

# WORKPLACE WELLNESS PROGRAM

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# IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

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An Interactive Workbook for Program Success

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Develop, launch, or refresh your workplace wellness program with a focus on attracting and retaining top talent, promoting employee well-being, and reducing costs to the business.



**SITEWELL**  
SOLUTIONS

## ABOUT THIS WORKBOOK

A well designed employee wellness program helps define and exemplify an organization's values and company culture. Benefits of workplace wellness programs to the organization's that provide them can include:

- Reduced health care costs
- Decreased absenteeism
- Increased productivity
- Reduced injuries
- Reduced worker's compensation and disability-related costs
- Improved employee morale, loyalty, and likelihood to promote the organization

Recruiting and retaining talent has become a major concern across most industries. Robust employee wellness programs serve as a cost-effective resource for differentiating your organization from competitors in the eyes of prospective and current employees.

In addition to supporting talent acquisition strategy, workplace wellness programs have been utilized for decades to help control rising health care costs. Workplace wellness programs are proven to reduce expenses directly related to health insurance and other indirect health care costs such as absenteeism and presenteeism (productivity loss attributed to present, yet disengaged employees).

Whether your workforce is onsite, remote, or hybrid - this workbook will guide you step-by-step through the decision making process needed to design an inclusive, effective workplace wellness program.



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**Have questions, interested in brainstorming solutions? Let's talk! Schedule a [complimentary workplace wellness program support call here](#) or contact [Info@SiteWellSolutions.com](mailto:Info@SiteWellSolutions.com).**





## Getting Started

### Assessments

Taking inventory of your workforce's current health status, wellness needs, wishes, and the organization's ability to address these items is a critical first step in developing a successful workplace wellness program. Set your program up to make a measurable impact and achieve long-term success with these steps and resources.

#### **What are your employee's wellness needs and interests?**

An extensive employee health assessment was designed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 2005 and is available for [inspiration here](#). Note that certain questions in this survey may be dated or may not be suited to your work environment. We recommend keeping the survey as short as possible and relevant to your workforce. By focusing on questions that help employees feel empowered to take charge of their health the assessment and forthcoming wellness program will be better received.

Guidance on employee wellness programs according to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is [available here](#). Wellness programs that are part of the group health plan will be subject to the [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act \(HIPAA\)](#). For compliance support, industry-specific survey development, or other resources, contact [info@sitewellsolutions.com](mailto:info@sitewellsolutions.com).

## **In which ways is your organization currently supporting employee wellness needs?**

Analyzing the ways in which your company is currently supporting employee wellness can help further identify new programming needs or opportunities to promote existing wellness support services. The CDC's Worksite Health ScoreCard provides a comprehensive evaluation of workplace wellness offerings and can be [accessed here](#).

Finally, if your organization provides health benefits, an assessment of group health plan utilization can illuminate opportunities for tremendous cost savings. The CDC has provided guidance on [evaluating health care cost data](#) for the purpose of guiding workplace wellness program development.

The following question prompts are designed to further support the assessment process.



## Getting Started | Assessments

Are there any areas of wellness that your organization would like to specifically focus on, or avoid for the time being?

*Example: Some workplaces may wish to emphasize tobacco cessation and may have less need for increasing the physical activity of employees.*

Is there any feedback from employees regarding their wellness needs that may not be captured in the assessment surveys?

*Example: Employees may have expressed a desire to improve their financial acumen, but may not feel comfortable sharing this in the employee wellness survey.*

Securing survey participation can be challenging. Write down at least 3 ways in which your organization will boost employee participation.

*Example: Provide an abbreviated survey, or encourage supervisors to promote the survey.*

## Assessments Check List

A program that is based on a thorough assessment process is more likely to experience long-term success. The following check-list can be used to support your progress as you move through this process.



Employee health assessment (or similar employee needs survey)



Worksite Health ScoreCard (or similar environmental analysis)



Health care cost evaluation



Employee feedback (outside of previously listed assessments)

Are there any other areas you wish to assess? Is there any other information you wish to capture prior to moving forward with the design of your workplace wellness program?

*Examples: Will subcontractors have access to services? Are there certain times that wellness services would be most convenient for employees to access? Are employees located in different time zones? If so, approximately how many employees are in each time zone?*

# Gaining Support

## Executive Alignment

Thriving workplace wellness programs have one thing in common, managerial support. Behavior change within an organization is often a top-down initiative. Managerial support is also key to securing funding, administration support, and can lead to integrating employee wellness goals into the business' key performance indicators.



