



STEP **3**:

ASSESSING YOUR WORKSITE

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STEP 3: INITIAL ASSESSMENT

Assessing your worksite is essential to providing high-level programs to your employees. Matching the wants (interest survey) and needs (biometric screenings/health assessments) of your employees will only help to increase the participation and engagement of your workforce. Getting a snapshot of the work environment and employee health and developing a wellness program based on the information will help build the value of your program in the eyes of both key stakeholders as well as employees. Thinking about what data to collect and how to use the data at the start of developing your program will pay off in the end. Here are the key steps:



Assess Your Worksite Environment

#	Wellness Component	Yes	In Process	No	Potential Priority
6	Does the worksite orient new employees to the wellness program and give them copies of the wellness policies (nutrition, tobacco, etc.)?		✓		✓



Survey Your Employees

Please rate your interest in any of the following nutrition resources that might be available?	Very Low	Low	Neutral	High	Very High
a. Attending regular presentations on nutrition topics					



Check Biometric Measures or Have Employee Visit their MD

Biometric measures	Blood Pressure	Cholesterol	Glucose	BMI
Date _____	124/76	188	102	26.4



Gather Your Other Relevant Data

Gather any other information or data that might be available and use it to help develop or expand your wellness program

Your worksite assessment could contain four main components:

- Part 1: An assessment of the current worksite wellness programming, environment and policies.
- Part 2: An employee survey and/or other means for employee input to identify interests and the types of potential programs to provide.
- Part 3: Biometric measures (blood pressure, cholesterol, etc.) and a health assessment (HA) or a primary care provider (PCP) office visit.
- Part 4: Gathering of other existing information that might be helpful in your decision-making (ex. healthcare costs, absenteeism, etc.)

HOW TO ASSESS THE WORKSITE WELLNESS ENVIRONMENT?

Why do an assessment?

The purpose of completing the assessment is to identify your worksite's strengths and areas for possible improvement and provide an opportunity for your employees to have their health evaluated. The information collected as part of the assessment will lead your committee to recommend actions for changes to make the worksite supportive of healthy behaviors (i.e. healthy food choices in vending machines, policies to enforce no smoking on worksite grounds or encouraging walking during break times). You may find some of the actions for supporting healthy behaviors are easy to do and others may not be feasible or efficient in your worksite. It is also possible to use assessment results as a baseline measure for later evaluation. The initial assessment becomes the baseline for a follow-up assessment several months later or annually to measure progress.

What do I need?

- ❖ An assessment workgroup (this could be the Wellness Committee or a separate group just for assessment?)
- ❖ The worksite assessment tool (part 1)
- ❖ The employee survey tool (part 2)
- ❖ Knowledge of and access to other data that might be helpful (parts 3 and 4)
- ❖ Time
- ❖ Someone to collate and summarize the results

Who should decide what is included in the assessment?

Identify a workgroup (at least 4-5 people) who will be responsible for completing the assessment. This may be a subset of your wellness committee. Forming a diverse group from all areas and levels of your organization is important for meaningful assessment and successful planning and implementation. Suggested participants include employees from various departments, administrators, supervisors, vendors and wellness staff. Keep in mind what you learned about incentives in Step 2 – It is not about checking off boxes and you cannot “buy” good health behaviors. Sell your assessment process as a way to improve employee health for their sake.

When should the assessment be done?

Use the assessment as a starting point for your wellness initiative. Once you have completed the assessment, determine which areas the committee will focus on (i.e. healthy eating, physical activity, general health, etc.). Establish a time for the committee to meet and monitor the progress. Also, determine a schedule for annual assessments, so that the assessment can serve as a tool for continuous improvement and accountability over time. The program evaluation plan in Step 6 shows you how to use the annual assessment as part of your overall program evaluation plan.

Where can I get HELP?

You may be able to complete the assessment checklist and employee survey without any help. Both documents are ready to use, but if you would like more detail, or want to tailor the assessment more to your worksite, you can contact Jon Morgan at (608) 266-9781 or jonathon.morgan@wi.gov or DHSChronicDiseasePrevention@dhs.wisconsin.gov.

ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

PART 1: WORKSITE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Complete the Worksite Wellness Environmental Assessment Checklist to determine what wellness components you currently have at your worksite. This can be done with the full committee or you may want a few key personnel (such as the Human Resources lead, Wellness Coordinator or Committee Coordinator) to do a preliminary scan based on information they gather and then let the full committee react to their findings.

The next page contains a sample of an abridged completed checklist.

Appendix B contains a complete version of the checklist.

Completion of the checklist provides a reference point of the wellness policies, environmental supports and program activities that are currently in place or in process and it provides an overview of some of the items that should be considered for a comprehensive Wellness Program.

CHECKLIST COMPONENTS:

- Categories.** There are seven major categories: General Worksite Components, Health Screening and Disease Prevention and Management, Physical Activity, Nutrition, Mental Health and Stress Management, Tobacco Use, Financial Wellness and Emergency Medical Response Plan. Each category has several questions that address what you currently have in place at your worksite.
- Current Status.** Initially, list whether you have the component (Yes), are in the process of instituting the component or you are planning for the component (In Process) or do not have the component at all (No). At the end of each category, sub-total the number in each column and then total all of the categories at the end of the checklist to get an overview of where your worksite wellness program currently rates (A sample can be found on the next page). You should also use this baseline measure as a benchmark for later evaluation. By evaluating where your worksite is on each wellness component, you will be able to get a general idea of your status across each category and all 68 items.
- Potential Priorities.** After you have completed the assessment, the employee interest survey and reviewed available data, you can use the *potential priority* column to indicate what components you might want to focus on that are either currently in process or do not exist. This can serve as a first screening of possible areas to focus on as you develop your action plan, which is described in Step 5.

1		2			3
#	Wellness Component	Yes	In Process	No	Potential Priority
General					
6	Does the worksite orient employees to the wellness program and give them copies of the worksite policies (ex. physical activity, nutrition, and tobacco use).		✓		✓

Worksite Assessment Checklist (Completed sample)

#	Wellness Component	Yes	In Process	No	Potential Priority
Infrastructure					
1	Does the worksite provide the following the following key infrastructure components: ❖ a commitment from key stakeholders such as senior management, human resource managers, safety officers, staff members, etc. ❖ a champion(s) who is a strong advocate for the wellness program ❖ a representative committee that meets at least quarterly to oversee worksite wellness program operations	✓	Sample		
2	Does the worksite have a written statement that includes: ❖ a mission statement ❖ clearly defined goals ❖ an action plan to implement the program? ❖ a worksite wellness plan in place that addresses the purpose, nature, duration, resources required, participants involved, budget and expected results of a worksite wellness program?		✓		
3	What percent of a full-time employee (FTE) is dedicated to implement a wellness program at the worksite?		✓		
4	What is the worksite budget for employee health promotion that includes some funds for programming? (\$ per employee)			✓	✓
General area totals (# of Yes, In Process and No items)		1	2	1	1

FULL WORKSITE SCORECARD (Sample) (Totals for all categories)	Yes	In Process	No	Potential Priority
Infrastructure (4)	2	0	2	1
General Program Components (9)	4	1	4	1
Health Assessment and Insurance Coverage (7)	4	1	2	0
Physical Activity (19)	7	1	11	1
Nutrition (16)	7	2	7	1
Emotional Wellbeing (15)	5	1	9	1
Alcohol and Drug Abuse (7)	2	2	3	0
Tobacco Use (5)	2	1	2	0
Emergency Medical Response Plan (3)	2	0	1	0
Financial Wellbeing (8)	2	2	4	1
Assessment and Evaluation (4)	1	1	2	1
Worksite Total (97)	38	12	47	7



EMPLOYEE INPUT

PART 2: HOW TO GET EMPLOYEE INPUT

Why do an employee survey?

Conducting an employee survey gives you a better understanding of your target audience (your company's employees) and an understanding of their current interest areas. You can tailor the survey to your worksite and it can be done in paper form or using survey instruments on the internet. Using a computer survey instrument has the added advantage of being able to collect and analyze data automatically. There are survey software packages available for under \$100 to collect basic information. (There are also free versions of some survey software, but make sure the software has the features you need before you use it). Many free versions have limited access to certain types of questions, little or no analysis capabilities and may only leave the survey "live" for a small number of days before it closes the survey link.)

