



Welcome to:

Path To Wellness - February 2003 Edition

For leaders who value their team

This Edition's Theme:

Corporate Wellness Programs - Where to begin?

In this feature:

- Five Questions To Answer In Planning
- Sample Employee Wellness Questionnaire
- Applying The Nine Processes Of Change To Wellness Programming
- Health Canada's Comprehensive Workplace Health System
- Top Four Reasons Why Companies Offer Wellness Programming
- Wellness Statistics
- Upcoming Wellness Events
- In The News
- Wellness Website Links E-Z
- Reprint/Comments/Submissions/Unsubscribe Policies

This free 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 practises.

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Beverly Beuermann-King,

www.WorkSmartLiveSmart.com

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(<http://www.WorkSmartLiveSmart.com>)

and the

Canadian Mental Health Association - Toronto Branch

(<http://www.StressSense.com>)

"Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it. Begin now!" Goethe

Consider these questions when beginning to put your employee wellness program together:

1. What will happen or continue to happen and how much will it cost if we do not invest in wellness?
2. What programs do we currently have and are they working?
3. What programs would meet more of the needs of our employees?
4. What outcomes are we hoping for or why are we willing to invest in wellness?
5. What can we realistically afford to invest?

Question One:

What will happen or continue to happen and how much will it cost if we do not invest in wellness?

Action: Examine current data to gather information on absenteeism, job turnover, quality, accidents, grievances, health benefits usage, compensation claims, and long-term disability. This data will give you an idea of how the current level of employee wellness is impacting your company's bottom line.

Conference Board of Canada 1996 survey reported that between 1990 and 1994 employer's health spending grew by 26%.

*All forms of mental illness cost \$30 billion per year, representing about 14% of the net operating revenue of all Canadian businesses.
(Conference Board of Canada)*

Question Two:

What programs do we currently have and are they working?

Action: Pull together all of the programs that your company has in place that have an impact on the way a person functions in their job.

This includes not only traditional areas of:

- Safety
- Fitness
- Nutrition
- Health Monitoring
- Health Benefits
- EAP

but also includes areas of:

- Training And Development In Leadership
- Education
- Reward And Recognition
- Communication
- Conflict And Problem Solving
- Team Building.

By pulling all of these areas together and binding them to an overall employee wellness program you will be able to more effectively gain buy-in for additional programs.

To assess if these programs are working and to gain a better understanding of what additional programs may be beneficial, it is important to do an employee wellness survey. The questions can be tailored to assess what is currently working, what signs of a lack of wellness are particularly bothersome or pervasive and what helping programs may be beneficial.

An example of a questionnaire is presented below.

Assessment - Employee Wellness Questionnaire

(Adapted from Health Canada)

To begin, pull together a list of questions that can indicate the various sources of stress that your employees may be facing, along with various symptoms that they may be experiencing. These questions can then be studied to see if there are trends or major issues that can be tackled by your wellness program.

The assessment should outline reason for exploring employee health and what you are intending to do with the information. Explain the confidentiality policy and how the results will be reported back to the Wellness Committee and employees. To increase employee participation designate a time to fill out the questionnaire.

Sample Questions:

1. How old are you?
 - a. Under 20
 - b. 20-29
 - c. 30-39
 - d. 40-49
 - e. 50-59
 - f. 60 +

2. What is your marital status?
 - a. Single
 - b. Married
 - c. Widowed
 - d. Separated
 - e. Divorced
 - f. Living with partner

3. Are you male or female?

4. How long have you been with the organization?
 - a. Less than 1 year
 - b. 1-4 years
 - c. 5-9 years
 - d. 10-14 years
 - e. 15 or more

5. What type of job do you have?
 - a.

6. What is your level of education?
 - a. Elementary school
 - b. Went to high school but didn't finish
 - c. Finished high school
 - d. Went to community college but didn't finish
 - e. Finished community college
 - f. Went to university but didn't finish
 - g. University degree
 - h. Graduate degree

