



STEP 1:

**HOW TO GET
STARTED**

STEP 1: GETTING STARTED

What's the hardest part of developing a worksite wellness program: Getting Started! Where do you begin and what do you do? Summarized below is a simple overview of the steps you need to take for a successful program that matches your resources. Take 2 minutes to read this to see that you can do it.

Once an organization decides they want a worksite wellness program, the first question is often "What kinds of things should we do?" Before you have that discussion, you should lay the groundwork and get more information. A summary of what to do would include the following items, all of which are very manageable if you take them one step at a time:

6 EASY STEPS TO A WORKSITE WELLNESS PROGRAM

STEP 1: HOW DO I GET STARTED? I'M CONVINCED, BUT NEED HELP GETTING STARTED.

An overview of how to get started. This includes management buy-in and developing a company wellness committee. The extent of your program will depend on resources, but you could implement some no-cost components of a wellness program tomorrow!

STEP 2: ENGAGING YOUR EMPLOYEES (Communications And Marketing)

Learn about factors to consider in engaging your employees in order to make your program a success. This step will provide background on different ways to communicate with employees and set up incentives that will increase participation.

STEP 3: HOW "HEALTHY" IS MY WORKSITE? DO AN ASSESSMENT.

Before you decide what programming to offer, you should do three things:

- A. Use the assessment tool in Step Three to assess your current worksite environment.
- B. Learn more from your employees: A sample survey and links to health risk assessments (HRAs) can be found in Step Three.
- C. Collect or use other existing data that may be helpful in your decision-making.

STEP 4: WHAT ACTIVITIES CAN I DO? SEE A LIST WITH ADDITIONAL RESOURCES.

There are many activities that you could include in your program. Read Step Four for a listing of program components. The components are split into low, medium and high resource needs, so you can get a quick glance at what you might be able to quickly implement, and what might take more time or be too costly to include.

STEP 5: WHAT DO I DO? WHAT DETERMINES PROGRAM COMPONENTS FOR MY WELLNESS PROGRAM? PICK AREAS WHERE YOU HAVE RESOURCES TO DO WELL.

There are many components that you could include in your program. See the tools in Step Five that will help you determine priorities and set up a plan to make them happen. Step 5 also describes how you can clearly define the goals and objectives of your wellness program. See how policy changes and even small environmental changes can have great impact at little or no cost. Step 5 includes:

- A. Using the assessment results, survey results and other data to prioritize your program components and to set goals and objectives.
- B. Developing an action plan with appropriate strategies to address specified goals. Include a timeline, a budget, and an evaluation plan.
- C. Using your communications and marketing plan from Step 2 to implement your program.

STEP 6: IS IT WORKING? HOW WILL I KNOW IF THE WELLNESS PROGRAM IS WORKING?

THINK ABOUT EVALUATION WHEN YOU START THE PROGRAM.

Evaluation of your program can be very simple to very complex. You will need to evaluate the program at some point, so consider some type of evaluation from the beginning. An overview of what to evaluate and how to do it can be found in Step Six along with a sample evaluation tool. Evaluation will help you measure outcomes and monitor progress so you can make necessary changes to continue to revise the program to maintain a healthy environment for all employees.



WELLNESS COMMITTEE

DEVELOPING A WELLNESS COMMITTEE

Gain Support from Management

Support from all levels of management is key to the success of your wellness program. To ensure the support of management, inform managers about the program early on and encourage them to participate. Communicate clearly and often the goals and benefits to the company and participants. You need to direct sufficient resources and staff time to developing and implementing your wellness program if you want it to be successful. Consider setting an annual meeting with the executive team and managers to review the wellness program results from the previous year and to preview what the program is going to look like going forward.

If you are an outside coordinator not affiliated with the business, it may be worthwhile to list your responsibilities and the responsibilities of the worksite at the beginning. See Appendix H, the coordinator's guide, for more information and a sample memorandum of understanding.

Assembling Your Wellness Team – Forming an Onsite Wellness Committee

The Wellness Committee is responsible for promoting the worksite wellness program, planning activities, recruiting team leaders, and conducting the evaluation. The size of the committee will depend on the size of your company and the scope of the program or activities, with many companies having somewhere between 8-15 members. The committee should include staff that represents various employee shifts and departments such as management, union representatives, human resources or administrative assistants. There is no minimum or maximum size, but the committee should be large enough to represent your workforce and should have representation from all locations if you have more than one facility. If you already have a wellness or health promotion committee or other groups interested in taking on this role, involve them on the committee. Committee members can focus on recruitment, activities, events, rewards/incentives, and evaluation.

Designate a Coordinator

Management or the Wellness Committee should identify a Wellness Coordinator to manage the program. Although the Wellness Committee and others can share some of the responsibilities, having the right person coordinating efforts increases the likelihood that the program will be well managed and delivered. **The level of success for the wellness program is often linked to the coordinator's time and ability. It is essential that some or all of the coordinator's time be dedicated to the wellness program and that those responsibilities are included in their job description. If this isn't possible, then the company should consider contracting with an outside party to provide programming.** Local healthcare organizations and YMCAs often provide this service. Check with your local contacts to see if this is an option.

Committee Meetings

The Wellness Committee should meet on a regular basis, at a minimum on a bimonthly or quarterly basis. The committee may meet more often during peak times when planning or implementing activities or programs. The frequency of meetings will depend on what the committee plans to accomplish.

