CEO who took resource allocation very seriously was Ted Townsend when he was the CEO of Townsend Engineering—this Des Moines based jewel was recently acquired by another entity. For years, Mr. Townsend had made the case that if employees were to be healthy and productive, it was important to make sure that they had the opportunities available to them in order to accomplish this important goal. With that in mind, Ted made staff available to lead the program, set aside generous amounts of space for wellness initiatives, funded results oriented programs that brought about change, and eliminated barriers that kept people from participating. For this reason, Ted Townsend was one of the leading CEOs in the area of health and productivity.

The CEO's Delegation Practices Regarding Wellness

The third characteristic of exemplary senior level support for wellness is delegation.

Delegating responsibilities for wellness on behalf of the CEO is vitally important to any results oriented wellness initiative. In fact, the more people who have been delegated formal responsibilities for the organization's wellness initiative, the more likely it is to succeed over

Time—and the more likely it is to become part of the organization's culture.

Delegation can take place in a variety of ways.

To get genuine CEO buy-in, it's important to make sure that you have four elements represented. These include communication, resource allocation, delegation, and individual health promoting practices.

The CEO can encourage the formation of a volunteer wellness committee. This is an excellent "first step," however, volunteer initiatives often lose their luster when the schedule gets hectic or the organization falls on hard times. For this reason, formally delegating responsibilities is much preferred. The second way the CEO can delegate is to appoint a wellness team consisting of senior level executives. This is an excellent move as decision makers now have a vested interest in wellness. However, unless middle management and front line employees are involved, the wellness initiative can be perceived as "strong-arming" from the top. Therefore, the third and fourth ways to delegate responsibility is to include middle managers and front line employees.

It has been our experience that when the CEO delegates to senior level executives, middle managers, and front line employees, wellness committees become very effective.

Many CEOs have begun to delegate responsibilities for wellness throughout the organizations hierarchy. For example, Marc LeBaron, CEO of Lincoln Plating has made sure to involve all levels of his organization in planning and delivering wellness programs.

The CEO's Health Promotion Practices Regarding Wellness

The fourth characteristic of exemplary senior level support for Wellness is role modeling.

In order for any organizational change initiative to be effective, there has to be a champion. And when it comes to organizational wellness initiatives, that champion should be the CEO. In fact, when CEOs value healthy lifestyles and openly practice good health habits, the rest of the

Organization is likely to follow in their footsteps. For many years, CEOs attempted to preach good health to others but not practice it themselves.

We found that this was a recipe for certain and stinging criticism. Bottom line: in order to be genuine in promoting

health, CEOs need to embrace health as an individual priority. This does not mean that the CEO has to be a marathoner or a “health Nazi,” it just means that they value health and well being and take steps to protect it.

From our perspective, there are four elements of strong CEO role modeling. These elements include participating in an annual health risk appraisal, receiving an annual physical, regularly participating in company wellness offerings, and taking part in community wellness activities. One CEO who has taken role modeling to heart is J. Barry Griswell, Chairman, President, and CEO of The Principal Financial Group. In fact, as a result of taking personal health seriously, Barry was able to reduce his weight from 297 to 246 pounds (Barry is 6’9”), reduce his LDL cholesterol from 131 to 104, and raise his HDL cholesterol from 47 to 66.

As a result of his leadership, employees from The Principal Financial Group were able to follow in his steps.

When CEOs value healthy lifestyles and openly practice good health habits, the rest of the organization is likely to follow in their footsteps.

The second Healthy Workplace Practices of a results-oriented wellness program is the creation and integration of a well-functioning team. The reason for teams is clear. Indeed, history is replete with stories of companies whose programs have failed because they have appointed full responsibility for the initiative to one individual. While it might appear to make sense from a cursory review, placing the responsibility for the organization’s wellness initiative in one person’s hands is a big mistake.

Here’s why.

