



THE SUPERVISOR/HR NEWSLETTER

Public Employee Benefits Alliance

HELPFUL RESOURCES FROM YOUR
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

June
19

June Online Seminar

Mindfulness Matters

Explore basic mindfulness principles and learn some techniques that you can put to immediate use.

Available on-demand starting June 18th at www.deeroakseap.com

Deer Oaks 2019 Supervisor Excellence Webinar Series *Employee Engagement*

A series of practical educational programs designed to help supervisors and managers to build more engaged and productive work teams. This series is available to all supervisors, managers, and other interested employees and does not count toward your organization's training hour bank.

Webinar # 2: How to Effectively Onboard and Engage Your Employees

Creating high-quality onboarding experiences for new employees is a key to building an engaged work team. This practical presentation will discuss several strategies for effectively onboarding, engaging, and retaining your employees.

Friday, June 7th 1:00 – 2:00 PM CT

Register: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7622657225343204099>

Monday, June 10th 1:00 – 2:00 PM CT

Register: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/9080421627285853187>

Helpline: 866-327-2400
Web: www.deeroakseap.com
Email: eap@deeroaks.com

Seven Simple, Fun Wellness Challenges to Start at Work

Each May marks Global Employee Health and Fitness month (<https://www.gehfm.org/>), but wellness at work should be implemented year round. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, almost 90% of workers (85.8% of males and 66.5% of females) spend more than 40 hours per week at work, which makes the workplace a great place to target and change health behaviors.¹ Employers have the potential to positively impact employee health in a number of ways, including making environmental and cultural changes. As part of cultural change, wellness challenges at work can provide a fun, motivating spin on promotion of health behaviors. This article lists seven tips for fun wellness challenges, many of which have been implemented successfully at other workplaces.

1. Walking Challenge

Walking is one of the most accessible forms of physical activity, and there are a number of ways to implement walking challenges. For example, participants can earn a reward for walking a certain number of steps every day for a set period of time, or can earn a raffle entry for each 1,000–2,000 steps walked over a set time. Get inspiration from the Surgeon General’s Step It Up! Campaign.

2. Daily Habit Challenge

Daily habit challenges work well over shorter, 2- to 4-week periods. The idea is to come up with a different healthy habit that participants must do each day. Habits can be anything from packing your own lunch to taking a daily walk. Each behavior earns a raffle entry, with drawings at the end of each week.

3. Team Wellness Challenge

Team challenges can foster a sense of community and motivate people to a common purpose. Participants work toward large, group goals, such as “walk 5,000 miles” or “lose 50 pounds,” and keep track of group results on a white board or poster, usually displayed in a common area. Employers can offer an incentive for the whole group, such as weekly fitness classes at the office or a free, healthy lunch.

4. Participation Challenge

This challenge encourages participants to accomplish a goal task a certain number of times over a set period, rewarding those who reach a certain number. For example, if an employer subsidizes a health club membership (or has a fitness center on site) it can challenge its employees to attend 25 fitness classes in 30 days. Employers can also challenge employees to do other things like bring their own healthy lunch (instead of eating out) 15 times per month or to walk 5 miles a day.

5. Weight Loss Challenge

Weight loss is a common goal for Americans—according to a Gallup poll done in 2015, 49% of Americans want to lose weight—and challenges provide a fun, motivating atmosphere.² Weight loss challenges can span 8 weeks to a few months, and typically include regular weigh-ins as well as support throughout, such as nutrition education. Winners can be determined by variables like total pounds lost, or percent of body weight or body fat lost.

6. Holiday Challenge

In the United States, holidays are often a time when healthy habits suffer. Employers can run a challenge around physical activity to help keep people motivated through November and December.

7. Plank Challenge

Planking is great for core stability and can be done in a short amount of time. Employers can challenge participating employees to plank a set time each day, with times increasing 5 seconds each day to reach a certain time goal over 3–5 weeks. Plank challenges can be done as a team (where those who have the best completion percentage win) or individually.

Building a culture of wellness in the workplace takes time, but fun challenges like those listed above can help engage employees and bring them together toward the common goals of increased physical activity and overall better health.

References

1. U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). (2018, June 28). Average hours per day spent in selected activities on days worked by employment status and sex [Charts]. In American time use survey—2017 results. Retrieved March 23, 2019, from <https://www.bls.gov/>
2. McCarthy, J. (2015, November 27). Fewer Americans say they want to lose weight. Retrieved March 23, 2019, from <https://news.gallup.com/>

Source: Black, A. (2016, June 22; Revised 2019 [Ed.]). 7 simple, fun wellness challenges to start at work (B. Schuette, Ed.). Retrieved March 23, 2019, from the U.S. Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion website: <https://health.gov/>

Beatitudes of Leadership

Leadership expert James O'Toole said, "Ninety-five percent of American managers today say the right thing. Five percent actually do it." Today's complex and changing business environment requires a special style of leadership. Like yesterday's newspaper, traditional leadership styles are outdated ... no longer effective. Everyone today, no matter what job he holds, must improve his leadership skills. Whether you are a meeting planner, an association executive or the CEO of a large corporation, leadership is the key ingredient to organizational success.

The most critical ingredient needed in all organizations today is action-oriented leadership based on a whole new set of attitudes. Uniquely equipped for this task is the innovative leader who possesses the Beatitudes of Leadership.

