


HEALTH PROMOTION

practitioner

practical solutions for health enhancement programming



AMERICAN CAST IRON PIPE COMPANY OPERATES BY THE GOLDEN RULE

Sheri Snow, MA, RD, CDE
Wellness Manager

plus...

- HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR NEXT CONFERENCE
- WELLNESS CAMPAIGN DESIGN CHECKLIST
- HOW TO KNOW WHO AND WHAT TO LET GO

on the cover & inside

If you contemplate the Golden Rule, it turns out to be an injunction to live by grace rather than by what you think other people deserve.

Deepak Chopra

This *Practitioner* issue highlights the success of American Cast Iron Pipe Company's WellBody program. Founder John Eagan's vision was to build his business based on a very simple rule: *Treat people as you would want to be treated.* That philosophy still guides the company and their award-winning wellness program. See how they do it beginning on page 10.

Regular contributor Paul Terry explores ways to put coercion into action in an interview with Smarts and Stamina authors MJ Shaar and Kathryn Britton. And Health Enhancement Systems consultant Beth Shepard shows practitioners how to craft well-being messages that lay the foundation for self-motivation.

If you're attending a conference this year, managing editor Dean Witherspoon details steps to make the most of the experience and come away energized to do even greater things at your organization. And whether you're building or buying your wellness campaigns, we supply a simple design checklist on page 14 to get the best results for your participants and your program.

As always, we want to hear from you. Send your article suggestions to editor@hesonline.com.

insight

The 6 Traits of Successful Wellness Leaders

There are multiple paths to wellness program success, but in our work with hundreds of managers over the years some recurring themes in their approach have appeared. Though not universal or all-inclusive, here's what we see often:

Often paired with their exercise or meditation time, we've heard many managers say they take time (5-30 minutes) almost every day to just think of nothing or anything, without outside stimulus.

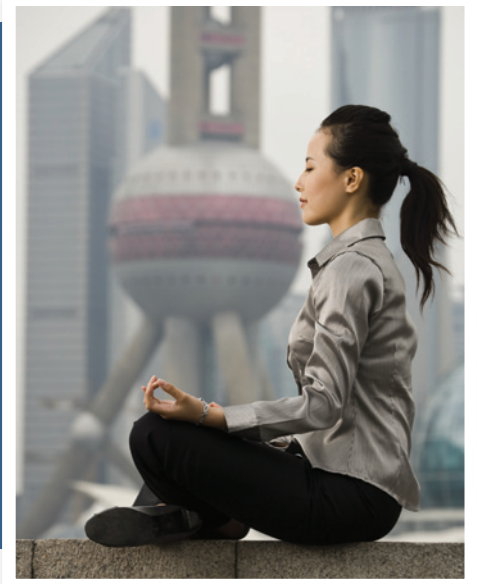
- **Outside interests.** Typically, successful wellness leaders have deep interests — which vary widely — beyond the industry, where those experiences come back to support or inspire their work.
- **Reflective, introspective time.** Often paired with their exercise or meditation time, we've heard



...by Dean Witherspoon

many managers say they take time (5-30 minutes) almost every day to just think of nothing or anything, without outside stimulus. If they rush through their day completing one task after another, fatigue sets in — leading to lower-quality decisions and work product. Unplugging sort of reboots their reserves.

- **A solution mindset.** There's a stark difference between long-term successful wellness managers and those you can almost predict



won't last long in the field. High-performing managers don't lament (at least not for long) tight budgets or an office in the basement. They approach each new obstacle as a challenge, not a burden. And they look for answers that not only solve

the problem at hand but contribute to ongoing results.

- **Failure, early and often.** Many excellent wellness leaders can point to lots of early misses in their careers, but they had the attitude (and fortunately a supportive boss) that it's okay to fail if you learn from it and apply the lessons. And they remain unafraid of failure throughout their careers. Those who played it safest seem more likely to simply hang on after several years in one position.
- **Talent spotters.** Some managers have the good fortune to handpick their wellness team, while others are 1-person departments who have to beg and borrow for help. In both instances, we find they've aligned with highly skilled individuals — whether it's up, down, or sideways in the organization. There's almost no ego involved and successful leaders are more than eager to shine the spotlight on those who've contributed to their accomplishments.
- **Genuine affection for others.** We've known lots of smart people over the years who completely fail at wellness leadership because — to put it directly — they care more about their own advancement than the welfare of those they work with and serve. A propensity to hug isn't enough; genuine interest in helping others improve the quality of their life can't be faked for long and ultimately separates the best from the rest.

How you define success influences which attributes rise to the top. But our association with wellness managers who love their work and believe it gives them purpose/meaning suggests these 6 traits are significant. 📊

How to Know Who and What to Let Go

It's not in our nature to turn away anyone from our wellness services. Most managers and programs go to great lengths to be all-inclusive, sometimes to the detriment of the majority... *If we can't offer this to the 4% of our Spanish speaking-only population, we can't offer it to everyone else.* It's a laudable, yet often impractical goal.