When the person in charge of the wellness program burns out, gets promoted, or takes a new job, everything that was associated with the wellness program just walked out the door. As a result, the wellness program gets put on hold until someone new gets hired or worse yet, goes away altogether. Are we saying that hiring a fulltime person is wrong? Absolutely not, in fact, it’s ideal. However, we are saying that not involving other key members of the organization in the wellness initiative can be the kiss of death. In addition to the importance of diversifying the roles and responsibilities of the wellness team, the guidelines by which these key members adhere to are equally as important. We believe that there are two main characteristics that help to create a Cohesive Wellness Team. These two characteristics include:

The wellness team’s history and composition and the wellness team’s method of operation

The Wellness Team’s History and Composition

The first characteristic of a successful wellness team is a strong history and proper composition of team members. Wellness teams are important because it is the people on these teams that actually get things done. Important things to consider are: The overall length of time that the team has been in place; the number of members serving on the wellness team; the areas that team members represent; and the length of term or appointment for each member.

An excellent example of a strong wellness team is the one assembled by Greater Omaha Packing Co Inc. This Midwestern-based company has developed a nationally recognized wellness initiative—and its team is the heart and soul of the endeavor. With representation from the executive ranks all the way to front line employees, this team has a long history of working together and the diversity of the team has resulted in a wellness program that has endured over the years and achieved great things.

The Wellness Team's Method of Operating

The second characteristic of a successful wellness team is the actual method of how the wellness team operates. As with any effective team, it is important to make sure that the right people are at the table, but it is equally important to make sure that the right people are doing the right

things. This is the essence of this second characteristic. Like the first characteristic, there are four elements that can be used in determining how effectively an organization's wellness team is functioning. The first is the presence of team leadership. The second is the actual responsibilities that the team is charged with. The third is the frequency in which the team meets.

And the fourth is whether or not the team has a regular agenda to which it adheres.

An excellent example of great teamwork—the right people doing the right things—is Lab Safety Supply, Inc. Located in Janesville, WI, this Platinum award winning company has developed a superior team functioning under the leadership of people like Jan Bruss and Tim Markus. With

770 employees, this wellness team has developed concrete approaches that have resulted in health improvement for employees and cost containment for the organization.

Healthy Workplace Practices #2: Creating a Cohesive Wellness Team

The wellness team's history and composition

The wellness team's method of operation

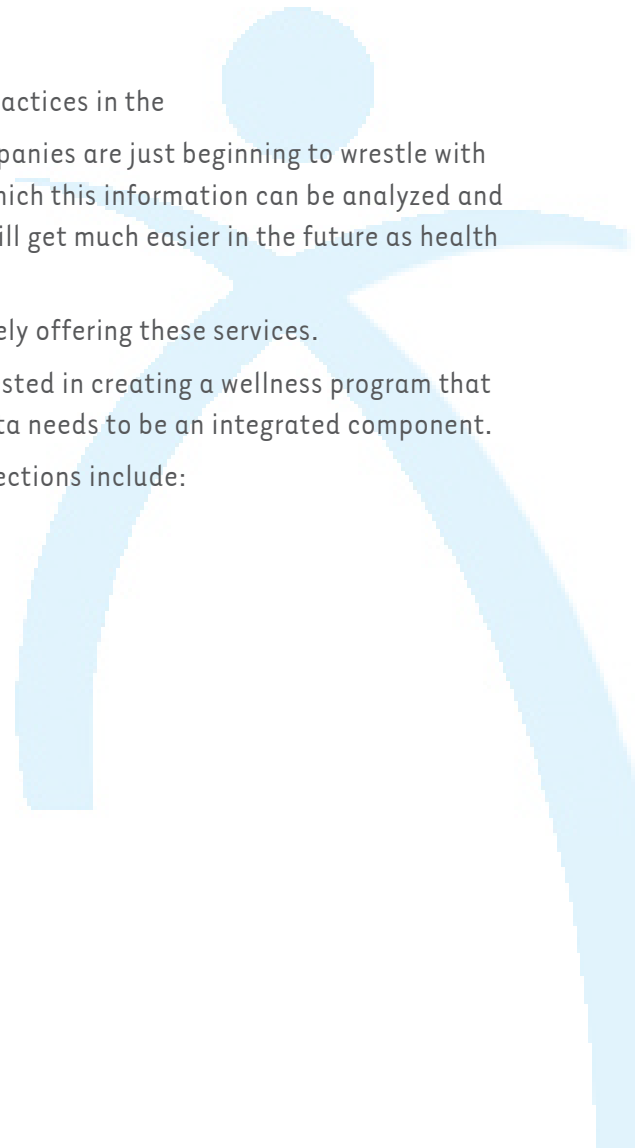
Data collection may very well be the most important Healthy Workplace Practices in the entire Workplace Wellness place process. From our perspective, many companies are just beginning to wrestle with the idea of collecting the right kinds of data and creating databases by which this information can be analyzed and monitored. Although collecting data can be a cumbersome challenge, it will get much easier in the future as health systems,