Once the appropriate assessments have been completed, a business case communicating the value of a wellness program can be shared with C-Suite personnel. The Chief Human Capital Offices Council has created a helpful [Worksite Health and Wellness Campaign Fact Sheet](#) that serves as an excellent resource for promoting the business case of workplace wellness programs. See the prompts below for additional questions to consider as you prepare to share wellness program plans and obtain executive support.

What are the organization's short-term strategic goals? List at least 3 ways a wellness program will help the organization achieve these goals.



What are the organization's long-term strategic goals? List at least 3 ways a wellness program will help the organization achieve these goals.

How does an employee wellness program align with the organization's values, mission statement, or tag line?

Consider the leadership styles, personal values, strengths, weaknesses, and obligations of the organization's executives. How will this program align with their professional and personal objectives?

What are the specific benefits that the organization can derive from the employee wellness program? How can these be best communicated?

# Rallying Your Allies

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## Establishing a Wellness Committee

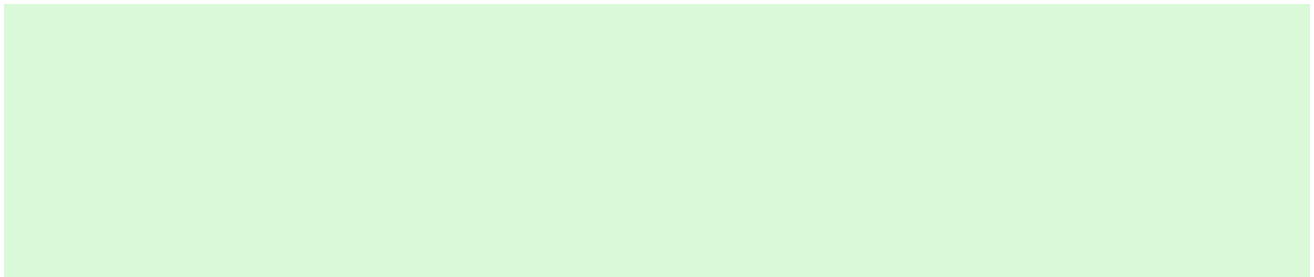


Once assessments have been completed and management support is obtained, it's time to create a wellness committee. This internal, employee-led committee can help build, promote, and sustain the workplace wellness program.

When possible, it is ideal to gather a group of wellness committee members with the following attributes:

- Diverse individuals who are a representation of their peers as well as different organizational departments
- Individuals with different perspectives and personal wellness values
- Individuals who are able to motivate others
- In good professional standing and able to obtain the support of their supervisors for committee participation

Does your organization require additional qualifications for committee service or leadership that will need to be considered in the selection process?



How will committee members be selected? How can we prevent burnout amongst committee members and allow for new perspectives over time?

What support will be provided to incentivize committee participation and improve the wellness committee's effectiveness?

*Examples: Managerial support in the form of dedicated time for committee work, continuing education resources, and financial incentives.*

What will the responsibilities of your employee wellness committee be?

*Examples: Evaluating which existing wellness programs should be promoted; developing strategic goals; assisting in the implementation and promotion of wellness activities.*



## Developing the Vision

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### Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives will be largely based on employee assessment findings, worksite environmental analysis, and organizational/executive focal points for wellness improvements. The program goals can be relatively broad and based on long-term support of the wellness program. Multiple objectives can be tied to each goal. While the goals can be vague and overarching, it is recommended that objectives contain realistic, measurable markers for success, and are time-bound.

Based on the employee assessment findings, what are the most in-demand wellness needs of your employee population?

Based on Worksite Health ScoreCard (or similar assessment) findings, what are the top environmental needs of the workplace?



Based on health care costs evaluations, which employee wellness needs are the most common and/or having the greatest financial impact?

Based on the responses noted in the previous three questions, are there any wellness program goals your organization would wish to *not* support at this time?

Based on the previous four responses, list any wellness support services or needs that showed up multiple times. Do not include initiatives the organization is unable to support at this time.

Based on the initiatives listed above, list at least 3 general goals that will be priorities for your wellness program.

For each goal listed above, list specific, measurable, realistic, time-bound objectives that will help your organization reach that goal.

*Example: Goal 1: Improve the mental well-being and resilience of the workforce.*

*Objective 1: Curate a library of at least 20 on-demand guided meditation videos by Dec. 1.*

*Objective 2: Provide a free virtual workshop on breathwork for all employees before Dec. 1.*

*Objective 3: Beginning Dec. 2 promote these offerings in the annual All Hands Meeting, company newsletter, and on a banner ad within the company intranet.*





## Making it Happen

### Budgeting

Good intentions can only take a workplace wellness program so far. Without some financial support, it is inevitable that the program will stall.