Also, consider engaging employees in focus groups or informal interviews to gather information on their wants and needs. You can use this method to gather information in place of the survey.

Whatever method you use to gather information, make it as easy as possible for employees to complete and submit the information so you get a high return rate. Consider offering an incentive or prize for people who complete the survey.

The two sample interest surveys below contain questions about:

- ❖ Health topic areas of interest
- ❖ Types of training that might be available
- ❖ Preferred methods of communication
- ❖ Demographic information
- ❖ Open-ended questions about preferences and barriers to participation

Sample interest surveys are available at:

- ❖ Health Alliance Plan Employer Interest Survey
<https://www.hap.org/~media/files/hap/for-employer/sample-employee-interest-survey.pdf>
- ❖ Healthy Workforce 2010: Essential Health Promotion Sourcebook for Employers, Large and Small (pages 58-60)
http://www.acsworkplacesolutions.com/documents/Healthy_Workforce_2010.pdf

HEALTH/BIOMETRIC ASSESSMENTS

PART 3: HEALTH/BIOMETRIC ASSESSMENTS

What does it mean to complete a Health Assessment (HA)?

Workplace health promotion programs in most settings conventionally ask individual participants to complete a brief questionnaire that summarizes key health information, which can then generate a statistical estimate of one's overall health status at the beginning of program participation. These assessments (or surveys) are often referred to as "health assessments". **Health assessments** (HA, also known as health risk assessments: HRAs) help identify health issues and should provide a feedback mechanism or follow-up plan to help employees to understand the results and what they should do with the information. **Biometric Screenings**, such as blood pressure readings or blood analysis, may be part of a health assessment or may be done separately. In either case, like HAs, there should be a follow-up plan to make good use of the results.

Most would agree that completion of a HA alone will not likely result in a significant change in one's overall health profile. What most experts recommend is that all HAs should be followed by specific counseling and opportunities to participate in health promotion strategies (like nutrition counseling, organized physical activity, or tobacco cessation programs) relevant to the significant modifiable health behaviors identified through the completion of an HA. HA results, when aggregated in a confidential manner across multiple members of a workplace population, and where HA results are periodically available from the same respondents, can provide useful and powerful means of tracking the impact of workplace health promotion and wellness programs over time. For this reason, most experts in the field recommend that HAs be the fundamental starting point in any workplace health promotion effort and that these measures serve as the primary measuring gauge of program impact and effectiveness.

How do you choose an HA?

- ❖ Set the goals and objectives of using the HA (i.e. identify high-risk individuals and strategies to help them, improve the health of high-risk individuals, monitor health changes over time, evaluate the effectiveness of strategies over time).
- ❖ Decide the specific follow-up actions you want to take (i.e. programming).
- ❖ Determine whether you would like to process your own HA.
- ❖ Create a short list of possible vendors and select a vendor.

What are the different types of HAs?

- ❖ Self-reported - individual focused. Only self-reported lifestyle information is collected. This type of HA generates a computer printout to an individual and is only as reliable as the information reported.
- ❖ Self-reported and medical data – Individual and aggregate focused. Self-reported lifestyle information and medical data are collected. This "comprehensive" HA outputs individual health scores, aggregate data for employers, and educational support materials. It allows individuals to see the cumulative effects of certain lifestyle risk factors. Biometric data included are the following: cholesterol, blood pressure, percent body fat, BMI, blood sugar, resting heart rate, frame size, height and weight, carbon monoxide testing, prostate specific antigen.

How does a Health Assessment (HA) work?

HAs calculate the probability that a person with certain health behaviors will acquire various chronic diseases or die in a given time period. This probability calculation compares your lifestyle information, medical data, and health and family history to people with similar demographics.