7. Do you have children for whom you are wholly or partly responsible?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

8. Do you have other people for whom you are wholly or partly responsible?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

9. Would you say your health is
 - a. Excellent
 - b. Very good
 - c. Good
 - d. Fair
 - e. Poor

10. In the last year, how many days were you away from work because you were sick, injured or disabled?

11. Is your weight in line with your height?

12. In a typical week how often do you spend at least 20 minutes at a time in vigorous physical activity?
 - a. Never
 - b. Less than once week
 - c. 1 or 2 times a week

- d. 3 to 5 times a week
- e. More than 5 times a week

13. How many hours do you usually sleep every day?

14. How often do you have trouble sleeping?

- a. More than once a week
- b. Once a week or less
- c. Never

15. How often did you use medication or prescription drugs to help you sleep or calm you down in the last month?

- a. None
- b. Only once
- c. Two to three times
- d. Once or twice a week
- e. Daily or almost every day

16. How often are you so physically or mentally tired at the end of work that you do not really enjoy your time away from work?

- a. Very often
- b. Often
- c. Not very often
- d. Never

17. How many cigarettes do you usually smoke a day?

- a. None
- b. Fewer than 10
- c. 10 or more

18. How many bottles of beer, shots of spirits, and/or glasses of wine do you drink in a typical week?

- a. None
- b. Fewer than 5
- c. 5 to 10
- d. 10 or more

19. Do you eat a variety of foods according to Canada's Food Guide?

- a. Yes
- b. No

20. Do you eat foods high in cholesterol or fat, or pre-packaged or fast foods daily?

- a. Yes
- b. No

21. Do you skip meals?

- a. Yes
- b. No

22. Do you drink a minimum of 6 glasses of water a day?

- a. Yes
- b. No

23. Do you drink more than two cups of coffee, regular tea and/or coffee a day?

- a. Yes
- b. No

24. What if anything caused you excess worry, or stress in the last six months?

- a. I changed jobs
- b. Too many changes within my job
- c. I don't like the hours
- d. Too much time pressure
- e. Unscheduled overtime
- f. My duties are not clear
- g. My duties conflict with one another
- h. Management tries to control my work too much
- i. I don't have enough influence over what I do and when I do it
- j. Too much responsibility
- k. Supervisors have unrealistic expectations of me
- l. Deadlines
- m. I don't get any feedback on how I'm doing
- n. I'm not treated fairly
- o. I'm afraid of being laid off
- p. My work tires me physically
- q. My work tires me mentally
- r. My work is boring
- s. I am being sexually harassed
- t. I am being discriminated against

- u. Conflict with other people
- v. I feel isolated from my co-workers
- w. I have difficulty speaking with people at work
- x. I have difficulty understanding written instructions
- y. I have trouble getting to and from work
- z. A family member or friend has been ill or injured
- aa. A family member or friend has died
- bb. Unexpected pregnancy
- cc. Birth or expected birth
- dd. Adoption
- ee. I have begun a new relationship
- ff. Divorce or separation
- gg. Arguments with my partner, children or roommate
- hh. Arguments with other family members
- ii. Physical abuse at home
- jj. Verbal or emotional abuse at home
- kk. Child care problems
- ll. Child running away from home
- mm. Finding a place to stay or moving to a new home
- nn. Change in living situation
- oo. Took on a big expense
- pp. Took on a big loan
- qq. I don't have enough money
- rr. Trouble with the law
- ss. Alcohol or drug use by a family member
- tt. My own alcohol or drug use
- uu. I have trouble balancing home and work responsibilities
- vv. I am depressed
- ww. Fear of AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases
- xx. I have a chronic illness

25. When you are worried, upset or under stress, how many people can you really count on to understand how you are feeling?
- a. No one
 - b. One
 - c. Two or more people

26. During the last year, did you seek help or counselling for a non-medical personal or emotional problem?

- a. Yes, through a service provided by my employer
- b. Yes, but not through my employer
- c. No, but I thought about it
- d. No