insurance companies, and other health promotion providers will be routinely offering these services.

For now, it is important—indeed essential—that if an organization is interested in creating a wellness program that has the capability of containing costs and improving employee health, data needs to be an integrated component.

There are ten subsections of this Healthy Workplace Practices. These subsections include:

employee health data
health risk appraisal
information and health
physical environment
workstation ergonomics,
cafeteria set up, and
heating/ventilation; and
absenteeism,
disability, and workers'
compensation data.



Healthy Workplace Practices #3: Collecting Data to Drive a Results-Oriented Wellness Initiative

Organizational data which includes things like modifiable health care claims and demographics Employee health data which includes things like health risk appraisal information and health screening data. Physical environment data which includes things like workstation ergonomics, cafeteria set up, and heating/ventilation. Employee protection and productivity data which includes things like absenteeism, disability, and workers' compensation data

The second component of successful wellness data collection pertains to the employee population. When combined with organizational data, information on the health practices, knowledge, interests, and status of the employee population can be very powerful. By collecting this type of data, an organization will have gathered the information necessary to allow for the surveillance of health trends within the employee population.

With respect to the employee population, there are four types of data that should be collected. The first is a health interest survey. This survey can be a simple, one-paged instrument that allows for a better gauge of what types of programs employees are interested in. The second type of data that should be collected is a health risk appraisal. By offering an HRA, population health data can be gathered and employees are provided with information on their health status. The third type of data that can be collected is health screening information (e.g. blood pressure, cholesterol, etc.) and can be gathered at employee health fairs. The fourth and final type of data that can be collected is health knowledge. This can be very useful as it allows for a better understanding of how much the employee population knows about their well being.

These four types of employee health data should be collected every 12 to 24 months. In addition, data can be collected on spouses and retirees as well.

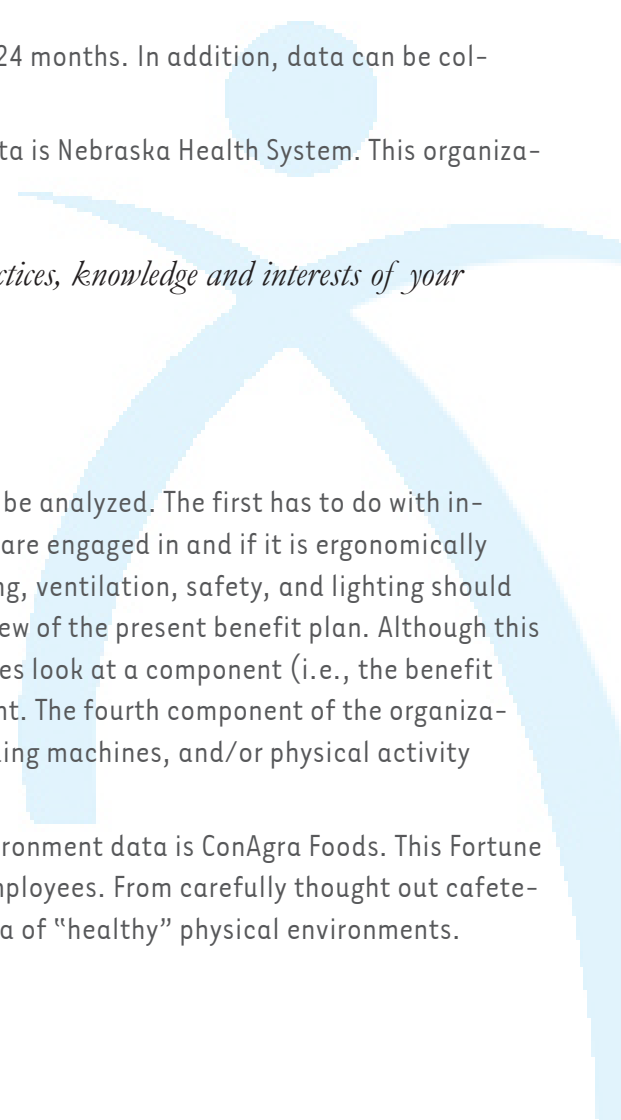
An excellent example of a company that collects this type of employee data is Nebraska Health System. This organization consistently monitors this type of information at regular intervals