As an organization, you can decide what factors you want to assess and how often you want to do assessments. Your ultimate goal is to reduce individual risk factors and the number of employees that have multiple risk factors, since "high risk" employees will generally result in higher healthcare costs. As

an example, here are some key health risk factors and the criteria for classifying someone as having that risk factor:

Key Risk Factors

Health Risk Measure	Health Risk Criteria	Yes	No
Alcohol	More than 14 drinks/week		
Blood Pressure	Systolic >139 or Diastolic >89 mmHg		
Body Weight	BMI \geq 27.5		
Cholesterol	Greater than 239 mg/dl		
HDL	Less than 35 mg/dl		
Existing Medical Problem	Heart, Cancer, Diabetes, Stroke		
Illness Days	>5 days last year		
Life Satisfaction	Partly or not satisfied		
Perception of Health	Fair or poor		
Physical Activity	Less than one time/week		
Safety Belt Usage	Using safety belt < 100% of time		
Smoking	Current smoker		
Stress	High		
Total Number of Yes Answers			

One use of the risk factor analysis would be to see what percent of your employees have multiple risk factors and then try to decrease the number that fall into the medium and high-risk groups over time.

An analysis in one report showed the following distribution:

Risk Level	# of Risks	Average cost/employee	Average Work Site	Employee % Goals
Low Risk	0 to 2 risks	\$2,199	55%*	70%
Medium Risk	3 to 4 risks	\$3,460	28%	20%
High Risk	5 or more risks	\$5,520	17%	10%

* Average number with zero risk factors = 14%

Edington: From the UM-HMRC Medical Economics Report

Estimates based on the age-gender distribution of a specific corporate employee population

There are lots of HRA examples and vendors available. One free option that can serve as an individual self-directed assessment and provide anonymous feedback to employees can be found at <https://www.sharecare.com/static/realage>.

Primary Care Physician Visit vs. Health Assessment (or both)

As an organization, you can decide what factors you want to assess and how often you want to do assessments. Traditional worksite wellness has focused on online assessments and biometric screenings. A different approach is to encourage employees to schedule an annual wellness check-in with their Primary Care Provider (PCP). There are pluses and minuses to both these approaches and some worksites alternate between the options, with a physician visit one year and a health assessment and biometric screening the next year.

Preventive visits can be a great option as they are usually covered under your health plan and they allow your members to establish a relationship with their primary care provider. In return, this can also encourage your employee to become a better health care consumer by using their PCP versus urgent care or the emergency room for what could be a routine visit. Your ultimate goal is to have happy, healthy and productive employees. You should decide which employee health assessment and follow-up method would best achieve that goal.

Health Assessment and Biometric Screening vs. Primary Care Provider Office Visit

Health Assessment and Biometric Screening	Primary Care Provider Office Visit
Limited # of biometric measures collected	Covers all preventive screenings
Employee walks out the door with some biometric “numbers”, but no concrete follow-up plan.	Employee walks out the door with a specific follow-up plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Possible Rx ❖ Possible follow-up/referral
<u>Employer knows:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Some of their employees were screened ❖ That he may get aggregate data from a subset of his employees 	<u>Employer knows the employee:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Had a medical visit (signed form as part of an incentive package) ❖ Talked with their PCP ❖ Discussed their biometrics with their PCP and they are okay or are being treated ❖ Is up-to-date on all prevention screenings
Employer <u>doesn't</u> know if the employee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Will see their PCP ❖ Get needed prescriptions ❖ Set up follow-up appointments 	Employer <u>doesn't</u> know if the employee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Data can be aggregated and reported back to the employer (likely not)

There are lots of HA examples and vendors available. One free option that can serve as an individual self-directed assessment and provide anonymous feedback to employees is available at <https://www.sharecare.com/static/realage>.

OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION

PART 4: USING OTHER AVAILABLE DATA

You may be able to access other key data that already exists for your worksite. If your company is large enough to have human resources and/or information technology staff, check with them to see what information they may already have available. Your health insurer is also a good source for utilization data based on health claims and pharmacy purchases. Data may be available for you from your health care provider if you have a population size of 100 or more employees. Viewing this data as an aggregate for your company's employees will also help focus your efforts. Examples of existing data might include:

- ❖ Demographic data about your employees
- ❖ Absentee rate
- ❖ Workers compensation claims
- ❖ Health claims data
- ❖ Pharmaceutical use data

Identifying this data will serve two purposes:

- 1) It will help you decide what the big health issues are for your employees and it will allow you to better target those issues.

