

WHAT IS A HEALTHY WORKPLACE?

In a healthy workplace, organizational leaders, employees and other partners combine efforts to enhance the wellbeing of people at work.



Healthy workers are good for business!

Organizations that support employee wellness create positive work environments. Not only does this enhance employee health, it also leads to workers being more engaged, satisfied with their jobs and devoted to company success. This, in turn, results in:

- increased productivity
- better staff morale
- reduced absenteeism
- higher retention
- fewer health-related costs
- improved company reputation

Successful wellness programs ensure that:



the workplace is free of hazards to physical safety



employee mental health is promoted and protected



healthy lifestyle choices are encouraged and supported



the organization is involved in supporting the community



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Mobilize

Assess

Plan

Do

Evaluate

MOBILIZE

Developing a workplace wellness program begins with gaining commitment from all workplace groups, especially management. This ensures that everyone is working towards the same goal and that the program has the resources needed to be successful over time.



Key Steps

- Determine who needs to be involved (business owners, managers, human resources, unions, employee groups, etc.).
- Establish a Workplace Wellness Committee made up of members from various levels and sectors in the workforce, including at least one senior leader.
- Develop a Terms of Reference.
- Designate an Workplace Wellness Champion.
- Gather information and present a business case that outlines the potential benefits.
- Secure buy-in from management that goes beyond endorsement. Leaders should also allocate resources to the program, be actively engaged and encourage staff to participate.
- Put a written policy in place that formally adopts the program.
- Collaborate with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee, Psychological Health and Safety Committee, and other committees as appropriate.



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ASSESS

One of the first tasks of the Workplace Wellness Committee will be to gather and analyze workplace data in order to understand the needs of employees and of the organization. This step is essential for making sure that the Workplace Wellness Program targets the most important areas. It also establishes baseline data to measure the impact of the program in the future.



Key Steps

- Develop an assessment plan that outlines what data will be gathered and how.
- Examine information on absenteeism, benefits costs, etc.
- Conduct surveys and/or interviews with employee groups about what's important to them. Remember to protect confidentiality!
- Audit the work environment.
- Review current policies and practices.
- Reflect on previous health initiatives, considering what worked well and what didn't.
- Analyze the information gathered. Look for trends over time and areas for improvement.
- Make sure all employee groups have been included.
- Select the high priority areas that the workplace wellness program will aim to address.
- Summarize and communicate the main findings from the assessment and decisions on priority areas to all collaborators, including leadership and employees alike.



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PLAN

A healthy workplace plan details how the Workplace Wellness Committee will address the priorities identified in the needs assessment. Thoughtful planning at this stage will help to avoid surprises and roadblocks later.



Key Steps

Develop a strategic plan that outlines goals, objectives, activities, roles and responsibilities, timelines, budget, etc. The plan should:

- Combine organizational and individual approaches to address the unique needs and priorities identified during at the assessment stage.
- Integrate physical health, psychological health, personal health resources and community involvement.
- Build a corporate culture of health.
- Include input from leadership.
- Engage employees at all levels of the organization and from all work groups.
- Provide staff with incentives for participating.
- Include approaches for how to promote the program to all staff.
- Use evidence-based strategies and include activities that are technology-based.
- Consider what data to collect to monitor progress and evaluate the program later on.
- Involve external professionals, as appropriate.
- Recognize any training needs required for the program to be successful.



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DO

Carrying out the Workplace Wellness Plan is what this step is all about. As the program is underway, keep in mind that it's important for organizational leaders to be continuously involved and employees to be engaged.



Key Steps

- Implement the Workplace Wellness Plan ensuring that offerings are available to all workers.
- Provide ongoing communication that promotes the wellness activities, the benefits of participating, changes to any policies, etc. It is ideal to have this communication come from leadership as it demonstrates that employee wellness is important to the organization.
- Respect each employee's choice to participate.
- Track participation in wellness activities and collect other helpful information for measuring progress later on.
- Make program adjustments as needed. If the program appears to be faltering, examine reasons as to why and how it could be improved.
- Maintain strong linkages with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee, the Psychological Health & Safety Committee, and other groups as appropriate.
- Encourage employees to provide ongoing feedback and ideas to the Workplace Wellness Committee, either formally or informally.
- Orient any new staff to what the organization offers to support employee wellness.



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EVALUATE

Evaluating the Workplace Wellness Program shows what difference it is making and helps to maintain management support. Measuring progress helps to identify how the program can be refined. Improvements can be captured in an updated plan that continues to build a healthier workplace.



Key Steps

- Review data already gathered and collect any new information needed to measure the quality and impact of the wellness program. This could include an employee survey to assess satisfaction with activities. Participant testimonials can also help demonstrate program success.
- Analyze the information collected. Compare data to what was collected at the start of the program, if possible.
- Consult with employees for their perspectives to better understand evaluation data, if needed.
- Reflect on what is working well and what can be enhanced.
- Celebrate achievements.
- Disseminate evaluation results to organizational leadership and to employees at all levels. Highlight successes of what is working well to promote employee wellness.
- Refine the plan as needed to improve the program.
- Continue with efforts to build a healthier workplace.



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