All wellness managers and programs have limited time, energy, and money, so it's important to understand when you need to cut your losses with a participant, group, or activity and move on to others that offer greater upside. Some signs:

Nothing sucks the energy out of you more than someone or something that's a waste of time.

- **They're wasting your time.** Whether it's an individual dropping by your office to shoot the breeze or a committee you're chained to that meets but never does anything, end it. Nothing sucks the energy out of you more than someone or something that's a waste of time.
- **You're getting little return for your investment.** What actually contributes to people moving more and eating healthier? Do more of that and less of other things. Does it make sense to commit 25% of your annual budget to an assessment when you already know the outcome? Are you or your participants really

going to discover some magical bit of information that will somehow be different than it was the last time you did this?

- **You dislike what you're doing.** Wellness should be fulfilling at the least, and we think it should be enjoyable too. But if you're putting energy into stuff that just drags you down, try not doing it for a year. Wellness challenges a pain in your neck? Health coaching feels like a lead weight you're carrying around? The annual fun run has become un-fun? Complete this sentence: *My job and the wellness program would be better if I could stop doing...*



then find a way to not do that for a month, a quarter, or a year and see how it works out.

- **They're never satisfied.** Obviously, if it's your boss you've got to find a way to reach common ground. But if a participant or department is never pleased despite your best efforts, it may be time to say *I can't help you* and move on.

Your energy is limited and time is finite. Don't waste either when you could be putting both to more productive use. 📊

How to Get the Most Out of Your Next Conference

...by Dean Witherspoon

Wellness conferences — whether local or national — can be a good way to recharge your batteries and come back to work inspired to do great things. Or they can be a waste of time. Here's how to ensure the former and prevent the latter.

flight at 5 AM that gets in 10 minutes before the opening keynote is exhausting and anxiety producing. You're guaranteed not to be at your best and retain information if you're rushed or tired.

in each. And if presentations are given more than once, ask other attendees which they got the most from and you'll learn quickly what's a good use of your time.

Have lunch with people you don't know. Most folks are comfortable talking in this environment so you can learn about them, where they're from, and what they've experienced at the conference.



- **Make sure it's worthwhile and relevant.** Easier said than done, but the best way is to call 3 or 4 people who went last year. What did they learn? Who did they meet? What have they put to use? Would they go again? Then look at the lineup of speakers, activities, vendors, and social functions. Are these people and topics that really interest you and have implications for your work? Are new faces sprinkled in with veteran presenters or does it look like the same conference from a decade ago?
- **Get there early.** Give yourself time to get the lay of the land as well as rest and relax a bit before the games begin. Catching a cross-country

- **Don't network, engage.** Collecting business cards like they're baseball cards isn't a complete waste of time, but it's pretty close. Forget about first impressions and simply say hello to people you meet, then try to learn as much as you can about them and what they do. And don't feign interest just so you can tell someone all about yourself. Be open to giving as well as receiving, but save the narcissism for Facebook.
- **Be selective about sessions you attend.** It's unusual for a conference to have great back-to-back-to-back presentations, so don't try to attend them all unless you've a real interest

- **Leave sessions (discreetly) that aren't meeting your needs.** No one wants to be rude to a speaker by walking out in the middle of a presentation — so don't if you feel uncomfortable or think it would hurt the experience for others. But if the session was misrepresented in the program or is just bad, leaving may be the kindest thing you can do.
- **Meet speakers who inspire.** If you attend a great session and think you might want to follow up with a presenter, introduce yourself after the talk and ask to contact them in the future. It's a rewarding way to access true experts in a specific area that interests you.

- **Have lunch with people you don't know.** Most folks are comfortable talking in this environment so you can learn about them, where they're from, and what they've experienced at the conference.
- **Get some rest before attending social functions.** Being always "on" is draining, so put your feet up and turn on Wolf Blitzer or music in your room for an hour before going to the mixer. You'll feel more like mingling if your dogs aren't barking.
- **Create a to-do list while the experience is still fresh.** Set aside time in the room or on the plane ride home to capture actions items — people to follow up with, conversations to have back at work, topics to explore further, slide decks to get. Then try to knock off the list your first few days back at work so it doesn't get stale.

Have a great conference experience you'd like to share? Send your comments to deanw@hesonline.com. We're always looking for the best to attend and recommend. 🇺🇸

Showcasing Well-Being in Recruitment Programs

Sustained (though slow) growth in the economy has spurred new recruitment and hiring in the last year. For more than 30 years, wellness managers have claimed worksite programs offer a recruitment advantage. Yet few programs we know have a plan for presenting services in the best light to potential/new employees; even fewer have a method to judge their effect.

