



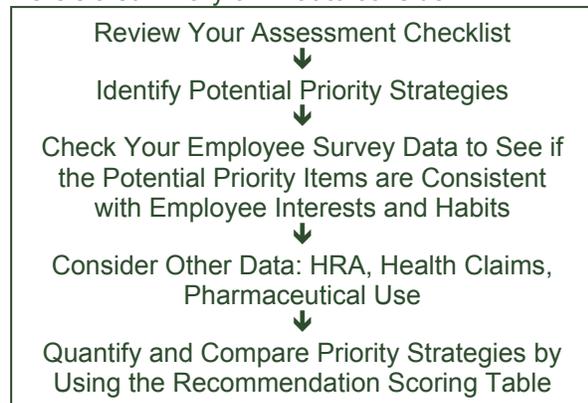
**STEP 5:
MAKING DECISIONS
WHERE TO FOCUS
YOUR EFFORTS**

CONSIDERATIONS

STEP 5: MAKING DECISIONS - WHERE TO FOCUS YOUR EFFORTS?

Now that you've completed the analysis of the worksite assessment, employee survey and other available data (Step 3) and looked at the array of program strategies to be considered (Step 4), it's time to narrow your focus. This can be a very simple process or can be done in a very structured manner – it's up to you.

Here's a summary of what to consider:



Start with the Worksite Assessment Checklist (Appendix B) that you completed in Step 3. Do a “first cut” by looking at the strategies that you placed in each category (Yes, In Process and No) and determine ones that are potential priorities to improve or implement as new strategies. Now take what you've learned from the employee survey and see if that information changes the list at all. If you have other data from sources such as health risk assessments, health claims information, or pharmaceutical utilization, use those sources as additional background in making your decisions.

At this point, you might be able to decide where to focus your efforts. However, an additional step can help you decide where you'll get the most impact, by comparing the relative value of implementing each strategy. Use the following factors to place a point value on each strategy:

- ❖ importance
- ❖ cost
- ❖ time
- ❖ effort
- ❖ reach or number of employees likely to participate or be impacted

This may be helpful in coming up with a manageable number of strategies. An explanation of this recommendation scoring table is found later in this section and a blank form can be found in Appendix D.

By looking at your current programming, you should be able to see the gaps in areas where there are additional strategies that could be implemented. By identifying those gaps and comparing them with the current health habits and interests of your employees that were gathered in the employee survey, you should be able to match high priority gaps with high priority employee needs or interests. Finally, by answering questions about the importance, cost, time, effort and potential number of employees that will be reached by your program strategies, you will be ready to select what will be included in your wellness program. A model to walk you through this process is included later in this chapter in the form of a Recommendation Table.

TYPES OF PROGRAMMING

As you make plans on where to focus your wellness efforts, consider that some efforts may have greater impact than others may. Your wellness programming can include many components, such as:

- ❖ Health screening and assessment
- ❖ Education through presentations, printed materials and web resources
- ❖ Program activities, including “campaigns” over a specified time period
- ❖ Environmental change
- ❖ Policy change

CONSIDER THE ENVIRONMENT AND POLICY CHANGES

All of your programming should involve creation of a supportive social and physical environment where healthy decisions are the norm. Part of creating this environment is to clearly define the organization's expectations regarding healthy behaviors, and implementation of policies that promote health and reduce risk of disease.

All of the components listed above have merit, but changing the environment and changing

policy is crucial to affecting change in most health habits. Policies create the opportunity for widespread behavioral change because they change the existing “rules,” which can have a powerful effect on employee behavior and habits. Environmental changes, both physical and cultural, provide options or opportunities to adopt healthier habits and can result in widespread change.

Company policies and changes in the work environment will affect or influence the behavior of all of your employees, which may also lead to changes outside of work. In many cases, policy and environmental changes make it easier to make the better health choice. Here are some examples:

Formal written policies:

- ❖ Guidelines for ordering food for company events
- ❖ No smoking on company property
- ❖ Company cost-sharing for health club memberships

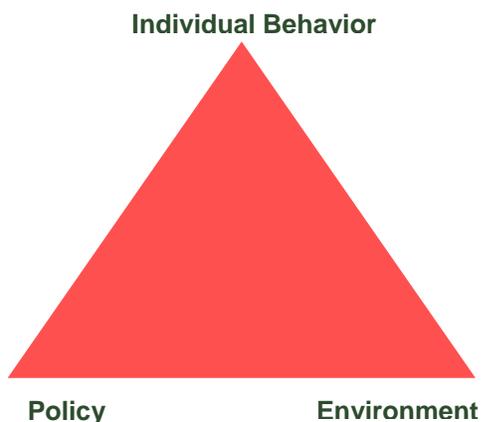
Environmental changes or cues:

- ❖ Outdoor bike racks
- ❖ Labeling or highlighting healthy food choices
- ❖ Areas for relaxation can stress reduction (quiet rooms)

Listed in the program section (Step Four) were a number of policy or environmental changes that you could make. You should use the planning tools in this section to determine which changes you want to make first. Think about addressing some of the easy changes first to get a taste of success and show that your wellness program is working. As your program develops, you can always tackle some of the more difficult issues.

