

Path To Wellness

Your Best Practices In Employee Wellness E-Newsletter

Fall 2008- Issue 18

Welcome Beverly



Welcome to our newest subscribers especially those from the Windsor Executive Breakfast, the Employers Seminar from the Hospital Education Program in Collingwood, the HR Southwest Texas Conference, the Durham Region Health Department Workplace Symposium and the Region of Peel - Workplace Wellness Teams

This e-newsletter highlights information on employee and corporate wellness for the beginner to the seasoned professional.

It provides you with how-tos and updates you on significant research and statistics that may assist you in your wellness initiatives.

We welcome your input, your questions and your best practices.

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Going Green and Your Wellness Plan

Employees Are Wary Of Employer Efforts To Go Green

Despite widespread publicity about the greening of corporate America, barely half (50.8%) of American workers say their company has a significant initiative such as carpooling and recycling. The **Marlin Company's 14th Annual American Workplace 2008 Poll** surveyed U.S. workers about why they think companies go green,

- Nearly one-fourth (24.1%) said companies went green to save money
- 22% said they did it to garner positive publicity
- 14.1% said they did it to be politically correct
- 17.4% cited social responsibility as the motivation
- 12.9% said that companies were going green as a way to counteract rising energy prices
- Most workers said their employer lagged behind themselves in going green.

Thank You For Subscribing,

Beverly Beuermann-King, Stress and Wellness Specialist, Consultant and CSP (Certified Speaking Professional)

www.WorkSmartLiveSmart.com

Bring Beverly To Your Workplace

To view workshop themes from **Workplace Stress,**

Handling Negative Attitudes, to **Finding Balance** that may

be right for your team, [Click Here.](#)

Not sure where to start in your wellness journey - Beverly can help - call 705-786-0437

Quick Links

[Wellness Awareness Days, Weeks and Months](#)

December

Mothers Against Drunk Drivers Month
National Stress-Free Holidays Month
Extraordinary Work Team Recognition Day - Dec 4
No Interruptions Day - Dec 29

January 2009

Financial Wellness Month
New Year's Resolutions Week - Jan 1-7
Customer Service Day - Jan 17
Weedless Wednesday - Jan 23

February

National Time Management Month
Leadership Success Day - Feb 12
Telecommuter Appreciation Week - Feb 24

When asked, "Who's greener, you or your company?", more than 60% (63.4%) of workers said that they were greener

- **More than three-fourths (77.7%) of U.S. workers said it was important for them to have an employer that was going green in a significant way**

For complete survey results, visit www.themarlincompany.com

Beverly's Comments

Reducing, reusing and recycling are top of mind and becoming an even more important issue to our employees and a strong part of our wellness programming. We need to look at the ways that we can be more green and at the same time ensure that we are implementing these strategies for the right reasons. The benefits in addressing these issues of course are in attracting employees, saving money and to be seen as socially responsible. But it is also the right thing to do - conserving resources to the benefit of everyone in the future.

Coming Soon for 2009

Check out the **new look** for the www.WorkSmartLiveSmart.com website this January 2009 - We look forward to your feedback and we hope that it is even easier to find the wellness resources that you need for yourself and for your workplace.

Want to view the **newest wellness YouTube videos** from Beverly - visit: [YouTube - beverlybeuermannking](#)

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Know the value of Social Networking and want to connect to Beverly - **Checkout her Facebook and LinkedIn profiles.**

Commuter Benefits Can Be Adding To Your Green Program

The stress of getting to and from work is playing on our employees mind. Increased gas prices along with the stress of commuting and finding balance are making commuter benefits highly attractive. According to the **Society for Human Resource Management**, more than half of employers offer commuter benefits of some kind. The most common are:

- Pre-tax transit accounts/subsidies (28%)
- Parking subsidy (11%)
- Telecommuting part-time (35%)
- Flexible hours (59%)

Douglas Johnson of the Consumer Electronics Association's research shows that if each person were to telework one day per week, each person would save as many as 1.4 gallons of gas per day, four to six tons of carbon emissions per year and one-third to one-half of a household's yearly energy use.