Greater recruitment and hiring activity are opportunities to demonstrate added value and increase participation. Consider these steps:

- **Identify the target audience.** Most organizations will focus recruitment efforts on 2-3 disciplines. Your approach will vary depending on their training — technical, creative, business, etc.
- **Learn what's important to them.** Not too many 22-year-old college graduates are concerned about cholesterol or blood pressure. But they are interested in fitness, social events, and recreation. Interview or survey some new employees to find out their priorities.
- **Highlight what they want.** You may not change your programming for a few new hires, but you might already provide the right services and only need to make sure they know about them and feel welcomed.
- **Ask to join the recruiting team.** Not to go on campus visits, but to be certain your services are represented in the best way.
- **Invite new employees to help you.** If you're preparing web, video, or print material for the recruiter to share, ask new employees to help you design content that resonates with them.



- **Spend time with successful recruiters.** Provide an overview of your services and benefits to employees/the organizations.
- **Find out why some got away.** When your employer doesn't land a top recruit, try to learn why and see if there's a way for you to help.
- **Measure your impact.** A good recruiting department will survey new employees to see what made them select the organization. Be sure your wellness program is a choice on the survey.

Presenting your services in the best light to candidates and new hires creates an entry point into your program. If they see your services as a plus before they accept the job, they're even more likely to participate once they start work.

Finally, be sure to prove your efforts and success in contributing to recruitment programs. Quarterly or annual reports peppered with favorable quotes from new employees are especially effective. 🇺🇸



Putting “Coaction” Into Action

...by Paul Terry

In a past column I discussed situational leadership and featured Dr. Sara Johnson’s studies on “coaction” — a finding from her work at Pro-Change Behavior Systems that suggests taking effective action on one behavior improves the chances of simultaneously improving another behavior. It is a counter intuitive idea about behavior change, given so many exhort us to take small steps and/or have us focus on single behaviors like smoking, stress, or fitness. That’s why I felt fortunate to meet a well-being practitioner who has been applying what Johnson researches. Marie-Josée Shaar (“MJ” for those of us who get tongue tied by a French accent) and her colleague Kathryn Britton wrote the book: *Smarts and Stamina: The Busy Person’s Guide to Optimal Health and Performance*. MJ’s company by the same name also offers wellness workshops and an online coaching program.

Listen to Shaar’s presentations and you’ll learn her interest in coaction derives from biological as well as behavioral principles. She explains the role of serotonin, cortisol, and diurnal hormones while she describes “leveraging the connections between our various behaviors and the associated changes in biochemical activity.” MJ notes how working on behaviors together “keeps people from reinforcing past failures, getting stuck, and quitting. Programs that focus on only one or two of these behaviors lose in effectiveness, because they miss out on the efficiencies.”

Given the intersection of biochemistry and systems thinking might be esoteric

for some, I asked Shaar and Britton for a simpler example: “Our kids don’t learn the whole K-12 English curriculum in grades 1, 2, and 3, all of math in grades 4, 5, and 6, history in grade 7 and so on — and for very good reasons. Kids need to learn different skills at the same time because one reinforces the other. Strong language skills help a child understand math problems, and strong math skills help with science puzzles.”



MJ Shaar, MAPP, CPT

President, Smarts and Stamina



Kathryn Britton, MAPP

This example reminds me of Dr. Johnson’s speculation that coaction occurs because the skills accrued from changing one behavior generalize to other behaviors we could address. But, according to ProChange experts, tackling another behavior successfully still relates to readiness to change. So I asked Shaar and Britton whether working on one behavior could affect our stages of change related to another? “Sure, health habits interact with one another. We intuitively know that when we sleep poorly, we are drawn to snacking and overeating. We also know that nothing gets rid of a bad

Leadership in health promotion



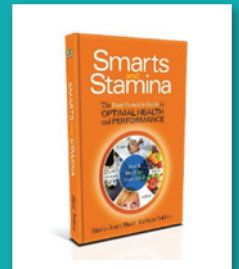
Paul Terry, PhD

EVP and Chief Science Officer at StayWell Health Management

mood faster than a good sweat and that lower stress levels contribute to a better night’s sleep. When we eat and sleep well, we have the energy to enjoy exercise.

According to Shaar, *Smarts and Stamina* used a workbook approach so that 50

research-based concepts could be translated to highly practical, health-building activities. The book was also written as a resource for coaches or wellness program leaders hoping to find new ways to engage others. Visit bit.ly/SaSBook (case sensitive) for more details. To access several examples of these activities visit <http://healthpromotionjournal.com/blog/>.



Being active then makes it easier to fall asleep. Our sleep, food, mood, and exercise habits go together and grow together, not only because of how they make us feel subjectively, but also because of the biochemical activity that each generates in the body.”