When combined with organizational data, information on the health practices, knowledge and interests of your employee population can be very powerful.

Work Environments

There are four environmental components of the organization that should be analyzed. The first has to do with individual workstations. It is important to analyze the work that employees are engaged in and if it is ergonomically protected. Second, a facility assessment that analyzes heating and cooling, ventilation, safety, and lighting should also be conducted. The third analysis that needs to be completed is a review of the present benefit plan. Although this particular analysis does not look at the physical environment per se, it does look at a component (i.e., the benefit plan) that will greatly impact how employees interact with the environment. The fourth component of the organization's physical environment that should be analyzed is the cafeteria, vending machines, and/or physical activity centers.

An excellent example of a company that collects this type of physical environment data is ConAgra Foods. This Fortune 500 Company has developed exemplary physical environments for their employees. From carefully thought out cafeterias to comfortable physical spaces, ConAgra Foods is a leader in the arena of "healthy" physical environments.



Healthy Workplace Practices #4: Crafting An Annual Operating Plan

While empowerment and alignment are important reasons for developing a carefully crafted wellness plan, they are not the only ones. Indeed, the operating plan will also serve as an excellent and accountable communication with the organization's senior level executives.

To be sure, nothing speaks louder to organizational decision makers than a well constructed operating plan that outlines clear and concise outcomes and return on investment.

Finally, the operating plan is especially important in the event of turnover in key positions related to the company's wellness initiative. In fact, if there's not an operating plan in place, and a key member of the initiative is lost, there will generally be a significant amount of time, energy, and resources spent, reorienting a new person with what's already been done.

There are seven components of an exceptional operating plan. These seven components include:

A Vision/Mission Statement For The Wellness Program

Specific Goals and Measurable Objectives That Are Linked To The Company's Strategic Priorities;

Timelines For Implementation; Roles And Responsibilities For Completion of Objectives;

Itemized Budget Sufficient To Carry Out The Wellness Plan;

Appropriate Marketing of the Wellness Plan

Strategies To Effectively Promote The Wellness Plan;

Evaluation Procedures to Measure the Stated Goals and Objectives.

Vision/Mission Statement

In essence, the vision/mission statement is simply a one or two sentence declarative on what the program will ultimately accomplish. While many times people struggle with the idea of developing the vision/mission statement, it really doesn't have to be so complicated. Literally, the word vision means "to see." Consequently, the vision statement is what is seen for the future of the program. For example, a large health care system developed the vision statement of "Health from Hire to Retire," as their ultimate declarative destination. With this one simple phrase, it's obvious that this company has a unique vision of what they want and see for their employees throughout their working history.

Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives are an extremely important part of any results-oriented operating plan. In fact, clear goals and measurable objectives will provide the feedback necessary to move in the right direction. Believe it or not, without clear goals and objectives, there is no concrete way to evaluate outcomes—because outcomes are based on what has been said needed to be accomplished. Sadly, many programs don't wrestle with writing goals and objectives up front and as a result, suffer greatly when outcomes to demonstrating outcomes. Specifically, you should strive to write SMART objectives.