This being said, there is a wide range of budget allocations that can be leveraged to ensure the success of your workplace wellness program.

### How can you make the most of your budget?

Financial support from the organization helps wellness programs operate efficiently. Wellness programs lacking financial backing often suffer from poor engagement due to the workforce's lack of awareness of program offerings. Another factor may be underwhelming incentives for participation or lackluster wellness events that reflect poorly on the program as a whole.

To fully capitalize on the potential value of a workplace wellness program, it is important for the wellness committee to explore and implement a blend of low-cost and no-cost activities along with activities in which cost is unavoidable. Common wellness program expenses include:

- Incentives for participation in the wellness program
- Vendor fees for screenings or other specialized support services
- Promotional materials and marketing
- Fitness wearables or other tools that support healthy behavior

## Getting Established | Budgeting

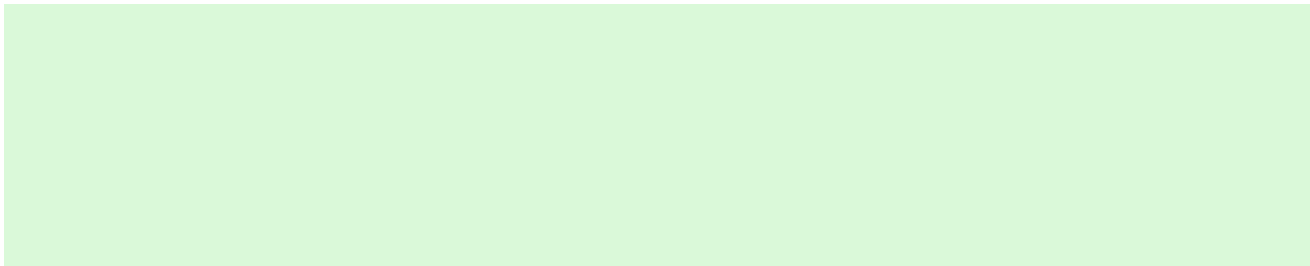
Are there aspects of your wellness program that employees would be willing to pay for? This can be assessed in surveys and typically, discounted rates can be arranged for volume-based services.

*Examples: Onsite chair massage, wellness seminars, Resilience Coaching.*



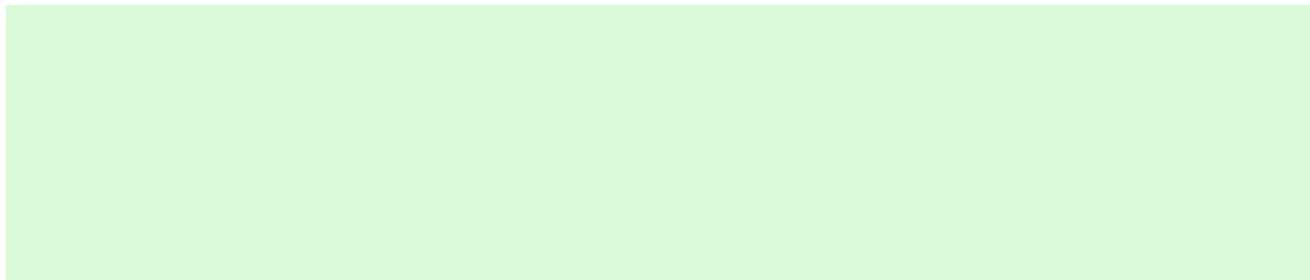
Does your health insurance provider offer any incentives to employees who partake in preventive health services? If so, can these rewards be aligned with the Wellness Committees' overarching goals?

*Example: Many insurance companies will reward gift cards to employees who complete a health assessment or visit their physician for an annual health screening.*



Are there health care providers in the surrounding community who will support the wellness program through educational outreach or discounts?

*Examples: Many massage studios will offer discounts to certain groups; medical providers often dedicate time each month to educational presentations for the community.*





What are low-cost or no-cost initiatives that could be leveraged to support the wellness programs' goals?

*Examples: A walking group will help employees move more; our insurance provider (or state) offers free tobacco cessation resources.*

How will our available budget be utilized to support the wellness program?

Tip: Engagement tends to be one of the biggest challenges when it comes to achieving measurable wellness program outcomes. Budgeting with an emphasis on promoting engagement tends to be a solid strategy.