Shaar and Britton trained under Martin Seligman and often allude to their rootedness in Positive Psychology principles. I wondered how they compared their approach to that of stages of change disciples. “Prochaska wrote that interventions that try to change multiple health behaviors

Get the ball rolling, feel in control and capable of change, and quickly build on initial victories. That’s much more energizing and sustainable than trying to fix your weakest area first.

either simultaneously or sequentially are likely to be the future of preventive medicine (Prochaska, J., 2008, *Preventive Medicine*, 46(3), 281-285). We do not recommend a specific, prescribed step-by-step process. Rather, we help participants as they create their own unique approaches to healthy living by finding the activities that are most interesting to them and easiest to integrate in their own busy lifestyles. In other words, our focus is on what people will do, not what they won’t.”

As a triumphant parent, having helped raise 2 high-spirited children into fully formed and astounding adults, it is a focus that resonates. Still, I doubt any professional trained in health


education would focus on a behavior a person is disinterested in focusing on themselves. I wondered, then, whether Shaar and Britton might be uncovering a fundamental tenet of coercion that involves considerably more than just starting slowly. That is, does being intentional about noticing the interactions between behaviors increase the likelihood that people will graduate from easier changes to harder changes?

You’ll get the ball rolling, feel in control and capable of change, and quickly build on initial victories. That’s much more energizing and sustainable than trying to fix your weakest area first.”

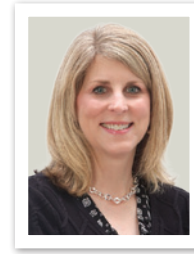
Like Gallup’s “Strength Finder” concept for improving workforce engagement or Search Institute’s “Developmental Assets” for supporting



Their answer is convincing and refreshingly unambiguous when compared to the boggling language used by coercion researchers. “When people ask us how they can become healthier, here’s our answer. Start with whatever is easiest for you instead of what’s most difficult. If you have had many failed diets, then food is your problem, not your solution. Work on sleep, mood, and/or exercise first, and food will become less of a challenge.

youth achievement, there is considerable evidence that a focus on what we do well may be what it takes to better manage our shortcomings. Practitioners who help open the pathways from success in one area to improvements in other areas will need to be deliberate about putting coercion into action. 

Craft the Right Messages to Cultivate Self-Motivation ...by Beth Shepard



Beth Shepard
Health Promotion
Consultant, Health
Enhancement
Systems

You work hard to offer top-notch, engaging wellness programs and services — so why don't more people participate... is it something you said? Maybe.

How you communicate about your workplace wellness program shapes perception — and, like it or not, perception is reality. Traditional bulletins containing just the facts are

“only engagement can produce mastery (competence) — becoming better at something that matters.”

We all agree that health behaviors like regular exercise, good nutrition, and stress management skills matter. So how do you create messages that promote engagement and, ultimately, behavior that leads to mastery? Focus on employees'

- “Complete the health risk assessment by 4/2. If your body mass index is >30, a health coach will call to enroll you in the new Healthy Weight Program that begins 5/1.”

(I'd like to lose weight, but things are too stressful with taking care of Dad right now. This feels presumptuous... like I'm being backed into a corner.)

Focus on employees' basic needs for autonomy, competence, and connectedness with every wellness communication.



boring. Heavy-handed or patronizing messages are offputting. Instead, use lessons from self-determination theory (SDT) to carefully craft communications that appeal and inspire.

basic needs for autonomy, competence, and connectedness with every wellness communication.

Feed the Needs

In Why We Do What We Do (Penguin, 1995), researcher Edward Deci explains SDT principles. To be self-motivated for any task, people need a sense of autonomy, competence, and interpersonal connectedness. Daniel Pink addresses some of the same concepts in *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us* (Riverhead Books, 2009). Pink points out that

Make It or Break It

Here are a couple un-inspiring messages and how they might come across to employees:

- “Sign up today for the wellness challenge; deadline is 3/20. Visit www.hrbenefits.xyz for details.”
(I'm asleep already, I don't really know what's going on, and I'm so not interested.)

In contrast, the wellness messages below are deliberately written to support the need for autonomy, competence, and connectedness:

Interested in making a change to feel your best? You'll find plenty of support here at XYZ: (Autonomy)

- Team up with coworkers for fun, fitness, and healthy eating — and square off against rivals — in a virtual basketball tournament with Slam Dunk Wellness. (Connectedness)

- Join or form an onsite walking group and catch up with coworkers as you all get fit together. (Autonomy, connectedness)
- Need some just-in-time tips to make healthy living easier? Complete short online modules and quizzes on a topic of your choice, at your own pace. Examples: Fast & Fabulous Healthy Dinners, Fitness on a Budget, and Meditation Basics (Autonomy, competence)
- Check out the biweekly High Five! feature on www.hrbenefits.xyz for inspiring wellness success stories from your colleagues and their families. (Competence, connectedness)
- With new wellness challenges and activities kicking off throughout the year, find something that appeals to you when *you're* ready. (Autonomy)

See the difference?