[Stress and Wellness Tips Blog](#)

[Website Contest](#)

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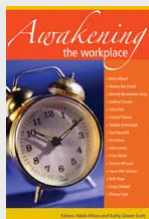
Awakening

The Workplace

A great addition to your wellness library or for enhancing your team's personal growth. People are changing and evolving in regards to how they see themselves in relation to their work and expectations for finding connection, fulfillment and success.

Awakening The Workplace is an exciting book that is full of tips, tools and stories by more than 16 contributing authors from around the world (including Beverly) who specialize in workplace connection, renewal and wellness.

[Click Here](#), if you would like to order or learn more about this exciting book.



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Corporate Example:

The Alcott Group, a New York-based HR consulting firm, has looked to offset this stress by giving employees \$100 via payroll to help pay for commuting expenses.

The book, "**Undress4Success: The Naked Truth about Working from Home,**" estimates that, if US telework increased to its full potential:

- Gulf oil imports could be reduced as much as 80%
- This equates to \$43 billion dollars at the gas pump, 625 million barrels of oil and reduction of carbon dioxide emissions by 107 million tons
- In the nation's capital, that means 60 hours per person regained each year and \$1,094 per person in savings in travel delay and excess fuel consumption costs each year, shows the **Texas Transportation Institute's 2007 Urban Mobility Study**
- In Los Angeles, the number increases to 72 hours regained and \$1,374 saved

Beverly's Comments

Whether your employees commute, car-pool or use city transit, we know that these costs have dramatically risen over the past few years. This has had a huge impact on the finances of our employees which can be anywhere from 2-8% of their income. As part of your wellness programming, what programs are you implementing to assist your employees deal with this source of stress? Some companies have chosen to reimburse their employees, some have looked to telecommuting or reduce hours of operation. By weighing the options and asking your employees directly, you will be able to implement the right strategies for your employees and help reduce the impact that this stressor is having on their lives.

Five Mistakes Companies Make In Implementing Telecommuting Programs

Telecommuting expert, Brandon Dempsey VP of Suite Commute, says it's important for companies to understand that although they can likely implement a telecommuting program with their current infrastructure, sound policies and procedures are critical to any program's success.

Below are five of the most common mistakes that companies make when they implement a remote work and telecommuting program:

1. **Lack concrete policies and procedures**
2. **Overinvest in technology**
Existing IT infrastructure can often be used without acquiring any new software or hardware.
3. **Fail to train managers**
Managing someone from afar requires a different set of management skills, especially concerning communication.
4. **Miss the implementation strategy**
Organizations should map out their business drivers and define the goals they want to achieve by implementing a virtual work option before implementing a telecommuting program.
5. **Overlook a pilot program.**
Companies should first test the initiative on a sample of employees. Once the appropriate policies and procedures are in place, the initiative can be expanded

Beverly's Comment

We hear a lot today about telecommuting. It has become to be seen as a shining star within a good wellness program. However, we need to be careful that we don't see it as the right solution for everyone or every company. For those that can implement this as an option, it must be done right, with planning and proper discussion around the impact on the work team and the management of that team. All wellness programs have an impact on the way the business is done - and it is our responsibility to ensure that these programs are implemented with care and attention to detail in order to reduce stress not create additional stressors.

The True Objective Of Wellness Is To Improve Health

The **Integrated Benefits Institute** studied health-related incentives and disincentives offered by 500 employers.

- Nearly 75% of respondents offer at least one incentive aimed at promoting health and wellness.
- 75% of employers, however, said the main goal for incentives and disincentives is to encourage participation, while about two-thirds said their incentives and disincentives focus on changing behavior to improve health and productivity.
- Only 19% of respondents use disincentives. Employers use cash-based and benefits-related strategies most frequently. Prizes and gifts are less common, while salary and job disincentives are only used by a few.
- Substantial sums are invested in incentives and disincentives, with about 50% of respondents investing more than \$200 per participant, per year and more than one in five valuing them at more than \$400 per participant per year. More than 40% said they would increase the dollar value of their incentives.

MetLife's research show that:

- The number of companies with 500 or more workers offering a wellness program jumped 8% from 2006 to 2007, climbing to 57%.
- Smaller companies aren't nearly as likely to offer a wellness program, with just 16% indicating they do so.
- Those that do are pretty confident their programs are working, with 94% saying the programs are effective in reducing medical costs.