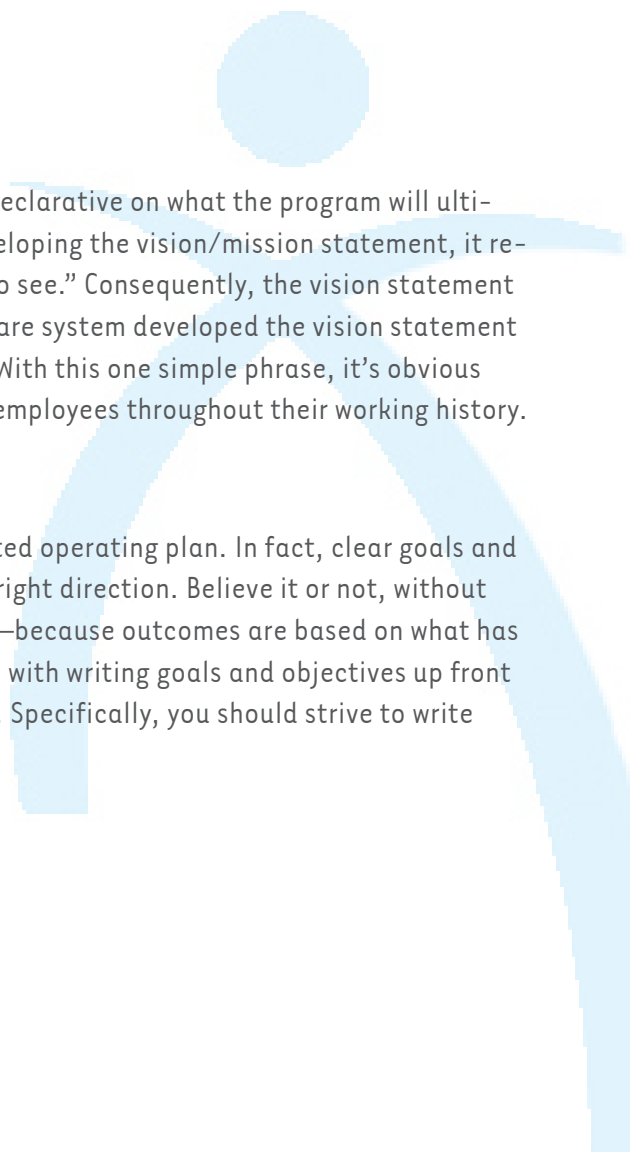
S = Specific

M = Measurable

A = Achievable

R = Relevant

T = Time Based



Timelines

Picking up from where the goals and objectives section leaves off, it is important to declare specific timelines on when things should get done. Timelines are absolutely important in any operating plan because they overtly state not only what needs to be accomplished, but also when it should be done. Timelines help to hold everyone accountable and provide an excellent measure for how the team is doing. Be warned, timelines are not difficult to write, but they are very challenging to meet. There is an art to setting timelines. Think of it like a pressure cooker—not enough heat and nothing gets done, too much heat and a meltdown occurs.

Roles and Responsibilities

Identifying the specific roles and responsibilities that the team members should play is the fourth critical part of a results-oriented operating plan. Although it seems straightforward, it is surprising

how many operating plans don't specifically identify who or what group is going to be doing what and what they should be doing. When assigning roles and responsibilities, it is important to think of this component in terms of individual strengths and talents.

In essence, the people on the team will bring three basic and innate

Talents/strengths to the table. First, there are relaters. Relaters are "people" people. They like to interact and their good at establishing relationships. These people are very important to any team because they bring the human element. Second, there are achievers. Achievers are those people who are uniquely wired to get things done. They like checklists and specific tasks and challenges. These kinds of people are critical to the success of teams because they keep the team on track in terms of getting things done. Finally, there are thinkers. Thinkers like to analyze what needs to be done and to carefully think through how things fit together. Thinkers are critical when it comes to tasks like analyzing data and thinking through the strategic ramifications of this kind of information. The bottom line on roles and responsibilities is this. Roles and responsibilities should be aligned with individual strengths/talents. Saddling a "thinker" with "relating" responsibilities will only frustrate and complicate the dynamics of the team. Once again, the key is to align and empower individuals with roles and responsibilities that fit their unique strengths and talents.