27. Indicate those health and safety issues that negatively impact you in your job:

- a. Too much heat or cold
- b. Bad air
- c. Too much noise or vibration
- d. Poor workspace or not enough workspace
- e. Poor lighting
- f. Having to perform unsafe work
- g. Working with people who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- h. Fire or explosion hazards
- i. Litter or mess in work areas
- j. Not enough safety training
- k. Risk of physical strain
- l. Risk of eye strain
- m. Dangerous chemicals
- n. Biological agents or infectious diseases
- o. Unsafe equipment or machinery
- p. X-rays, other radiation, or video display terminals
- q. Electrical hazards
- r.

28. What would you like to do in the next year to improve or maintain your health?

- a. Increase my energy
- b. Drink less caffeine
- c. Lose weight
- d. Gain weight
- e. Eat better
- f. Exercise more
- g. Remove a major source of worry
- h. Learn to cope better with stress
- i. Learn to cope better with anger
- j. Change job situation

- k. Change my home situation
- l. Quit smoking or smoke less
- m. Drink less alcohol
- n. Cut down on headache medication
- o. Cut down on other painkillers
- p. Cut down on sleeping or calming medications
- q. Cut down on other medications
- r. Get help with allergies
- s. Get counselling or other support
- t. Control my blood pressure
- u. Control my cholesterol
- v. Get help with digestive illness
- w. Get help with musculoskeletal illness
- x. Get help with cardiovascular illness
- y. Get help with cancer related illness
- z. Get help with respiratory illness
- aa. Get help with depression
- bb. Develop hobbies
- cc. Learn how to relax
- dd. Learn more about natural therapies
- ee. Learn more about at home and preventative remedies
- ff. Develop some balance strategies
- gg. Get information on financial strategies
- hh. Get information on parenting and other caregiving strategies
- ii. Nothing

29. What is stopping you from making this change

- a. Problem isn't serious
- b. Not enough time
- c. Not enough energy
- d. Not enough money
- e. Too depressed
- f. Don't know how to get started
- g. No encouragement from family and friends
- h. No encouragement or help from employer
- i. It's too hard
- j. Don't want to change my ways
- k. Not sure I can really make a difference
- l. Too much stress right now
- m. Fear of the unknown

- n. Lack of self-confidence
- o. I don't know what is stopping me
- p. Other

30. How do you think your employer could help you improve your health?

- a. Provide health benefits
- b. Get more employee advice on how work is organized
- c. Introduce job sharing, job rotation or flexible hours
- d. Provide more workplace health and safety training
- e. Provide training on communication and conflict skills
- f. Train supervisors to address employee's concerns
- g. Communicate more openly with employees
- h. Provide employee assistance programs to help people get counselling
- i. Provide or support child care
- j. Look at how current shift schedules affect employees' sleep and health and provide shift worker training
- k. Provide or support recreational or exercise programs
- l. Provide or support weight-control or nutrition programs
- m. Provide or support stop-smoking programs
- n. Provide or support drug cessation programs
- o. Provide or support stress control programs
- p. Provide or support chronic health related programs
- q. Provide or support balance programs
- r. Provide a variety of health screening tests on-site
- s. Provide a variety of immunization programs
- t. Other

Question Three:

What programs would meet more of the needs of our employees?

Action: Once you have delivered the assessment survey, the data needs to be examined for trends and evidence. With this information you are ready to start the process of determining what wellness programs may be beneficial. Programs may address sources of stress, particular symptoms or organizational issues. At this point a committee, which reflects all of the people in the organization, should be established to brainstorm potential programs.