Rules of Engagement

Behavioral and motivational psychology research is clear: Lasting change occurs only when people decide the payoff is worth the work involved *and they're ready to do it for themselves*. Earning a gift card or an insurance premium discount aren't strong enough motivators to sustain people through the difficult and complex process of losing weight or not smoking.

The right tools and resources, the right information, and the right level of support are vital, too — but even the best-designed program can't help people if it doesn't attract them. Capture interest with prose that acknowledges — and respects — employees' basic psychological needs; keep them engaged and on track with programs, activities, and services that do the same. 🇺🇸

Build a Better Wellness Program With Self-Determination Theory

Design your wellness program to support autonomy, competence, and connectedness:

- Ditch the financial incentives and penalties. If participation isn't voluntary, fat chance the behavior will last when the carrot or stick goes away.
- Offer multiple entry points so employees can join when *they're* ready, not on an externally driven timeline.
- Allow choices whenever possible: individual vs. team participation; specific activities and goals; variety of times and places.
- Provide how-to information in different formats — online modules, podcasts, video clips, or onsite demos — to appeal to diverse learning styles and preferences.
- Include select social components in your programming — like a Tumblr blog or an in-program wall for sharing encouragement, wellness successes, struggles, and ideas.
- Use self-assessments to promote insight and reflection around personal strengths and goals.
- Embed brief quizzes in wellness campaigns so employees can check their understanding of facts and concepts.
- Recruit employees with wellness-related hobbies and expertise (like biking to work or vegetable gardening) to show others the ropes.
- Encourage team wellness participation; working with others toward a common goal is highly motivating.
- Help employees connect with each other through cross-department mingling with group walks, book clubs, lunchtime potlucks, or other mixers.
- Spell out the ways a culture of health and a positive work environment — including healthier, happier employees — contribute to organizational and personal success.
- Print photos and testimonials in wellness communications to highlight participant and team successes.



Budget Challenged? Check out our WIN (Wellness In Numbers) Wellness Campaigns at <http://bit.ly/WIN-HES>.





spotlighton...

American Cast Iron Pipe Company Operates by the Golden Rule

In 1905, John Eagan founded Birmingham, Alabama's American Cast Iron Pipe Company. His vision was to build his business based on a very simple rule: *Treat people as you would want to be treated.* From the earliest days, Eagan's company provided equal pay for all workers regardless of race or gender — something almost unheard of in those days. Because bathrooms were a luxury for many, he built a bathhouse with hot and cold running water behind the main building so employees could shower after work.

American's WellBody program is open to all 7500 employees, family members, and retirees. Employees and retirees receive a financial incentive attached to the company's signature screening and health coaching programs.

The company offered onsite medical care and hosted frequent social activities.

Eagan walked to and from work each day, frequently stopping at employees' homes to ensure they and their families had everything needed to thrive.

Upon his death, Eagan placed the company in a trust administered by members of management and elected workforce representatives. To this day they share in the profits as well as continue his vision of making employee well-being an integral part of operations.

In the early '90s, American took this philosophy to the next level and began formalizing what would become an award-winning wellness program. Sheri Snow (Wellness Manager) has been with the company for over 20 years, but praises her predecessor Rebecca Kelly whose groundbreaking work launched the program in 1993.



"Even though Rebecca now is nearby at the University of Alabama, I can always count on her advice whenever I need it."

WellBody Program

American's WellBody program is open to all 7500 employees, family members, and retirees. Employees and retirees receive a financial incentive attached to the company's signature screening and health coaching programs. WellBody's *Thrive, Fuel, Go,* and *Nurture* elements include:

Assessment and Coaching (Thrive):

Health risk assessment, onsite screening, group health coaching, personalized goal setting and coaching, disease management, diabetes management/education, tobacco free cessation coaching with free nicotine replacement therapy plus prescription quit aids, healthy posture and movement.

Nutrition and Weight Management

(Fuel): Nutrition for lifestyle conditions, onsite presentations, education and cooking demos, individualized weight management coaching/menu development, healthy options cafeteria program, healthy meeting guidelines.

Physical Activity (Go): Staffed and equipped wellness and fitness center (5000 square feet), variety of exercise classes, individualized exercise prescription and personal training, walking/pedometer programs, fitness-

based incentive programs, coordination of community walking events/special interest fitness groups, subsidized entry fees for charity fitness walks/runs.

Integrated Program Partners (Nurture):

Onsite medical/dental practice with lab, x-ray, mammography, pharmacy, vision care, free preventive exams, mammograms, flu shots, Employee Assistance Program, healthy prenatal care, ergonomics and safety, partnerships with local health professionals, onsite credit union, financial planning/debt avoidance counseling.