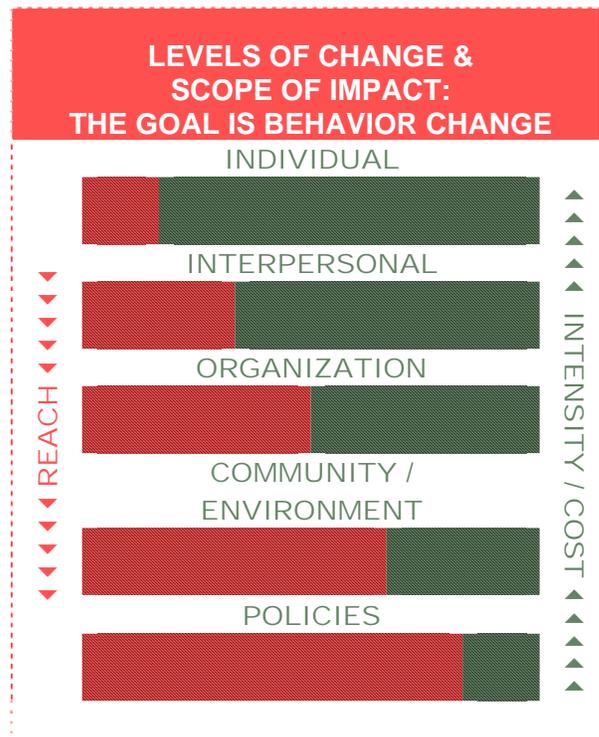
3-Pronged Approach

Remember to try to tie all three components into any focus areas you work on in your program.



SCOPE OF IMPACT

Unlike trying to impact change at an individual level, environmental and policy changes have the ability to impact large groups of people and will likely provide the most “bang for the buck.” The following diagram further illustrates why changes in the environment or changes in policy are so important.



As you can see from the diagram, individual behavior change takes a great deal of resources and affects only one person at a time. Policy and higher-level strategies targeting communities and organizations have a much greater potential impact. Although your wellness strategies should address as many levels as possible, it’s also important to focus on areas where the greatest potential benefit could occur.

Another way to look at this when making decisions, is to ask the question how much impact will there be with a selected strategy? Although you can’t answer this question specifically, you can estimate the impact by looking at the “reach” and “dose” of the strategy. Reach would be the number of employees who would likely be participating and dose would be how often they participate in the strategy.

Physical Activity Example: Worksite with 100 Employees

For purposes of this physical activity example, 1 dose of activity is equal to 10 minutes. The adult goal is at least 30 minutes per day or 3 doses

1 dose = 10 minutes. Adult goal is 30 minutes per day or 3 doses. Reach = number participating

Scenario 1 - Worksite holds a 1-day event where staff walk for 30 minutes (3 doses).	Scenario 2 – Worksite institutes a new policy that encourages daily 20 minute “walk breaks” at lunch.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 50% of staff participate ▪ Impact is 3 doses x 50% = 150 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 30% of staff participate regularly (3+ days/ week) ▪ Impact is 2 doses x 30% = 60 x 150 days = 9,000
Total impact = 150	Total impact = 9000

This concept has been included in the Recommendation Table described on the next page and in the blank worksheet in Appendix D.

“PACKAGING“

One way to organize your efforts might be to pick a quarterly topic focus. As an example, the spring quarter from April to June might be a good time to focus on physical activity. Knowing that physical activity is the focus would mean that you could look for ways to incorporate that into your programming and strategies. If you have a well-developed wellness program, that might mean looking for programming through a variety of ways. A starter list of possibilities might consist of a Kick-off promotion, Education materials, Presentations, Training/Class opportunities, Tracking campaigns, Policy changes and Environmental changes. A sample is provided below.

Sample Wellness Plan for the 2nd Quarter 2010

Topic Area: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY	Who	What	Apr	May	June
Kick – off week: April 5-9					
Monday: Promotional message & flyer	Karen/Sue	Email & post	✓		
Tuesday: Fitness logs to track activity	Jon	Short write-up / directions	✓		
Education: HMO reimbursement programs for physical activity	Jon	Email	✓		
Highlighted web site of the Month: Real Age	Don	Email & post	✓	✓	✓
Presentations: Lunch & Learn topic on Physical Activity (web cast)	Sue et. al.	Meeting content & logistics	✓		
Bike to work: basics and routes		Meeting content & logistics		✓	
Trainings: Yoga classes (weekly)	Sue	Highlight/send out reminders	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Pilates classes (weekly)	Sue	Highlight/send out reminders	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Campaigns: Walk with a Buddy Month	Jon/Sue	Short write-up / directions		✓	
Bike to Work week (June 6-11)	Sue	Short write-up / directions			✓
Policy: Encourage walk on break and lunch time	Gina	Message to supervisors on their role and specific things to support + Short write-up	✓		
Walk & Talk meeting	Jon			✓	
Environment: Develop & promote walking route maps from the worksite	Jon	Short write-up / directions	✓	✓	✓
Develop related internal web pages	Don	Consolidate key information in 1 place	✓	✓	✓

