



# UNIT - 2

## DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF WORKPLACE WELLNESS PROGRAM

### Learning Outcomes

**By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:**

- ✓ Describe the necessity of workplace wellness programs
- ✓ Create program elements that reflect the needs of employees and the objectives of the organization

## Unit 2

# Designing and Implementation of Workplace Wellness Program

## Program Elements

### Designing Your Program, Part One

#### Case Study One: From Sedentary to Sensational

##### *Information*

You are working with a company that has 400 employees who mostly work at desks at their computers, providing insurance products and support. About 150 employees work as customer service representatives (on the phone or providing service in person at a counter). Another 150 people work in cubicles processing insurance claims. There are also 100 people who work in human resources, accounting, sales, marketing, management, and support roles mainly from their offices and desks. These jobs are all considered sedentary and provide few opportunities during the workday for people to even get up and move around.

Your workplace wellness program should focus on active living. Your goal is to get people committed to and participating in two hours of activity per week, outside of their usual work (although they could do things on their lunch break).

You have been given \$4,000 (\$10 per employee per year, with a 400 person company) to plan, create, implement, and follow up the program.

##### *Program Elements*

**What are the goals of this program?**

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**What is the expected percentage of employees who will use the program?**

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**What you will spend the budget on?**

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**Write a paragraph with your best persuasive writing skills to help make your pitch for the program to your senior executive team. Remember that you need their support (and ongoing funding).**

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**How will you measure results of the program?**

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**Who will present your case to the larger group?**

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### **Case Study Two: Smoking Cessation Program**

#### ***Information***

Your company of 150 people operates a machine and welding shop where you create large pieces of equipment used in heavy industries like oil, fishing, and logging. 80% of your employees are men. After a survey, you learned that 75% of all employees (men and women) smoke at least 15 cigarettes a day. An additional 10% smoke at least 20 cigarettes per day.

There was an effort about five years ago to encourage people to quit when one of the staff was diagnosed with lung cancer, and at that time the smoking rate went down to about 40% and stayed there for two years. Now there are lots of new employees, and many of the more senior ones have resumed smoking.

You have a \$1,000 budget for this program. Smoking cessation products are not covered under your benefit plan.

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## Designing Your Program, Part Two

### Case Study Three: Nutrition Program

#### *Information*

You work with a food manufacturing company that provides pre-made products for the restaurant industry (such as burgers, fries, and cheese sticks). Your cafeteria offers the same products to the staff at a nominal cost. The break room machines are filled with junk food.

Analysis of your drug plan shows higher than normal usage of drugs for stomach problems (such as irritable bowel, diverticulitis, and gastroenteritis) as well as high cholesterol and diabetes. When you look at the production floor, it appears that at least 70% of your workforce is overweight. Several of the employees are on a modified work program where they sit on a stool to do their work because they are not physically able to stand throughout their shift.

Your task is to create a program focused on eating well. Since these habits are deeply ingrained, you are going to encounter lots of resistance. You have a very limited budget to implement this program: for 200 staff you have \$1,000 per year.

#### *Program Elements*

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**Case Study Four: Alcohol and Drug Program**

***Information***

You work for a 10 year old mining company in an isolated area at a large mining camp. The camp is “dry,” meaning that employees are not allowed to bring alcohol or recreational drugs onto the property with them. (There have been some incidents in the past that have made you wonder if the policy is being enforced.)

Your organization’s insurance company is insisting that all employees who drive company vehicles must produce a driver’s abstract so the insurance company can determine the current risks and rate. It was a shock for the company to learn that 60% of the 200 member workforce had at least one suspension for driving while impaired. Some of them have up to three suspensions and there are five people who were jailed for impaired driving in the last five years.

Your boss is keen for you to create a drug and alcohol program for employees. You have a budget of \$100 per employee to eliminate the risk for further problems.

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## Designing Your Program, Part Three

### Case Study Five: New Parent Program

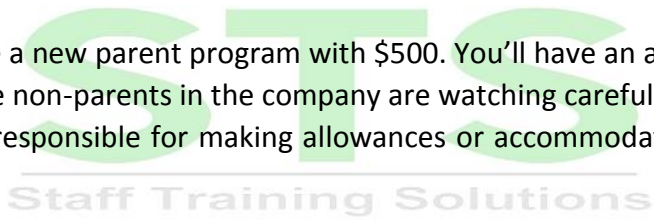
#### *Information*

Your company has a lot of moms working there, and it seems there has been a bit of a baby boom in the last few years! Since people love the work and have child care arranged beforehand (or a partner who can care for the child), they are typically back at work four months after their baby is born (if not sooner).

However, returning to work when there is an infant at home creates challenges. New moms in particular struggle with the adjustment (and with what to do when babies or young children are ill) and they have high levels of absenteeism.