Be Bold and Challenge the Status Quo

Conformity and status quo are the first steps down the staircase of business ineffectiveness. People become comfortable doing the same things the same way, copying everyone else. The innovative leader is always looking for ways to improve what is being done, never satisfied with just being good. In today's chaotic business environment, good is no longer good enough.

Be a Risk Taker

The innovative leader understands that progress depends on change and change is risky. The leader creates an environment allowing people freedom to experiment and take risks without fear of reprisal. The innovative leader provides support and encouragement to his or her people even if a person fails in trying to do something new.

Be Authentic and Approachable

Creating an open and supportive environment is important if you want your people to become innovative. One way to make yourself approachable is to talk openly about your own mistakes and your limitations. Once viewed as taboo and poor leadership, it is now more acceptable and no longer thought of as a sign of weakness. In fact, many people find it a sign of strength and authenticity, a way to gain respect and trust from your people. After all, who doesn't make mistakes - it's only human.

Be a Role Model

The old saying goes, "Actions speak louder than words." This saying is more true today than ever before. Change begins at the front office, the top floor, the corporate boardroom. Workers are not fooled by posters, slogans and speeches such as, "People are our most important asset," or "Quality comes first." Management's actions show the people in the organization what is truly important. You must walk the talk.

Be Out and About

In this high-tech, non-stop world, meetings and conferences become vampires slowly draining the life out of the business. Change occurs so rapidly that by the time a problem is brought to a staff meeting, it's too late. Solutions to problems and innovative ideas are found on the front line with the workers. Leaders must get out of the office and spend time talking to workers and customers in and about the business.

Be Inspirational

Horst Shultze, CEO of Ritz-Carlton Hotels, delivered one of the most inspiring and motivating talks ever heard. The vision for his company unfolded like an artist painting a canvas. He spoke of his dream of creating not just good hotels, but the best hotel chain in the world. He recounted how his workers told him what the hotel industry needed, what was important and how to do it. The audience seated in the auditorium became part of the transformation process. They felt the workers' pride and enthusiasm. They could see the difference this leader brought to his organization.

Throughout his talk he kept the audience sitting on the edge of their seats. He did not read a prepared text written by some speech writer but he spoke from his heart. The difference between his talk and other speeches was that you could feel his commitment and caring. It wasn't the words he used, but the tone of his words and his physical movement that made the difference. He was passionate, he was inspiring and he planted a seed in all of us. It was clear to the audience that Shultze possessed all the Beatitudes of Leadership.

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Ask Your EAP!

The following are answers to common questions supervisors have regarding employee issues and making EAP referrals. As always, if you have specific questions about referring an employee or managing a workgroup issue, feel free to make a confidential call to the EAP for a management consultation.

Q. I have an employee with behavioral issues. I have not made a formal EAP referral because I fear he will quit if I do. He can go anywhere, and I can't afford to lose him. Employees sometimes complain about his behavior and attitude, but I can see they have also adapted. Should I still take some action?

A. Consult with the EAP to change this status quo. Left unchanged, you risk an eventual crisis or disruptive event from this situation growing worse. Effects on coworkers and yourself are likely far reaching. This troubled employee has lost the trust of his peers, and this adversely affects workplace communication. Reduced cooperation negatively affects innovation, outputs, outcomes, and productivity. Teams also make suboptimum decisions when they are not working well together. Your performance is also affected because your leadership will be devalued by your subordinates for your failure to act. Trust in your abilities erodes. Rumors spread. And your reputation suffers with upper management. To cope, you may begin thinking about quitting, thereby harming your career. Likewise, you are likely to lose income opportunities because of management deciding that you can't lead properly. The EAP is your first stop for help in developing a referral plan.

Q. I am referring my employee to the EAP. He is very cooperative and anxious to see the EA professional. I am impressed that he is so open about his problems with cocaine. With such motivation, should I still send documentation about his performance issues?

A. Yes, pass along information related to job performance to the EAP. Your employee should also possess the same information. Also, phone the EAP to discuss the referral, if practical, because there are typically nuances associated with any troubled employee's communication and relationship style that are easier to understand when discussed. Note that employees with illicit drug addiction problems survive by lying and manipulation. It is part of the lifestyle. Your employee may be sincere; however, addicts are fearful of giving up drug use, and statements or behaviors that appear sincere are frequently deceptions. Your employee may only be planning the next step of evading treatment. All of this is quite normal, and the addiction treatment community is aware of these behaviors. Treatment can work, even for the most deceptive addict, because a combination of unabated real-life consequences and accurate information about addiction treatment and recovery combine to produce an individual truly dedicated to recovery and sobriety.

Q. We have an employee who is on the autism spectrum. He's a great worker and we have accommodated some of his needs, like ensuring that the office has less noise and no fluorescent light. Is the EAP able to address the needs of special workers like this person, who may have mental health counseling needs like other employees?

A. EAPs are able to work with any employee referred to them by self- or supervisor referral and will seek ways to communicate and engage so a client's needs are met in the EAP interview. EAPs do not claim to have specialized knowledge about every problem brought to them. However, using the EAP as a starting point offers tremendous advantages no matter what the problem might be. These include: 1) a free and confidential interview by a professionally trained listener who is committed to impartiality in the next step of treatment or resource referral; 2) an experienced person with expert knowledge about community and counseling resources; 3) a professional who is willing to expend the effort, no matter how rigorous, in locating the proper referral source; and 4) follow-ups to ensure the proper help was received and any roadblocks are overcome in the EAP client successfully engaging with that help.

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