Itemized Budget

The itemized budget is the fifth component of a results oriented wellness program. Although budgeting doesn't get most people excited, it is a very important of the planning process. It's important because it forces the team to think through what is feasible to invest in the wellness program and specifically what everything will cost. In addition to the costs associated with things like health risk appraisals, newsletters, brochures, and incentives, it's also important to think through what the "softer" costs will be. Softer costs include things like staff time, release time for employees to participate, and team strategic planning meetings. All of these things have very real price tags, so if the budget is to be complete and accurate, it's important to think through how much everything will cost.

Marketing/Communication Strategies

The sixth component of a results oriented operating plan is the execution of innovative marketing communications strategies. While this section sounds more complicated than it needs to be, there really is no mystery in this component. Marketing and communication strategies simply allow for successful implementation of the flow of information to employees and more importantly, what that information should be. A good mix of marketing and communication strategies should always be used. This mix should include written, oral, and electronic messages. In essence, no one in the organization can be expected to get involved in the program if they don't know what's going on and specifically how they can participate. That's the challenge and the purpose of this component.

Healthy Workplace Practices #5: Choosing Appropriate Health Promotion Interventions

What separates the Workplace Wellness process from other activity-centered approaches to corporate health promotion is the fact that within the Healthy Workplace Practices model, the health interventions that a company offers are predicated upon the data that has been collected in Healthy Workplace Practices three and articulated in the organization's operating plan (Healthy Workplace Practices four). By offering programs that are consistent with what the organization needs and the employees are interested in, the health promotion interventions offered will be much more straightforward, rational, and effective.

Although each company is very different in terms of employee demographics, organizational mission, and corporate culture, it is safe to say that there are a number of programs that will be appropriate for any working population—and will be supported by the data that has been collected. Potential programs that can and should be offered include but are not limited

to: physical activity, nutrition/weight management, smoking cessation, responsible alcohol use, stress management, medical self-care, financial management, ergonomics, mental health/depression, disease management, and work/family balance.

When it comes to choosing and offering the appropriate health promotion interventions for the employee population, there are several issues that should be considered in advance. These issues

Include:

what programs will be offered;

how often the programs will be offered;

who they will be offered to (spouses, dependents, retirees); and

What incentives will be used to increase participation?

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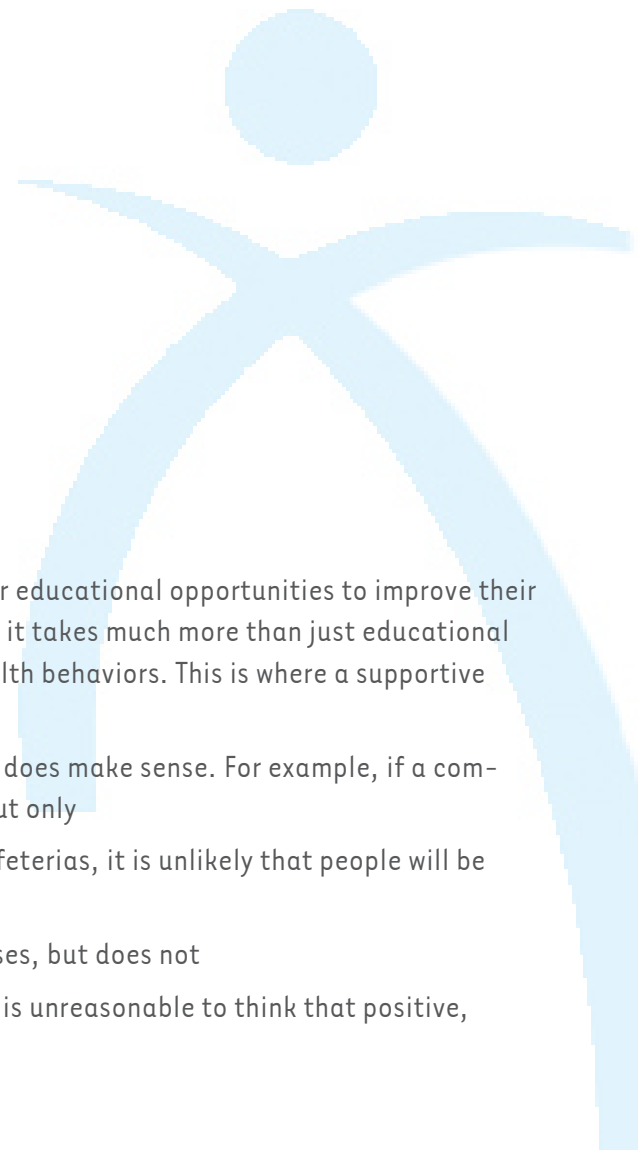
For years, it was believed that if employees were provided with then proper educational opportunities to improve their health, positive changes would transpire. Over time, we have learned that it takes much more than just educational opportunities to bring about desired and ongoing changes in personal health behaviors. This is where a supportive environment can play a