*Examples: Printing quarterly flyers to promote upcoming wellness initiatives; prizes to encourage engagement in motivational challenges; a software platform to track wellness program "points" for participants.*



# Putting the Pieces Together

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## Wellness Program Design



The wellness program you and your wellness committee ultimately decide to implement may be small and highly focused, large and multi-faceted, or somewhere in between. There is no one-size-fits-all formula for workplace wellness needs.

Using the previously established goals, programs can be developed to drive progress towards achieving the measurable objectives of each goal. Some goals may overlap; it is not necessary to establish a unique program for each goal. Common programs include:

- Resilience programs
- Weight management
- Nutrition education
- Flu vaccination initiatives
- Movement motivation programs
- Health risk screenings
- Tobacco cessation
- Social fulfillment programs

What programs will be the initial focus of your wellness program? Which goals do these programs support?

## Legal Compliance Considerations

New legislation has been passed to empower and support employers who wish to provide employee wellness programs. Even with this support, there are still legal and compliance considerations to account for. The following sources, outlined by the Society of Human Resource Management, provide guidance for navigating wellness program legalities:

- The [ADA](#) prohibits employers from discriminating against individuals on the basis of disability, including an employee's access to wellness programs.
- [GINA](#) allows employers to "request, require, or purchase genetic information" in connection with employer-provided health or genetic services only if the services "are reasonably designed to promote health or prevent disease." The ADA has reasonable design requirements as well.
- When part of a group health plan, [HIPAA](#) mandates that individually identifiable health information collected from or created by participants in wellness programs is considered PHI and is protected by HIPAA rules.
- The [PPACA](#) requires that programs must be reasonably designed to promote health or prevent disease. Programs must be reasonably designed to be available to all similarly situated individuals, and individuals must be given notice of the opportunity to qualify for the same rewards through other means.



# Getting Engagement

## Communication and Marketing

In the case of a brand new workplace wellness program, it is important to develop a written policy that outlines program offerings, incentives for participation, and the organization's stance in support of the program. A roll-out of this policy along with the opportunity for further questions should be extended to all employees and become part of the new hire onboarding process.



After the official policy is in place and readily available for all employees to review, program-specific communications and marketing can begin. This is an exciting step and critical for engagement with program offerings. According to the Rule of Seven, people need to see or hear a marketing message at least seven times before they will engage with the product or service. However, some research shows the number of exposures needed to trigger action is actually higher. When it comes to encouraging people to take action in changing their health and lifestyle behaviors, it stands to reason that triggering engagement may take more than seven attempts. The point is - communicate, communicate, communicate. Here are common avenues for marketing and communication to consider:

- Company intranet
- Organization newsletters
- Flyers and other signage onsite
- Push notifications (if a company-wide app is being utilized)
- Social media (either company-wide pages that are public facing or internal pages developed for employee resource purposes)
- Word of mouth promotions





General best practices for effective workplace wellness program communication include:

- Clearly communicate which wellness programs are available, who has access, and if any incentives or prizes will be available for participants
- Generate excitement around a new program rollouts or launches
- Endorsements, visible support, or participation from C-Suite personnel
- Persuasive testimonials and anecdotes from peers
- Refresh the program's messaging when momentum seems to stall
- Consistent, reliable offerings that allow employees to know where to look for what is going on and whom to contact if they have questions

Which avenues for communication are available for your program? List at least 5 options that will help increase program awareness.

Who will be responsible for marketing and communications? How will the workload be divided to ensure ongoing, sustainable messaging?

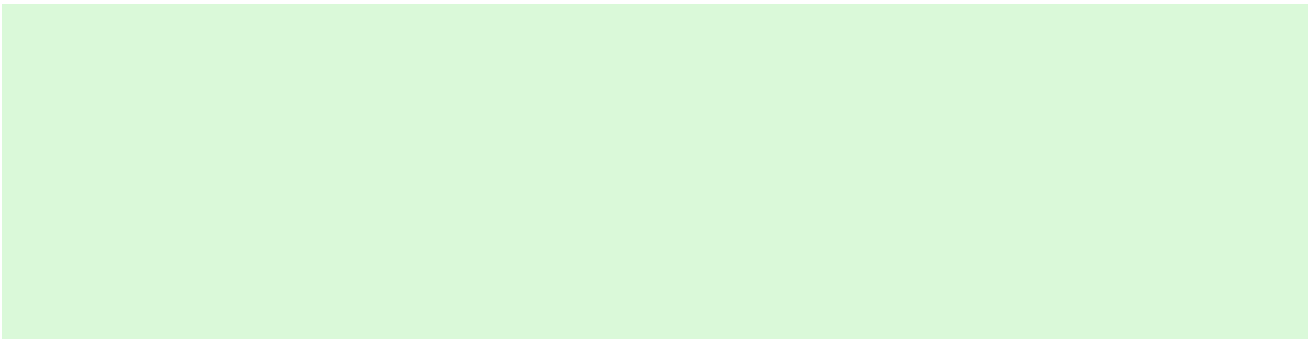
In which ways can the marketing and communication efforts be streamlined?

