



WELLNESS WORKS

Your Workplace Wellness Road Map

You're ready to bring wellness to your company. Now the question is – how? How do you implement wellness programs that create a happier, healthier, more productive workforce?

Here's your five-step road map:

Step 1: Commit to Wellness Leadership

Step 2: Update Policies and Procedures

Step 3: Choose Which Programs to Implement

Step 4: Make it Happen!

Step 5: Evaluate, Adjust and Continue

What is Modern Workplace Wellness?

Traditional workplace wellness programs focused on physical health. Modern wellness programs take a broader approach, focusing on the whole person.

Wellness programs can include:

- ✓ Stress management
- ✓ Volunteerism
- ✓ Financial literacy
- ✓ Career planning
- ✓ Community engagement
- ✓ Social connectedness
- ✓ Anything else that matters to your team

Step 1: Commit to Wellness Leadership

Before launching a workplace wellness program, take an honest look at your corporate culture. Culture is the personality of your organization, and it has a significant impact on your employees' actions and beliefs.

Is your culture conducive to workplace wellness? If not, you may need to activate a culture shift.

Culture is influenced by the vision, attitude and voice of company leaders. Leaders cannot say wellness is important and then fail to participate in the programs. Leaders at every level must engage and set the right example. A culture shift requires a top-down effort that permeates every level of the organization. Leaders must walk their talk if they want their people to follow.



Step 2: Update Policies and Procedures

Culture is also shaped by company policies, procedures and reward systems. While every workplace is different, below are some ways employers can support wellness through policies and procedures:

If you want employees to....	Do...	Don't...
Maintain a healthy work/life balance	Reward outcomes	Reward workaholic behavior
Eat better and lose weight	Make healthy food and drinks available	Fill your vending machines with junk food and soda
Exercise and increase activity	Allow time and provide opportunities during the day	Penalize people for taking time out to move
Work with purpose	Offer a clear plan for how employees can move forward in your organization	Be vague about employees' futures

Scrutinize your processes for goal-setting, performance reviews and promotions.

- How do you measure and reward performance?
- How do you empower and support healthy behaviors?
- How do you help employees achieve their short and long-term objectives?

Review your benefits package.

- Do you offer paid time off rather than sick days?
- Do your financial benefits promote fiscal responsibility and savings?
- Does your health plan reimburse for gym memberships, weight loss or disease prevention programs?
- Is your company's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) linked to stress reduction initiatives?
- Do you provide voluntary health screenings and flu shots at work?
- Do you offer flexible work arrangements, daycare benefits or parental leave?
- Do you allow paid time off for volunteer work?
- Do you plan team-based community service projects?

Wellness should be embedded into everything you do. If you can't afford to do everything on these lists, focus on a few key goals that you can promote affordably.



Step 3: Choose Which Programs to Implement

Wellness is not a one-size-fits-all activity. The best wellness programs cater to the specific needs of the workplace. Here are three ways to determine those needs:

1. Examine your company.

- Have multiple employees quit while citing the same reasons?
- Are employees missing work due to similar problems?
- Are there certain negative incidents or health issues that seem to be recurring?
- What are the factors that reduce your productivity?

2. Look at the demographics of your workforce.

- Do many of your employees have young children? How about aging parents?
- Are your employees struggling with student loan debt? How about retirement savings?
- Do your employees enjoy volunteering and giving back?

3. Survey your employees. Questions could include:

- How do you rate the work environment?
- What can be improved?
- Are you distracted by financial stress?
- Do you feel overwhelmed by the workload?
- Are you happy with your schedule? If not, what could make it better?
- Do you have a good work-life balance? If not, what makes finding the right balance difficult?
- Do you see a strong future with the company? If not, what could change this?
- What benefits or programs do you wish the company offered?

Why Workplace Wellness Matters

- Full-time workers spend roughly one-third of their awake hours at work – and that doesn't even include the commute.
- The workplace has a tremendous impact on a person's well-being.
- Conversely, a person's well-being has a huge impact on the workplace environment.
- When employers help employees achieve greater wellness, it's a win-win situation.

Step 4: Make it Happen!

Once you've determined your company's needs and prioritized your focus areas, it's time to make it happen. Here are some tips to get you started.

- **Assess the time and manpower needed.** Also consider external resources. Do you have partners (such as insurers, vendors or community partners) who could help?
- **Estimate the costs.** Some wellness initiatives cost next to nothing. Others are more expensive.
- **Establish the timelines.** Will this be a short-term, long-term or continual effort? Will you roll it out to everyone or test with a pilot project first? Can the initiative be phased?
- **Maximize accessibility and simplicity.** The best programs are relevant to a wide range of employees and participation is easy and simple. How can you make your program work for the largest number of people within the structure of a normal work day?
- **Be aware of privacy and compliance issues.** Information collected through a workplace wellness program may be protected under HIPAA. Participation must be optional, and health-based rewards must be compliant. Involve your legal counsel in planning.
- **Predict the outcomes.** What do you expect to achieve? Do the expected benefits outweigh the projected costs?
- **Create excitement.** Get the word out via email, posters, conversations, and any other means possible. Get leaders involved, create friendly competition and tell employees why it matters. Find ways to reward participation. Whether it's free food, a prize, or PTO, the right motivator can help your program take off.

Case in Point - The 25-Mile Challenge

- **Short-Term Goal:** Help the team become more active.
- **Potential Long-Term Outcomes:** Healthier workforce, less absenteeism, disease prevention, lower health plan costs over time.
- **Activity:** Create a 25-mile challenge in which team members strive to walk or run 25 miles every week.
- **Timeline:** The initial challenge will take place for a 12-week period.
- **Participation:** Open to all employees at every level on a voluntary basis.
- **Participation-Based Reward:** Those who participate receive a fitness tracker to measure their weekly distance.
- **Leadership:** The executive team members compete in the contest and their progress is highly publicized to create a buzz.
- **Policy/Procedure:** Each department establishes a morning and afternoon walk with an appointed leader.
- **Measurement:** Data is input in a Google Sheet at the end of every week.
- **Outcome-Based Reward:** Those who achieve the 25-mile goal for all 12-weeks receive reimbursement for a new pair of tennis shoes.
- **Engagement:** A department level challenge is also created. The department with the greatest collective mileage wins a spa day.
- **Community Outreach:** During the 12 weeks, the company participates in two community fundraiser walks.
- **Cost:** \$20 per person for the participation reward (distance trackers) and a \$3,500 budget is set for outcome-based rewards.
- **Ongoing Journey:** Once the first 12-week contest ends, the company will assess how to best continue the focus on activity.



Step 5: Evaluate, Adjust and Continue

After the program has been in place for a while, you'll need to evaluate your results and participation against your initial program goals. Some metrics might include:

- **Project success** – Have short-term and/or long-term project goals been achieved?
- **The expected versus actual costs** – Was the project executed within budget?
- **Participation rates** – Did enough employees participate?
- **Absenteeism rates** – Are employees missing fewer workdays?
- **Turnover rates** – Have turnover rates been positively impacted?
- **Negative incidents** – If negative incidents had been a problem, is this improving?

Remember that real change can take time. If you're not yet seeing improvement, you may still be on the right track, even if your objectives haven't been fully met.

Whether or not your program is meeting your expectations, there's probably room for improvement. Once your evaluations are in, it's time to think about how you can adjust and improve the program.

There's always more you can do, and the needs of your team may change over time. As new problems arise, new solutions will be needed. This is when you return to your road map and pick another wellness priority to continue your wellness journey. It is well worth your time!