critical role in helping employees to adopt healthier behaviors. This really does make sense. For example, if a company provides weight management classes and coaching opportunities, but only

provides high-fat, non-nutritious foods in their vending machines and cafeterias, it is unlikely that people will be able to maintain any long term behavior change.

Similarly, if a company provides opportunities for smoking cessation classes, but does not

create a supportive environment by banning smoking from the building, it is unreasonable to think that positive,



healthier changes will occur

There are ten subsections to this

Healthy Workplace Practices. These subsections include environmental modifications to:

Increase physical activity;

Reduce tobacco use;

Promote better nutrition;

Health Cafeteria and vending machine option

Improve workstation ergonomics;

Reduce unintended on-the-job injuries;

Extinguish the use of alcohol and other drugs;

Better manage and reduce job-related stress;

Increase participation among all employees including shift worker and those located at remote sites; and maintain organizational benefits that protect and promote good health among all employees.

When taken together, these nine environmental modifications can create a positive health-promoting culture within any organization.

The Organization's Environment As It Relates To Promoting Healthier Behaviors

In order to build a results-oriented wellness initiative that will last over time, it's essential to develop specific strategies for systematically improving the physical working environment of

employees. In fact, in order to lead healthier lives, employees need to have the environmental support as it relates to:

physical activity;

tobacco use;

nutrition;

workstation ergonomics;

on-the-job injuries;

alcohol/drugs; and

Job-related stress.

A healthy cafeteria is critical in keeping your employee population well. In a healthy cafeteria, foods are labeled and the best choices are always promoted and made available.

The Organization's Benefit Plan As It Relates To Health And Well Being

It's clear that a well designed benefit package can go a long way toward

keeping employees healthy. There are specific elements that can be woven into a progressive benefits package that will help to get this job done.



These include:

- Health Insurance
- Disability Protection
- Life Insurance
- Sick Leave/Well Days Off
- Leave of Absence
- Compensatory Time Off
- Vacation
- Flex Time
- Job Sharing
- Work at Home/Teleconferencing
- Maternal/Paternal Leave
- Family Leave
- Child Care
- Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts
- Health Promotion Program
- Prepayment or Reimbursement
- Retirement/Investment Plan
- Tuition Reimbursement
- EAP

There are numerous examples of companies that are working hard to improve the benefits that they are offering their employee population.

Policies that ensure that health promoting activities are made available to shift workers as well as employees that are located at remote sites can make a significant difference when it comes to improving health.

Healthy Workplace Practices #7: Carefully Evaluating Outcomes

In essence, the idea is to identify individuals who are at-risk (generally defined as four or more risk factors) and intervene to make sure that the individuals don't progress further along the disease continuum.

Return On Investment

Last but not least is the evaluation target of return on investment.

Often viewed as the gold standard of evaluation efforts, return on investment is quickly catching on as an excellent measure by which corporate wellness programs can be evaluated. Leaders such as Dr. Ron Goetzel and Larry Chapman have blazed the trail whereby many companies now can begin to assess the impact of their programs in terms of ROI. Most often, this analysis requires outside investment and expert consultation.