Revitalizing the Committee

Regularly add new members to the committee and include members of groups that you want to target. Consider term limits for members to allow for new representation and new ideas. If you great committee members, you can always provide an option to reapply. Maintain a connection with management and report successes. Make it fun and rewarding.

Appoint or Recruit Team Leaders

Effective delivery of many wellness initiatives is often dependent on a leader that is close to the participants. Depending on the structure of your organization, you may want to develop smaller teams that have leaders or “captains” to help provide motivation, information, and support to the program participants. Leaders have a major impact on whether the participants have a positive experience. A team leader can be the point of contact or messenger for information shared between the program participants and the Wellness Committee and vice versa.

It is important that team leader is creative, enthusiastic, and committed to the program. The team leaders do not have to be the most active and healthy staff members. However, it is more important that they have the skills to help motivate their team members to success.



WHAT IS IT GOING TO COST?

Staff Time: Building a successful worksite wellness program requires resources, including staff time and finances. Some larger organizations may spend 20 hours per week for three to six months preparing all the steps prior to launching a worksite wellness program. Once the program is up and running, there should be some dedicated staff time to support the activities.

Although many organizations can build a successful wellness program by assigning roles and responsibilities to wellness committee volunteers, having some amount of dedicated staff time will greatly increase your chances for a successful program. When deciding on whether to hire an onsite wellness staff person for your company, consider the following

- ❖ the size of the organization,
- ❖ the impact you would like the wellness program to have on employees,
- ❖ the type of wellness culture being created by the company; and
- ❖ Return on investment (ROI).

Although there is no specific formula for staff resources needed for a set number of employees, a general recommendation (Chapman 2007) is:

<u>Number of Employees</u>	<u>Internal Staff (FTEs)</u>
≤ 25	0.1 FTE
≤100	0.4 FTE
≤250	0.8 FTE
≤500	1.0 FTE
≤1,000	1.5 FTE
≤5,000	2.5 FTE
≥5,000	Add staff as needed

Programming Costs: Monetary costs can fluctuate widely, and will depend on whether the employer pays all costs, the employees pay all costs, or the costs are shared. Cost will also be effected by whether

the program components are done by staff or through a vendor. In any case, national experts estimate the cost per employee to be between \$150 and \$300 per year for an effective wellness program that should produce a return on investment of \$450 to \$900. A sample expenditure for various levels of programs would be:

Program Type	Program Characteristics	Cost per Employee/Year
Education & Awareness	A minimal to moderate program: activity centered, little focus on risk, voluntary, limited resource allocation, unsure employee engagement, no evaluation	<\$50
Traditional Program	A medium to fairly comprehensive program: activity centered and results oriented, some focus on risk, voluntary, reasonable resource allocation, some incentives offered, conducts some outcomes/evaluation	\$50-\$200
Comprehensive Health & Productivity Management	A comprehensive program: results oriented, focus on risk and productivity, extensive budget and staffing resources, multi-faceted programming, incentives offered and outcomes driven	\$200+

Ron Goetzel: <http://www.welcoa.org/freeresources/pdf/0110newsviewsgoetzel.pdf>

Larry Chapman & David Hunnicutt: http://www.welcoa.org/freeresources/pdf/aa_v5.4.pdf

Keep in mind that the return on investment will likely be greater with more comprehensive programs, so the higher cost will also generate a greater return on investment due to lower health care costs and less absenteeism. Ideally, your budget would be based on all the strategies you want to implement in your wellness program. Realistically, your budget will often times be set and you'll have to figure out what you can do with the amount allotted. A sample budget worksheet is available in Appendix H. The sample will give you ideas on some of the things that you might want to do and set aside budget dollars to implement.

Other Resources - WELCOA of Wisconsin

The Wellness Council is the only nonprofit organization in Wisconsin dedicated exclusively to helping employers design results-oriented wellness programs to maximize the health and productivity of their most valuable asset — their employees. The Wellness Council of Wisconsin currently serves over 400 members representing 430,000 employees statewide. The Wellness Council of Wisconsin is the local affiliate of the national organization, Wellness Council of America (WELCOA). WELCOA, www.welcoa.org, is one of the most respected resources for workplace wellness in America. With a membership in excess of 3,200 organizations, WELCOA is dedicated to improving the health and well-being of all working Americans.

When it comes to designing and implementing a worksite wellness program, there are two paths that can be followed: activity-centered or results-oriented. Activity-centered workplace wellness programs are those that make "activities" the central focus of their initiative. If you are currently running an activity-centered workplace wellness program, there's no reason to feel bad—many people start this way. Indeed, according to a variety of recent national surveys, it is widely understood that the vast majority of workplace wellness programs in the U.S. are activity-centered. However, at the Wellness Council of Wisconsin and WELCOA, we believe that there is a better and more effective way to build workplace wellness programs. Visit www.wellnesscouncilwi.org to learn more about the Well Workplace process.

A Final Thought on Start-up

After you've laid the groundwork to develop a wellness program, take the time to plan the components that will result in a quality program. Many people want to jump into programming at this point, but following all the steps will ultimately make your program more successful. By assuring that your programming is geared to your employee needs and interests and that you are using proven strategies, you will greatly increase your likelihood for success.

Quick Resource: *Partnership for Prevention: An Essential Health Promotion Sourcebook for Employers, Large and Small* http://www.acsworkplacesolutions.com/documents/Healthy_Workforce_2010.pdf