The above sample illustrates one way to think about tying your potential programming together in a focused way. By “packaging” your strategies on a specific focus area, the activities build off each other rather than presenting a variety of unconnected activities. This coordinated mix of program strategies can provide a multiplier effect that is greater than the effect of adding up individual activities. “Packaging” related strategies will lead to greater participation and long-term success. For instance, having a policy that encourages physical activity on break time, coupled with using pedometers as incentives and then providing maps or on-site trails to get staff out walking will lead to greater success than any one of these strategies down in isolation. *One warning about packaging:* Keep in mind that it’s better to take on less and do a great job with high participation rates than try and do too much and have a poorer response.

NARROWING THE SCOPE

RECOMMENDATIONS – QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK YOURSELF

Another way to develop your program activities is to take your worksite assessment checklist and evaluate the areas where no policy or program exists or areas where some policy or program exists, but can be improved. For each of these items, ask the following questions:

- ❖ How important is the item?
- ❖ How much will it cost to implement the item?
- ❖ How much time and effort is needed to implement the item?
- ❖ How great is the potential “reach” and “dose” or how many employees may be affected?
- ❖ How well does the item match employee’s interests and other relevant data? Use the survey results to help answer this question.

You can use the Recommendation Table below to help narrow the scope of your wellness program. Once you’ve identified possible areas to focus on, asking the questions about importance, cost, time, effort and reach should get you to a very specific set of activities to implement.

RECOMMENDATION TABLE - SAMPLE

Instructions: Rate each of the recommendations identified in the Worksite Wellness Assessment on the following aspects: importance, cost, time and commitment. Rate each on a scale of 1-5 (low-high) using the chart below. Higher scores should indicate priority items to implement.

Item #	Recommendations	Importance	Cost	Time	Commitment	Reach / Dose	Points / Ranking
20	Create policy for use of break & lunchtime to be active	4	5	5	4	5	23
26	Install bike racks to encourage biking to work	4	3	4	4	3	18
30	Provide an on-site exercise facility	5	1	1	5	3	15
45	Make microwaves available to heat meals	4	3	5	4	5	21
61	Policy to prohibit smoking on property	5	5	5	3	5	23

(A blank Recommendation Table can be found in Appendix D)

What can you do with this data? – Some examples.

If you have limited resources and can’t implement all of your company’s recommendations, you should look at total score and category scores to help select priorities. The policy items (#20 & #61) have low cost and great reach so they might be the items to implement first. On the other end of the spectrum, an on-site fitness facility (item #30) might be problematic because of cost. A less expensive alternative might be to help subsidize local fitness club memberships for employees.

ACTION PLAN & WORKSHEET

Be realistic!

Limit your initial set of activities so you can focus your efforts and have some early successes. You can always expand your program as it matures, but a realistic set of objectives to begin with will require fewer resources and will keep you from being overwhelmed.

Once you've decided on your priorities, you should develop a specific action plan to implement the programming you've selected. The action plan would include:

- ❖ The overall goals and objectives of your wellness program.
- ❖ Specific recommendations on strategies to implement. These need to be clearly stated and measurable or your evaluation won't be meaningful;
- ❖ The chosen activities;
- ❖ The staff, resources and materials needed to make it happen;
- ❖ The time frame for completion;
- ❖ The evaluation plan to measure results.

The action plan can also be used as part of a presentation to give to management to sell them on your wellness program and get buy-in for the specific strategies and activities you plan to implement for the program. A sample action plan is shown below.

ACTION PLAN WORKSHEET - SAMPLE				
Recommendations	Describe the strategies selected from the Recommendation Table			
Activities	List the activities required to meet the recommendation			
Materials, Resources and Personnel	List the individuals who will do the work; and the resources and tools they need to get the job done.			
Time Frame	When will implementation begin? How long will it take to finish?			
Evaluation	How will you measure your successes and/or misfortunes?			
Recommendations: Strategies to Implement	Activities	Materials, Resources & Personnel	Time Frame	Evaluation Method
1. Provide incentive based programs to encourage activity (i.e. pedometer walking campaigns).	Walking "Challenge"	Walking teams, Team Captains, Pedometers, Recording sheets	3 months May- July	Pre/Post survey of activity levels
2. Offer appealing, low-cost, healthful worksite food options, (fruits, vegetables, juices, low-fat dairy products) in vending machines, snack bars and break rooms.	Inventory current options Increase healthy vending options	<i>Sample</i> Mary Smith	4 months Jan - April	Count of healthy food options before and after the initiative
3. Support physical activity during duty time (flex-time)	Draft and implement company policy on use of break & lunch time for activity	Wellness committee and staff input Management OK	1 month January	Policy in place. Include in annual survey.

(A blank Action Plan can be found in Appendix E)