- 2) It will serve as “baseline” data to compare against later to see if your programming has made a difference. Building this evaluation measure in at the beginning will help you prove the value of your wellness program.

A Quick Look at the Health of Your Employees

As was the case with the worksite environmental assessment, the employee survey results can also be used as a baseline measure for later evaluation. The initial survey results can later be compared with a follow-up survey several months later to note progress.

Listed here are sample results of questions answered as part of a survey and how you might use the information. The full sample survey is available in Appendix D. You should modify the survey to meet your needs.

Employee Health Survey (completed sample of Employee Health Survey 1):		
Demographics		
1. Gender		Sample
28% Male 72% Female		
2. Age		
0% <20		
6% 20-29		
16% 30-39		
26% 40-49		
45% 50-59		
7% 60+		
Wellness Questions		
3. Current physical activity level.		
12% I do not exercise or walk regularly now, and I do not plan to start in the near future.		
29% I do not exercise or walk regularly, but I have been thinking about starting.		
36% I am doing moderate or vigorous physical activities for at least 30 minutes on some days, but fewer than 5 days a week.		
11% I have been doing moderate or vigorous physical activities for at least 30 minutes in a day, on five or more days a week, and have been doing it for the last 1 to 6 months.		
12% I have been doing moderate or vigorous physical activities for at least 30 minutes in a day, on five or more days a week, and have been doing it for 7 months or longer.		

(A blank Employee Health Survey 1 is available in Appendix D)

How do my survey results compare to other groups?

Survey return rates will vary depending on a number of factors: ease and time to complete the survey, survey audience, audience interest, etc. Keep in mind that voluntary survey completion tends to attract those that are most interested in the topic, so your survey results may not be representative of all your employees. Using incentives as well as different delivery methods of the survey (internet based or paper), to increase participation in the survey may give you a better idea of the interests and current health habits of your employees. Survey participation rates above 30 percent are good and rates over 50 percent are excellent. Average return rates from worksites participating in a recent pilot project were in the 40 to 50 percent range.

How do your employees compare on certain key health indicators? Average numbers for Wisconsin adults on key health indicators are:

- ❖ 53 percent of adults participate in 30+ minutes of moderate physical activity five or more days per week, or vigorous physical activity for 20+ minutes three or more days per week
- ❖ 23 percent of adults consume 5 or more fruits and vegetables per day
- ❖ 81 percent of adults are non-smokers

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

The demographic information in questions one and two show a largely female workforce (72 percent), and an older work force with 78 percent over age 40 and 52 percent over age 50. This should greatly influence the type and intensity of any physical activity programming you might do that would have mass appeal. The activity information from question eight and nine shows that 41 percent of employees are not active at all and that an additional 36 percent are not active at least five times per week. This suggests that any physical activity program proposed will have to start out slowly to engage participants at a relatively low level and build their stamina.

One other example of a quick survey that can provide a high-level indicator of health is the four-question Healthy Days Core Module. The survey asks a question about general health and then three questions about the number of days in the past month that someone did not feel good about their physical health, mental health and days when they were limited from their usual activities. A hard copy of the survey is available in Appendix D.

This survey can give you a baseline snapshot of your worksite's aggregate employee health and be used in the future for comparison purposes to evaluate your wellness program.

Employee Health Survey 2

Healthy Days Core Module questions. See Appendix D (example 2) for full content.

1. Would you say that in general your health is: Excellent – Poor scale
2. Now thinking about your physical health, which includes physical illness and injury, for how many days during the past 30 days was your physical health not good?
3. Now thinking about your mental health, which includes stress, depression, and problems with emotions, for how many days during the past 30 days was your mental health not good?
4. During the past 30 days, for about how many days did poor physical or mental health keep you from doing your usual activities, such as self-care, work, or recreation?

There is a close link between assessment (Step 3) and evaluation (Step 6). Collecting information up front provides both an insight of current health status of your workplace and a baseline for a later comparison to evaluate progress.

