



Simple Wellness Solutions

*Need support creating
a wellness program
at your work?*

Get in touch with us at

416.456.18.57

info@proactivemovement.com

www.proactivemovement.com

Fit Commerce

Common Lies and Myths about Corporate Wellness

By: Greg Justice (April 17th, 2009)

Source: <http://www.fitcommerce.com/BLUEPRINT/Common-Lies-and-Myths-about-Corporate-Wellness-page.aspx?pagelid=915&portalid=2&cid=1574>

A proper corporate wellness program will maximize investment in the human resources that can make or break any businesses. Nine common lies and myths are dispelled. ...

For a CEO to get the most out of his or her business, they must get the most productivity out of their people. In a nutshell, the healthier their employees are, the more and better work they can do for their employer, and the better their quality of life will be. The recognition of this truism leads to a business practice generally known as "corporate wellness."

The world of corporate wellness is rife with hype, misleading propaganda, and false promises. Proper corporate wellness is critical to a business's success. There are proper guidelines for developing and managing a corporate wellness program that will maximize investment in the human resources that make or break businesses.

"A person's wellness, all the way from how often they get colds to their potential for serious disease, or repetitive stress injuries, is quite a bit more in their control than we generally want to admit."

Following are nine common myths, misperceptions, and outright lies regarding corporate wellness. Throughout this series of articles, you will learn how to tell fact from fiction and how to determine what is important for businesses and what will work. I will address each of these erroneous concepts and provide you with the critical information needed to show a company how they can maximize their work force's productivity.

Read these lies and myths like you were the CEO of a corporation.

COMMON LIES AND MYTHS ABOUT CORPORATE WELLNESS

1. Healthcare costs are going up, and there is nothing we can do about it.
2. What my employees do on their own time is none of my business.
3. People get sick. It's out of their control.
4. It's too expensive.
5. It takes too much time.
6. It's a touchy-feely new age thing that doesn't really have any solid benefit.
7. We don't have the facilities for exercise.
8. My employees won't want to do it.
9. It's too hard to know if it's working.

Healthcare costs are going up, and there's nothing we can do about it.

Healthcare costs are rising, but a sound corporate wellness program gives you an opportunity to minimize the effects on your business. There's plenty you can do about it. There are many factors that contribute to the increase of healthcare costs and related health insurance costs. Many of them are beyond your control.

But what is within your control is utilization. The healthier your group is the better insurance rates you will enjoy. This also applies to your workers compensation costs. The fewer injuries your staff incurs, the less expensive your workers compensation



Simple Wellness Solutions

*Need support creating
a wellness program
at your work?*

*Get in touch with us at
416.456.18.57*

*info@proactivemovement.com
www.proactivemovement.com*

insurance will be. Savings from workers compensation costs for healthy workers can range from 10% to 30% compared to others in your industry that have less healthy employees.

What my employees do on their own time is none of my business.

Although this may sound like an appropriate separation of personal and professional life, think about the benefits to the individual and your business. If your employee comes in reeking of alcohol in the morning after a night of partying hardy, is that none of your business? Even if he or she is not actually drunk, you might have concerns about his or her ability to function, as well as concerns about his or her influence on other staff.

Sending the employee home for the day (generally without pay) is not an uncommon employer response to this behavior. Repeat the activity two or three times in a month, and you start to worry about the employee having a substance abuse problem. Is it your "business" yet? At some point in time, what an employee does on his or her own time does impact your workplace. When it comes to health insurance, benefits, workers compensation costs, and productivity, it is definitely your business. The challenge is that employers historically do not view wellness as being related to costs or productivity. This series of articles will change that.

People get sick. It's out of their control.

More incidents of illness than you could ever imagine are a result of lifestyle choices. We'll get into them in detail throughout this series of articles. By way of summary, however, note that six of the top seven causes of death in the U.S. are lifestyle diseases. The one exception is automobile accidents.

A person's wellness, all the way from how often they get colds to their potential for serious disease, or repetitive stress injuries, is quite a bit more in their control than we generally want to admit.

It's too expensive. My company's too small to afford a wellness program.

Wellness programs can be surprisingly inexpensive and have been proven to be cost-effective. The returns in reduced costs are the tip of the iceberg. Increased productivity, focus and energy at work returns tremendous benefits. Increased loyalty and camaraderie from a workforce that appreciates the employer's concern and support reduces turnover, which is yet another cost savings. An employer with just a handful of employees will benefit from these advantages.

It takes too much time.

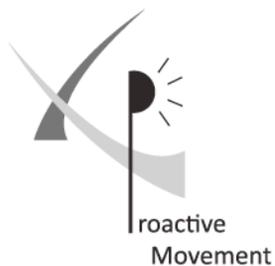
Management support and involvement is a must for a wellness program to be successful. However, this is not a time-consuming endeavor. Most importantly, much of what employees can do to participate is done outside of working hours. If you're inclined to allow extra time in the work day for your employees to exercise, so much the better. But if you cannot spare the time during the work day, they can exercise during lunch or after work with quick, effective 30 minute workout regimens.

It's a touchy-feely new age thing that doesn't really have any solid benefit.

Wellness programs have been researched and studied for over 20 years now. Their benefits are irrefutable, when they are properly implemented and when the management team is committed to their success.

We don't have the facilities for exercise.

You don't need a gym in order to have room to exercise. You don't need thousands of dollars of complex gym equipment for your employees to exercise. Workouts can



Simple Wellness Solutions

*Need support creating
a wellness program
at your work?*

*Get in touch with us at
416.456.18.57*

info@proactivemovement.com

www.proactivemovement.com

be conducted in small areas with bodyweight for resistance and be amazingly effective.

My employees won't participate.

Not all employees will be interested. Many, however, are already committed to fitness. Others will benefit from a bit of education on the matter and are quite willing to participate in a program that's easy to understand, convenient, and encouraged by their employer. Add the incentive of reduced health insurance premium, and any other incentives you want to use to sweeten the pot, and you'll have more participation than you would have imagined.

Some exercise formats require very little space.

It's too hard to know if it's working.

When you set up your wellness program, you can (and should) also determine what you want to achieve with it. Productivity metrics, healthcare cost reduction, and reduced on-the-job injuries will provide statistical evidence of the program's effectiveness over time.