*Example: A 100-word write-up about program offerings will be featured in the newsletter, C-Suite personnel will use this verbiage to promote the program in upcoming meetings, and excerpts from the write-up will be used in social media marketing, and flyers.*



How will the effectiveness of different marketing initiatives be measured?

*Example: Each new program or event registration will include "how did you hear about this program?", clicks on social media posts will be tracked for engagement metrics.*





## Making an Impact

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### Measuring Success

The definition of success for your program will be largely based on the goals and objectives previously established. Participant engagement and feedback should also be considered when evaluating the success of the wellness program as a whole or any specific initiatives.

#### What are common metrics for measuring success?

This will vary from organization to organization. It is important to remember that even with seemingly low levels of engagement, your wellness program is adding tremendous value to the organization.

For example, a healthy weight management program that results in just one person losing 10 pounds can have profound effects on the individual's well-being and potential costs to the organization. Here is how just one person's successful lifestyle improvement can make a difference:

- Maintaining a healthy weight prevents arthritis later in life (arthritis is the number one cause of workplace disability and cost \$164 billion in lost wages in 2013).
- Reduced risk of certain cancers (Direct costs of cancer treatment account for 12% of employers' total medical costs in the U.S.)
- Prevent Type 2 Diabetes (a \$20B cost to U.S. businesses annually)
- Lower blood pressure (a \$21B cost to U.S. businesses annually)
- Reduce the risk of heart disease (\$147B in lost productivity annually).



While research has proven that the return on investment for employee wellness programs can be as high as \$6 for every \$1 invested, this data is challenging to capture. Strategies for evaluating the impact of a workplace wellness program may include:

- Unique participation for the program as a whole and specific initiatives
- Tracking completion of program initiatives
- Assessing self-reported health metrics in year-over-year analysis
- Analyzing changes in health plan utilization rates
- Evaluating employee feedback on the program

How will employee feedback on the wellness program be captured? With what frequency? What can be done to incentivize employees to provide feedback?

Based on your workplace wellness program goals, what data will need to be collected to measure success? How will this be obtained?



What data or feedback can be utilized to communicate the program's return on investment?

Are there any subjective data points that should be captured to support the efficacy of the program?

*Examples: Participant testimonials, photos of happy employees from wellness events.*

What do you personally feel are the proposed program's greatest strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats?

## Summary of Tasks

The following checklist is a recap of each step previously discussed. Each workplace is unique. Therefore establishing a wellness program may come with unique challenges on a site-by-site basis. To support forward progress and overcoming any obstacle, additional blank tasks have been added to this list and can be customized to your program needs.



### **Assessments**

Employee needs, environmental, and health care plan assessments.



### **Executive Alignment**

Gaining the support needed to ensure the long-term success of your program.



### **Wellness Committees**

Recruiting the collaborative team needed to help elevate and maintain your program.



### **Goals and Objectives**

Making the vision a reality with overarching goals and clear objectives.



### **Budgeting**

Securing monetary support for your program and optimizing that budget.



### **Program Design**

Creating a workplace wellness program that will help your employees thrive.



### **Communications**

Raising awareness, building excitement around the program, engagement tips.



### **Measuring Success**

Preparing for continuous improvement by evaluating key performance indicators.



### **Task:**

Details:



### **Task:**

Details:



## **Together we can build a healthy world, one organization at a time**

Designing, implementing, maintaining, and measuring the success of a workplace wellness program is a tremendous undertaking. We encourage you to take care of your personal well-being during the process and to partake in the program's services when they become available.

Finding yourself stuck on a step, looking for alternative options, just need a brainstorming session? We believe every organization deserves access to employee wellness services and are here to help your team thrive. Book a complimentary wellness program support call using the "Let's Chat!" button below or by contacting [Info@SiteWellSolutions.com](mailto:Info@SiteWellSolutions.com).

[Let's Chat!](#)