Beverly's Comment:

Wellness is about improving the health of our most valuable resource so that they can be creative, productive and successful. It is great to see that the number of companies offering some type of wellness programming is increasing. The movement now is to ensure that these programs are more comprehensive and target those things in the employees' life and work environment that are causing stress. The challenge is to also help small companies find programs that can be tailored to their unique needs and boundaries. The more that we share our information on our successes and failures and savings the easier it will be for more companies to get on-board.

Recent Comments

Beverly has presented wellness workshops to more than 500 organizations and 30000 people coast-to-coast and has given more than 300 media interviews, bringing her wellness message to many communities around the country.

So What Does This Mean For You?

Experience - Engineering - Effectiveness - Excellence

Here are the comments from Beverly's most recent presentation...

- Excellent
- Humorous, knowledgeable and informative
- Made me take a close, serious look at my life
- Great enthusiasm and positivity
- Enjoyed the interaction
- Liked the personal examples
- Excellent, well-spoken presenter
- Beverly was fabulous - opened my eyes to a lot of issues
- Beverly was highly energetic and inspiring
- Really engaged the audience and was easy to follow
- Great energy and great delivery

Wouldn't you like your team to grow, learn and feel this way?

Contact Beverly today to see what presentations may be right for your team. 705-786-0437

Visit www.WorkSmartLiveSmart.com for more information on Beverly's Wellness and Stress Presentations

Want to take your wellness programming to the next level? Not sure where to start?

Beverly Can Help. Beverly can give direction on assessment, benchmarking, program development, communication and measuring your programs to achieve wellness success.

Contact Beverly today - 705-786-0437

CSP - Benefiting You

Beverly Beuermann-King was awarded her Certified Speaking Professional Designation in 2007 and there are less than 45 CSP's in Canada and less than 550 around the world.

This is the highest earned designation of the International Federation For Professional Speakers.

This award is achieved through continuous education, outstanding performance and professional business management.

[Click here](#) to see more about this outstanding achievement and what it means to your business.



What's New - What's Interesting? How About Green Meetings

The **Hotel Association of Canada (HAC)** released data from its 2008 Canadian Travel Intentions survey confirming that the environment is a major concern for the Canadian public and that most meeting planners had not implemented any green elements into their events in 2007, with approximately half citing lack of information and knowledge on the issue. 2008 M&IT Market Report Green Meeting Highlights:

Green meetings are still in the minority

- 60% of Canadian meeting planners have not implemented any green elements into their existing meetings
- 70% of corporate meeting planners have not implemented any green elements into existing meetings
- 60% of government/association/non-profit planners meeting planners have not implemented any green elements into existing meetings
- 47% of third party/independent planners meeting planners have not implemented any green elements into existing meetings

There is a large gap in knowledge which was cited as the main reason for not planning green meetings

- 49% of Canadian meeting planners cite 'still learning how to implement' as main reason why they haven't implemented any green initiatives yet
- 46% corporate planners cite 'still learning how to implement'
- 55% government/association/non-profit planners cite 'still learning how to implement'
- 50% third party/independent planners) cite 'still learning how to implement'

Meeting planners are driving demand for green meetings

- 51% of Canadian meeting planners are initiating the idea of a green meeting
- 66% corporate planners initiated the idea of producing a green meeting
- 51% government/association/non-profit planners initiated the idea of producing a green meeting
- 44% third party/independent planners initiated the idea of producing a green meeting

Green meetings really are more expensive

- 53% of existing green meetings, planned by Canadian meeting planners, are more expensive than 'brown' meetings
- 51% corporate planners' green meetings were more expensive
- 46% government/association/non-profit planners' green meetings were more expensive
- 56% third party/independent planners' green meetings were more expensive

For more information visit www.meetingscanada.com.

Wellness Programs For Small To Large Companies

Hamilton's City Employees Use Of A Virtual Fitness Challenge

In a diverse workplace with multiple physical locations, the city of Hamilton successfully used an online virtual fitness challenge to motivate its employees to reach health and wellness objectives.

The workplace wellness goal was to motivate employees with a fun "Race to Dublin", and to be active the equivalent of 10,000 steps a day.