Impressive Return on Investment

To measure WellBody's financial success, American asked University of Alabama researchers to conduct an evaluation spanning 2008-2012. Overall net savings were \$361,783 for medical and \$316,404 for absenteeism (participants were absent 14 1/2 fewer hours than nonparticipants). Savings from the decrease in health risk, medical costs, and absenteeism provided a 1:7.1 ROI.

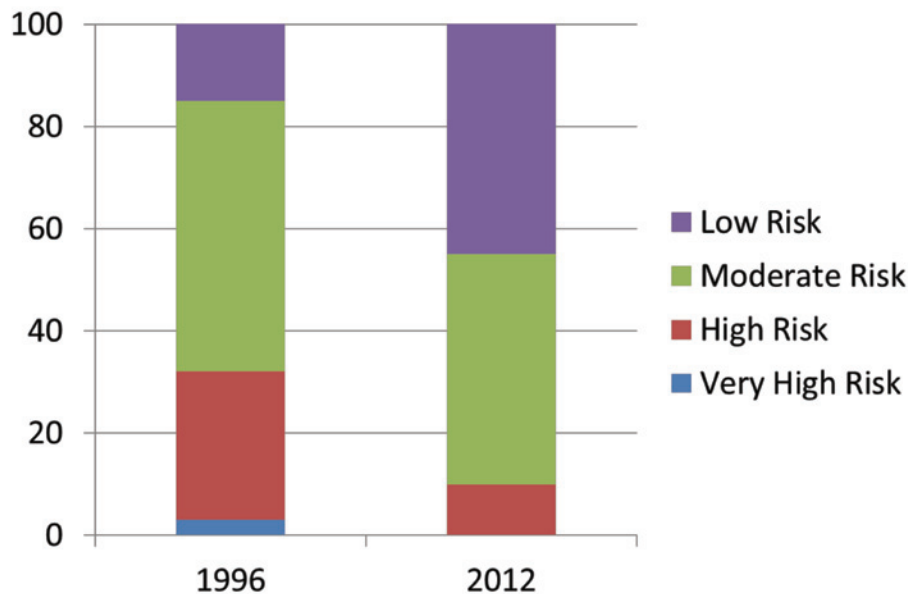
American's onsite physical therapy and rehab program focuses on getting employees back on the job as quickly as possible. Their Eagan Center for Wellness was paid for in 3 years through productivity savings alone.

Not surprisingly, the study showed a correlation between healthcare costs and employee risk status. Sheri and her team saw a 9% decrease in health risks over time. “As we do the health risk assessment and biometrics screening, we place employees in 1 of 4 risk-stratified categories... called our WellBody Clubs. They receive a health benefit depending on where they score. When employees reach their health goals, they qualify for a discount on their monthly medical premiums.”

The graph below shows the movement of employees from very high/high risk to moderate and low risk.

WellBody Health Risk Stratification

(based on blood pressure, body mass index, blood cholesterol, triglyceride and glucose levels, tobacco use, and exercise status)



Engaging Employees Where They Work

Sheri emphasizes the importance of taking programs to the employees. “We do a lot of outreach into the workplace, because we simply won’t

get the participation we need if we stay in the office. Employees are on the clock and don’t have time to change clothes and come to us. So we put on our hard hats and safety shoes and go to them. Besides our screenings and presentations, sometimes we just show up with bottles of water in July or a case of apples. We sponsor monthly ‘Wellness Wednesday’ awareness fairs in the cafeteria or outside grounds. Such ongoing face-to-face time and easy access have really paid off in terms of participation and our ability to keep our finger on the pulse of the organization.”

Sheri stresses that part of this outreach includes promotions in the company’s weekly newsletter and an ongoing intranet presence, as well as a team of wellness leaders and champions drawn from every department and unit. “They help spread the word on programs and communicate messages. They promote and register people for events. We have

3-4 big meetings each year with our champions where they help us with planning, conducting surveys, and providing feedback on what is or isn’t working and what employees want to see.”

Community Outreach

American’s headquarters is in the middle of 5 neighborhoods; Sheri notes the company’s strong commitment of philanthropic service to each. “It’s part of who our company is. We actually have an employee whose job includes being community liaison to help identify opportunities. We have sponsored community gardens, tutored at local schools, and partnered with various associations in fund-raising community events.”


Goals Trickle Down From Top

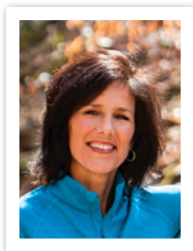
Sheri works for the Human Resources Director, who reports to the President and CEO, Van Richey. “My supervisor, Julie Shedd, and I meet about every 6 weeks. I update her and then she updates the rest of management, including Mr. Richey. I provide an annual report on activities, outcomes, and any pertinent numbers. I also send her emails and copy Mr. Richey when something particularly important happens, such as when we won the 2014 C. Everett Koop National Health Award.”

