

Health and Wellness = Increased Productivity and Lower Costs



We have spoken of ways to examine your company to increase profits. If you could find a way to increase productivity and lower costs at your work place, would that be of interest to you? Of course it would make sense to find a way to increase your bottom line. If I told you that the answer would have a 5 to 1 return on your investment, would you take the chance? Absolutely. The answer lies within your organization at a minimum cost of your initial investment.

Recently a 2008 Health & Productivity Index Key Findings Report shared the following:

- 50% of workers with balanced diets had high energy, while only 5% of employees with unbalanced diets had high levels of energy.
- Of employees with healthy diets, 73% reported having high levels of productivity, compared to 24% of employees with poor dietary habits.
- 51% of ideal weight employees had high morale, while less than half that amount 25% of very overweight employees had high morale levels.

- 57% of healthy weight employees reported high levels of productivity, while only 27% of very overweight employees reported being highly productive

Our health expenses are rising 8 to 14% every year. The health care industry makes up 16% of our GNP. A recent study found that only 1 in 20 adults are healthy according to the regimen prescribed by doctors, which is:

- Exercise regularly
- Eat 5 to 12 servings of fruits and vegetables every day
- Minimize trans-fat intake
- Drink 8 glasses of water a day
- Stop smoking
- Minimize alcohol intake

Health promotion programs lead to an average health care cost savings of \$3.48 and absenteeism savings of \$5.82 for every \$1 invested. A synthesis of 56 peer-reviewed journal articles found an average decrease of 27% in absenteeism, 26% in health costs, 32% in workers' compensation costs, and a return of \$5.81 for every dollar invested in health promotion in the workplace.

Key lessons learned in the workplace in terms of important criteria, strategies, or characteristics of successful worksite wellness programs include the following:

- Utilize a screening mechanism, such as a health risk assessment.
- Include environmental supports (type of food in vending machines, stop smoking campaigns, weight loss clinics, exercise classes, etc).
- Integrate the health promotion program into the company's structure, mission, and vision.
- Target a wide range of health issues, but be sure the program can be tailored to individual employee's needs.
- Ensure the support of senior level management.
- Provide incentives for participation.

If you would like to learn how to implement all or parts of this program, please come to our "Health and Wellness Expo" to reduce your bottom and increase your bottom line.