The results for this twelve week challenge had:

- 45 teams registering and over 450 people joining in the online workplace challenge event
- Participants increased their activity levels by an average of 14% over the twelve week event
- Up to 36% of the participants reached the 10,000 step health benefit target level at some point in the challenge, showing them what they can actually accomplish.

Using the online computerized tracking system CoreXL, participants were able to see in real time how much daily activity they had accumulated and how much was still needed. The online program also allowed participants to join teams, communicate and challenge each other to be more active as they raced to Dublin.

Results showed employees had many motivators to participate in the event with self-reporting fitness tracking ranking the highest motivational tool at 68.6%. The chance to participate in a team event was also a top motivator at 64.8%. The opportunity to become more physically active was third at 54.9% revealing that sometimes people just need a reason or opportunity to get moving.

Employees cited their achievements as being increased awareness of personal activity levels, increased activity, increased energy, improved muscle tone, increased knowledge of activity benefits, and lost weight. The most interesting result was that 98.6% of the employees reported they intend to continue with regular daily exercise.

Pepsi Links Wellness and Social Responsibility

A Pepsi promotion linked the fitness element of wellness with employee involvement in Habitat for Humanity. Dozens of employees turned up to swing hammers and get healthy. Pepsi has learned that for every dollar spent on fitness they will get three dollars in savings -- whether it is through increased productivity, risk management or decreasing health care costs. They also know that when employees enroll in a fitness program they talk about it. They feel healthy and the company gains a healthy reputation.

In The News - Statistics You Can Use

Going Green Benefits for US Bicycle Commuters

Starting in January 2009, an employee may be reimbursed on a tax-free basis for expenses related to purchasing a bicycle, repairs on a bicycle and storage fees, as long as the bicycle is regularly used to travel between home and the workplace.

Under the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act, the employer may reimburse a maximum of \$20 per month for each month in a year that the employee regularly uses the bicycle.

Survey Reveals Executives' Lunch Breaks Disappearing

More executives believe that the traditional lunch hour is slowly becoming a thing of the past. Many say their average lunch break is 35 minutes, seven minutes less than what they reported five years ago, according to a recent poll.

The survey from Office Team also found that some executives admitted to working while eating lunch more than half of the workweek. The telephone-based poll interviewed 150 senior executives at the 1,000 largest companies in the United States.

Beverly's Comments:

Early in the 1900's, employees fought long and hard to ensure that we, as employees could take a break during our workday. They knew that it was critical to maintaining our health. Don't let that essential rhythm to our day be thrown by the wayside. Tips for taking back the shrinking lunch break include:

- Schedule your tasks in chunked time and include adequate breaks to get up from your desk, to get something to eat and drink, to stretch, to get a breath of fresh air or to connect with others.
- Relax over lunch - this break will increase your creativity and energy for the rest of the day
- Respect your colleagues - don't schedule a lunch meeting without ensuring adequate time to eat and refocus

Subscriber's Gifts



Speaking Of IMPACT is the voice of the Canadian Meetings Industry and is targeted to those who plan and organize their team's meetings.

Speaking of IMPACT is devoted solely to excellence in all aspects of planning and delivering the very purpose of most meetings...the content. This is one of the most valuable resources for professionals in the meeting industry who are committed to providing events and programs with significant and lasting bottom-line value.

To receive your free subscription compliments of Beverly Beuermann-King and the Canadian Association Of Professional Speakers, please

[Click here.](#)

Beverly is pleased to have accepted the role of Editor for Dec 2008 to Dec 2010. Please send her any feedback that you may have and Enjoy your Subscription!

Enjoy the upcoming Holidays and all the best for 2009!

Beverly Beuermann-King

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She has been a mental health education consultant to the Canadian Mental Health Association and is a member of the International Stress Management Association. Beverly is a professional designate of the Canadian Association of Professional Speakers, past-president of their Toronto Chapter, the 2008 Convention Volunteer Chair and the incoming Editorial Chair for the Speaking Of IMPACT magazine.

You are receiving this email because you have specifically indicated that you wanted to receive information on Employee Wellness. Please let Beverly Beuermann-King know if you have any questions or comments or if you have a wellness program that you would like to highlight.

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