Sheri couldn’t ask for a more supportive senior management. Health, wellness, and safety objectives are incorporated into the company’s annual goals. “Mr. Richey sets corporate goals for the upcoming year. Each year he asks for a certain percentage of employee participation in WellBody programs and screenings. We’ve always had a goal of 80% participation in our signature coaching

and screening program and even surpassed that goal in 2014. This year Mr. Richey challenged the company to meet a 100% participation goal in our WellBody challenge. That was *huge* for us! Department goals are then set to support corporate goals. This filters on down to employees who set their personal goals. It's all integrated and communicated as a company priority. I've heard Mr. Richey say in meetings that this program will keep you healthy and help us control expenses. We'd like to think we can help people be the best they can be."

Sheri admits to being very humbled by American's winning the Koop award. "We started out with only 1 or 2 people, teaching fitness classes in an auditorium while I taught weight loss classes. We just kept building on our vision. This was our first try at the Koop award and we never dreamed we would win. As a wellness professional, this is the best possible place I could be. To be able to go home at the end of the day knowing I have made an impact in some positive way and maybe even been a blessing in someone's life... to have all that in one job is great!"

For more information, contact Sheri: ssnow@american-usa.com. 



Sweet Receipts: A Simple Innovation Formula for Wellness Managers

Bring in this morning's receipt after 2 PM today and get a bakery treat for \$1.

So why would Starbucks slash their bakery prices by more than half after 2 PM?


- By mid-afternoon, we feel a lull in energy that's countered quickly with a shot of caffeine — they know you're likely to buy a \$4 coffee if you step through the door.
- At \$1, they're still making money on the treat and generating traffic at the slowest time of the day.
- Even if you don't take advantage of the offer, it makes you feel good in the moment (especially if the barista asks with a big smile if you'd like the receipt), reinforcing your allegiance to the green siren.

Wellness managers can use this simple formula — surprise + delight + reinforce — to boost loyalty, participation, and goodwill that goes beyond how employees feel about your wellness program. Some ideas:

- **Webinars.** These are one of the best tools at your disposal, yet it's easy to fall into a rut, doing the same thing month after month. Shake it up by throwing in a different surprise 2 minutes before the official start time. It could be as simple as answering a quiz question from that day's health tip on your website for a chance to win something inexpensive, yet fun. It's unexpected, reinforces the value of your website, and encourages participants to be on time for future webinars. Come up with your own

idea as an enticement for the audience to stay engaged to the end.

- **Assessments.** Let's face it, health assessments (and surveys in general) can be pretty dull. Insert a fun, random trivia question half way through, like: *Who said this?* "My grandmother started walking 5 miles a day when she was 60. She's 97 now, and we don't know where the heck she is." If you can, show different questions to different people so when it comes up in conversation later, they have something relatable yet unique to talk about — it extends the whimsy beyond the moment.
- **Classroom education.** Announce at the beginning of the class that you've taped a 3-question quiz on material you'll cover today. Attendees have the option of taking the quiz now or at the end of the class. If they take it now, they'll have a chance to win a free spa day if they answer all 3 questions correctly. If they wait until the end and answer all 3 correctly, they're guaranteed to win a lesser, yet still useful prize (but don't tell them what it will be). This creates intrigue and a dilemma for participants: *Do I take a shot at the high-value prize or delay gratification for a sure thing?*

You get the idea. It's not hard, but you have to take the time to think through what will surprise, delight, and reinforce your brand, just as Starbucks has done. Of course that's not all Starbucks has going for it. They also have exceptional product, community atmosphere, and employees trained to make you feel good just for stopping in (and of course, caffeine). 

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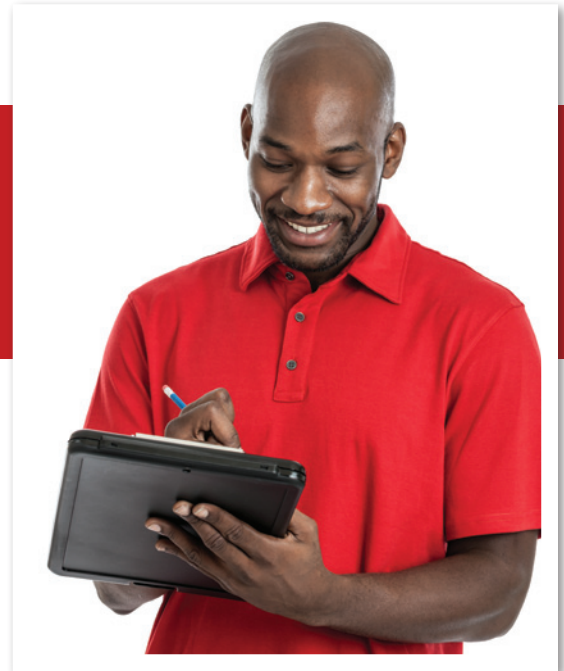
Wellness Campaign Design Checklist


We make our living selling award-winning online wellness campaigns and have developed a successful formula for attracting new participants and keeping them involved. Our ultimate goal is to keep them engaged long enough to experience the benefit, then maintain the behavior change on their own — with a booster shot now and then.

