

Workplace Wellness Assessment

Is Your Company Actively Supporting Employee Health and Fitness?
Is the Benefit Worth the Investment?

Health care costs are exorbitant. A large proportion of our society is unhealthy due to lack of exercise and fitness. Companies are realizing more and more that the health and fitness of their employees can impact the bottom line. Research shows that employees who are healthier are more productive and less frequently absent.

Companies can help by providing Employee Wellness programs. These programs are a desired perk for employees, while serving to reduce employee health costs and boost productivity.

"A man too busy to take care of himself is like a mechanic too busy to take care of his tools."

- Spanish Proverb

Employee support goes beyond just providing the tools and training needed to do their jobs. Companies can also provide support by promoting employee health and fitness. Supporting employee wellness is a growing trend with many positive outcomes.

Why Are Wellness Programs Important?

There are many benefits to supporting employee wellness – to the employee and to the company. The benefits include:

- Reduced health care costs
- Increased levels of employee engagement and productivity
- Reduced levels of absenteeism, presenteeism, turnover and stress
- Demonstrated care and concern for employees
- Enhance employee commitment and loyalty to the company

Does Your Wellness Program Work? How Could It Be Enhanced?

If you don't know the answer to these questions, a program evaluation can help. As with any program, it is important to:

- Understand awareness levels of existing program(s)
- Determine how well internal health and fitness programs meet employee needs
- Understand which employees are taking advantage of what kinds of programs. Are some employee groups underserved?
- Determine if there are any barriers to participation
- Identify gaps between employee needs and program offerings
- Determine where improvement investments would be most valued



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Assessing Where You Are and Determining What Needs to Be Done

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How Does the Evaluation Process Work?

There are three primary options for the evaluation process. These methods can be used simultaneously or separately.

1. **Focus Groups and Interviews:** Used to collect comments and feedback from individuals in terms of what they want, need, like most/least. These types of comments can be helpful in the design, implementation and evaluation phases.
2. **Surveys:** Used to collect data from all employees about individual needs, participation frequency, supports and barriers as well as provide assessments of current program offerings.
3. **Cost/Benefit Analysis:** Used to determine to what extent the organization is benefiting from the program.

What Will the Program Evaluation Results Tell Us?

- Current strengths
- Improvement opportunities
- Employee segment /demographic differences
 - In this approach, sub-group analysis is conducted to determine if certain groups (defined by demographics such as gender, age, location, etc.) feel more or less supported in terms of health and fitness.
 - If results differ by demographics, differences can be highlighted for further investigation and follow up.
- The relationship between program offerings and participation with organizational metrics such as job satisfaction, engagement, and organizational commitment
- Value of the investment

How Is This Information Used?

- To create new health and wellness programs or enhance existing programs to better fit the needs of employees.
- To determine how best to invest program dollars for optimal return on investment – both to reduce health care costs and improve employee engagement, productivity and retention.

Health and wellness needs vary across individuals. Organizations benefit most by offering employees a wide variety of choices to suit individual employee needs. Common offerings include:

- On-site exercise facilities
- Company reimbursed gym memberships
- Seminars on personal health
- Support groups
- Health screening
- Company sponsored events such as diet challenges, walking/ running teams, etc.
- Internal intranet resources

Bottom line: Supporting employee health and wellness helps organizations control health care costs and optimize workforce performance.



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