Under employment legislation, you have a duty to accommodate people with family situations, but in most places the law is either unclear or decisions have yet to be made on how far you have to go to accommodate family situations. After all, you have a business to operate.

Your task is to create a new parent program with \$500. You'll have an added element of planning for this program because the non-parents in the company are watching carefully. They will not be impressed if in some way they are responsible for making allowances or accommodations for parents unless they also benefit in some way.



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### **Case Study Six: Flexible Work Hours Program**

#### ***Information***

Your company has a workforce of 100 people, and is a leader in the technology sector. They provide programming and design for customers who want video-game-style applications and processes, as well as support to the users. Staff have indicated that they are dealing with high levels of stress due to deadlines, demanding clients, and unpredictable work schedules. You are going to design a flex schedule that gives them more control over their work schedule, while also managing to work their required number of hours per week (40) and meeting all their deadlines.

Create a flexible work hours program. Since this program is mostly about planning and implementation, you only have access to a budget of \$250.

#### ***Program Elements***

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## Implementing Your Workplace Wellness Program

### Implementation Options

As you design your program, there are plenty of options for implementation. If you are launching a new overall program, some kind of celebratory kick off is probably in order! Your goal with implementation is to encourage a lot of participation by employees, and modeling by your executive, committee members, and stakeholders. If you don't get lots of participation, your executive is going to have a hard time supporting a program (mostly because they take up your time and company budget money), no matter how good the idea is.

You have lots of options available. If you have different program elements, you may want to stagger them. (You could start a healthy heart program during heart and stroke month, a healthy nutrition program during apple month, a series of stress reduction workshops leading up to a holiday season, and so on.) You can also design programs to run for a specified period of time, like hosting a walking club in summer months, a series of healthy cooking classes in the winter months, or a series of six lunch and learn sessions about a range of topics.

If you are creating a single topic element (such as a smoking cessation clinic, for example), you can implement the program all at once, or you could do it one location at a time if your workforce is spread out in several locations.

Whatever you decide, here are a few tips for success:

- Keep the program details within the planning committee so that the workforce doesn't get excited about something that is later scaled back or even cancelled. They will lose trust and hope that the workplace wellness program is going to do anything for them.
- Motivation is an ongoing process, not a one-time event. In order to keep people interested in your program and to encourage utilization, you need to have a plan that encourages them to get involved and to stay engaged. You can do this by celebrating the kick off, sharing events and updates in your company newsletter, carefully designing strategies to keep people engaged, and reminding people that the programs exist.

### Identifying Motivators

**Choose a topic that you will actually be implementing at work, or choose one of the case studies from Session Seven. Write your topic below.**

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**Generate a list of four to six ideas to motivate and continually engage participants in the program, as well as employees who need some enticing.**

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## Reviewing the Plan

### Evaluating Prior to Launch

If your wellness program doesn't do a great job of encouraging and supporting people to participate, it won't last. In addition, you've got to keep the executive of your company on board. It's also important that company leaders model both the value of programs being offered and their utilization.

Take some time to reconnect the committee and go over the program details before you launch each element of the program. Make sure that your goals align with the strategic plan that the company is supporting, and that you have the support of your executive. Make sure that your launch and marketing plan to attract and engage users is compelling and will encourage employees to "get with the program." Also, make sure that program elements are available and that you are not favoring one group or shift over another.

Make note of any gaps that you perceive and address those issues prior to launching a program element, and before people can be dissuaded from the program.

**Make notes about what your evaluation plan might look like.**

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### **Getting the Executive on Board**

Although you have come a certain distance already and have had at least a cursory approval from your executive team, it's entirely possible that all of them are not really going to get on board with the program. This is a big problem, since their support, modeling, and encouragement to others is so important for program success. If your executive is not already modeling good wellness behaviors and practices for others, this is the last chance you have to engage them prior to program launch.

**Brainstorm a list of ways to engage your executive and leadership teams in the workplace wellness program.**

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Often, it is useful to measure statistics as percentages. For example, let's say that last year 600 employees participated in your wellness program. This year, 500 employees participated. However, the workforce shrunk from 1000 to 700 in that year. If you express the values as a percentage, you could say that last year 60% of the workforce participated, while this year approximately 70% of the workforce participated.

### Understanding Ratios

Ratios are simply numbers that let us compare. For example, if your car gives you 20 miles to a gallon of gas, and the new SUV you are looking at gives you 10 miles per gallon, you have just done a ratio analysis to compare the operating costs of the two vehicles.

In terms of workplace wellness, you may calculate cost-benefit ratios or the ratio of people considered obese to those within normal weight ranges. Traditional return on investment formulas can be difficult to calculate since many benefits of workplace wellness programs are not tangible.

### Making it Count

Map out what kind of statistics you will need to keep and report on.



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How will you organize your information?

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**Further Reading:**