New, fresh material throughout the campaign that involves them in the subject — and with you — will cement their commitment.

Here's a checklist for designing (or purchasing) your next campaign:

- ❑ **Relevant.** Does the health issue apply to your target audience? Using the stair climber to scale Mount Everest may be fun for people who like the stair climber, but office professionals might be more interested in, and receive greater benefit from, a program tied to workstation ergonomics.
- ❑ **Timely.** Pulling a topic out of the air and slapping the word “challenge” in front of it is a crapshoot at best. Themes tied to the seasons, your organization's current efforts, new business ventures, major sporting or news events, and national health observances are good bets.
- ❑ **Challenging.** Participants need to stretch themselves to see improvement and feel a sense of accomplishment. We'll often build in novice and advanced levels to accommodate everyone. If it's too easy, you're not going to interest them again.
- ❑ **Interactive.** People need to think while doing. Just capturing miles walked isn't enough to experience the benefits of regular exercise. New, fresh material throughout the campaign that involves them in the subject — and with you — will cement their commitment.
- ❑ **Makes everyone a winner.** Reward and reinforce behavior, not outcome. That's why journals, log forms, and charts are so valuable — they're reinforcing in and of themselves.
- ❑ **Supportive.** We haven't found anyone who has designed a program you can just wind up and let go if you want significant behavior change in people who need it most. Pretty graphics don't help change habits; you do. It takes an active, involved, supportive wellness professional to get the job done right.
- ❑ **Fun.** Emphasize the importance and value of your message and the behavior change, but do it in a light, entertaining way. Participants don't need to be reminded that heart disease is the number 1 killer each time you're trying to encourage exercise or healthy eating.
- ❑ **Leverages teams, buddies.** Many work groups have had it up to here with teaming. But if you can create a team component that doesn't require meetings or take more time, it can be a great way to recruit new participants and support them through the process.
- ❑ **Gives and gets feedback.** The beauty of online wellness campaigns is ability to involve large numbers without herding them all into a classroom or fitness center. But that's also a drawback, because you're not getting face-to-face reaction. Go out of your way to give and receive feedback throughout the program to make participants feel they're an important element — not just out there going it alone.



Keep this checklist handy for your next campaign design or purchase and you're more likely to attract and retain the participants you want. 

Put a Little Spring in Your Step



SHARE THE HEALTH
takeaway
for duplication & distribution

Walk the dog, play golf, do yard work, take the stairs... it's play back time.

Take a Recess

Who says recess is only for kids? Playful activities can rest your brain and energize your body while bolstering your agility and speed. For example, hopscotch enhances balance, tag builds power through sprinting and stopping movements, and playing catch works your arms as you throw and leap. Playground swings, monkey bars, or seesaws are a great way to stretch, warm up, and cool down. And don't forget the fun of tossing a Frisbee®, flying a kite, or swirling a Hula Hoop®.

Get on the Ball

Big vinyl therapy can make the body more functional in daily life through improved coordination, balance, and posture. Sitting and bouncing on the ball will work your abs, hamstrings, quads, back, and torso muscles, fostering strength and stability in the trunk — the body's center of power.


Learn the Ropes

Although it takes a little practice to get the hang of it, jumping rope improves coordination, speed, and agility. To protect your shins, wear aerobic shoes or cross trainers (not running shoes) and use a springy wood floor, lawn, or mat. Keep your posture erect, and land softly on the balls of your feet. You only need to jump 1 or 2 inches off the ground. To check the rope length, stand on the center and pull the handles up your sides; they should come just to the armpits.

Splash, Splash

Exercising in water can be as effective as the same activity on land — running, walking, or aerobics — burning 300-500 calories/hour. Plus, it can be less stressful for pregnant women, overweight individuals, or those with joint and back problems. And you'll still get results — it combines aerobics

and strength training, promotes weight loss, and improves flexibility. Put on a pair of old sneakers or water shoes and walk or run in the pool's shallow end. Move to chest-deep water and do jumping jacks, leg lifts, leg swings, or arm swirls. A flotation belt can help with deep-end activities.

Take advantage of spring's warmer weather and longer days to go out and play. You'll feel better for it. 



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