

Wellness Best Practices

1. Find out what people want. Use a survey or hold focus groups to obtain the perspective of the staff. The feedback will help to create a program that will motivate participation. Analyze health cost experience to target specific needs.
2. Build awareness of current health risks.
 - Biometric Screenings or Health Risk Assessments. Employees obtain confidential data in areas such as BMI, blood pressure, cholesterol levels and other key markers for health risk. Screenings can be completed during a health fair or at yearly exam in the physician's office.
3. Provide educational sessions to address common causes of health problems and best practices for a healthy life.
4. Offer 1-1 discussions with a wellness professional.
5. Strong top leadership commitment. Demonstrate through participation, support and policies.
6. Branded communications. Align vision of program to core values and goals.
7. Create a healthy environment. Make it easy and fun for employees to incorporate healthy behaviors at work.
 - Provide healthy snacks and meals at meetings.
 - Encourage frequent stretch breaks.
 - Ergonomic workstations.
 - Change up birthday or other event celebrations by eliminating sweet, sugary foods.
 - Walking or standing meetings.
 - Smoke free workplace – cessation support
 - Stress reduction programs.
 - On-site Yoga classes, chair massages, cooking class.
 - Increase healthy choices in vending machines and cafeterias.
8. Invite spouses/partners to attend workshops.
9. Align values and goals of program to incentives. Gift certificates to health store, local farm to table restaurant, or discounted gym memberships. Offer reduced health care premiums.
10. Set up a community garden.

References: National Wellness Institute; Hero Employee Health Management Best Practice Scorecard, in collaboration with Mercer, Annual Report 2012; Participant Engagement and The Use of Incentives Considerations, Care Continuum Alliance, 2012; Healthiest Places to Work Web Search