When brainstorming the options consider the following five principles from:
Health Canada's Comprehensive Workplace Health System

1. Programs meet the needs of all employees, regardless of their current level of health
2. Programming recognizes the needs, preferences and attitudes of different groups of participants
3. An individual's lifestyle is made up of an interdependent set of health habits
4. Programs need to be adaptable to the special features of each workplace
5. Wellness programming works best when there is strong support for an overall health policy

Applying The Nine Processes Of Change To Wellness Programming

When putting together a comprehensive wellness program, it is valuable to look at strategies that will ensure the changes in behaviour that are desired. The following nine points are from Stage Theory (Procheska et. al) and may also be useful in developing your comprehensive wellness program. Areas of concern can be addressed in a variety of ways to achieve your desired results.

Nine Processes Of Change

1. Consciousness-Raising - intellectual awareness of desired behaviours
2. Social Liberation - company supports for new behaviours
3. Emotional Arousal - possible teaching moments around desired behaviours
4. Self-Re-evaluation - development of incongruence between self view and non-desired behaviour
5. Commitment - individual accepts responsibility for change
6. Countering - finding positive alternatives to the non-desired behaviour
7. Environmental Control - individual re-structures their environment in order to minimize choice of non-desired behaviour
8. Rewards - positive recognition of choosing desired behaviours
9. Helping Relations - development of a strong social network to ensure maintenance of desired behaviour

Question Four:

What outcomes are we hoping for or why are we willing to invest in wellness?

"When the workplace consists of a culture that values worker health and psychological needs, the potential for increased productivity and improved well-being is enhanced." Peterson, 1997

Action: 'Health' is the extent to which an individual or group is able to realize aspirations, satisfy needs and to change or cope with their environment. (World Health Organization)

'Health promotion' is the science and art of helping people change their lifestyle to move toward a state of optimal health. (American Journal of Health Promotion) 'Optimal health' is defined as a balance of physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and intellectual health.

Effective programs deal not only with the physical aspects of health but with all aspects of optimal health. Health is influenced by life circumstances, beliefs, actions, culture, and by social, economic and physical environments.

It is important that you have very clear goals for your wellness program and a method for determining how well you are doing on these goals. Proper evaluation methods will give more credibility to your plans.

Top 4 Reasons Why Companies Offer Worksite Wellness Programs From 1999 Buffet Taylor National Wellness Survey

- 27.3% consider healthy employees a valuable asset
- 25.6% want to promote a healthy lifestyle
- 14.3% want to reduce absenteeism
- 10.1% want to contain the costs of their benefit programs

Question Five:

What can we realistically afford to invest?

Action: Once you have put together options for your wellness programs you need to develop your budget. Take into account the money already being spent on existing programs (especially those not currently considered under your wellness 'label') and what is needed to carry out further programs.

The next issue of *Path To Wellness* will address

- The kinds of programs that may be offered and
- How to implement your wellness plan.

Statistics:

Almost 1 in 5 Canadian workers missed over one week of work as a result of sickness, injury or disability. (Canada's Health Promotion Survey, 1990)

In 1997, work-life conflict cost Canadian organizations roughly \$2.7 billion in lost time due to work absences. (Health Canada, Duxbury, 1999)

Lost productivity cost due to employee stress is estimated to be costing Canadian businesses and employers \$5 billion a year. (Canadian Life and Health Magazine, 1995)

Up to one half the burden of medical costs can be prevented by changes to a healthier lifestyle. (Government of Ontario, 1999)

Stress claims by Canadian employees will increase 50% in the next 30 years. (Mindsets, 1998)

1 in 4 Canadians reported that they did not really know enough ways to maintain and improve their mental health. (Canadian Mental Health Survey, 2001)

41% of Canadian employees surveyed said that their employer did not do nearly enough to help them manage stress at work. (Aventis, 2001)

Upcoming Wellness Events:

Conference Board Of Canada - 2003 Workplace Health and Well-Being Conference - Tuesday, March 25 and Wednesday, March 26, 2003 - Toronto at the Fairmont Royal York

This conference will address the need for intervention, and explores best-practice solutions that will help you manage your most critical asset and protect the mental health of your employees. It will help you understand the impact of mental health on productivity and worker performance, diagnose and manage workplace stress-related problems early, and use preventive strategies to minimize mental health risks. The conference is sponsored by Towers Perrin, Brock University-Workplace Health Research Unit, and Bright Horizons Family Solutions, with support from the Canadian Mental Health Association Toronto.

Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge Health Unit and the Kawartha Lakes Chamber of Commerce - March 28, 2003 - Lindsay. Workshops on workplace stress and shift work strategies.

Mental Health Week - May 5 - 11 - National Awareness Program. Visit <http://www.toronto.cmha.com> <join us> events

Health Work and Wellness Conference - September 28 - 30, 2003 at the Hilton Lac Leamy, in the beautiful Ottawa-Gatineau region. Conference focus is on **Leading by Example**. Visit <http://www.healthworkandwellness.com>

Work Smart Live Smart™ workshops may be coming to an area near you. If you are interested in bringing one of these workshops to your location, please contact Beverly and she would be glad to co-ordinate this with you. To select a workshop that may be right for your location, please visit <http://www.WorkSmartLiveSmart.com>.

In The News: Work And Family No Longer Separate Worlds

Work and family life are intricately connected in Canada, and stress caused by trying to balance them is at unhealthy levels, says a major new report. 'Voices of Canadians: Seeking Work-Life Balance,' funded by the Labour Program of Human Resources Development Canada, is based on The 2001 National Work-Life Conflict Study conducted by Dr. Linda Duxbury and Dr. Christopher Higgins for Health Canada. The first of six Health Canada reports from that study was published in March 2002.

Among the 32,000 Canadians surveyed for the study, more than 10,000 offered written descriptions of how they handle stress. Workers told the researchers that lack of time is a major source of conflict in their lives, and they want greater control over their working lives. Some respondents also offered suggestions on how employers can provide them with a greater sense of work-life balance: limits on overtime, greater flexibility in where and when they work, a supportive work environment, and reasonable workloads.

'Voices of Canadians,' published on January 14, 2003, is available at www.labour.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/worklife. For comments from Dr. Duxbury, see 'The New Reality: Work, Family Inseparable,' Ottawa Citizen, January 15, 2003, at www.canada.com. The Health Canada report, 'The 2001 National Work-Life Conflict Study: Report One,' March 2002, is available from the Population and Public Health Branch at www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgsp/psp/.

Useful Links

- For **corporate wellness training and educational sessions** please visit <http://www.WorkSmartLiveSmart.com> and in Toronto <http://www.StressSense.com>
- For a **variety of wellness related articles** please visit <http://www.WorkSmartLiveSmart.com> and <http://www.StressSense.com>

- **Health Canada - 'HealthWorks - A "how-to" for health and business success'** <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/>
- <http://www.austrainer.com> for email tips on Stress, Personal Efficiency, Success, Life, Working Smarter, and Customer Service.
- **E-Z Link Compilation** adapted from <http://www.buffettaylor.com>
 - [Eat Smart!](http://www.eatsmart.web.net) www.eatsmart.web.net
 - [GlobalMedic](http://www.globalmedic.com) www.globalmedic.com
 - [Government of Canada](http://www.canada.gc.ca) www.canada.gc.ca
 - [Health Canada](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca) www.hc-sc.gc.ca
 - [Health Canada: Food](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/food.htm) www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/food.htm
 - [Health Canada: Heart Health](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/ahi/hearthealth/indexhtml) www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/ahi/hearthealth/indexhtml
 - [Health Canada: Nutrition and Dietary Guidance](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/datahpb/datafood/english/pub/bns/nutguide.htm) www.hc-sc.gc.ca/datahpb/datafood/english/pub/bns/nutguide.htm
 - [Health Resources Online](http://www.healthresourcesonline.com) www.healthresourcesonline.com
 - [Healthy Culture](http://www.healthyculture.com) www.healthyculture.com
 - [Heart & Stroke Foundation of Canada](http://www.heartandstroke.ca) www.heartandstroke.ca
 - [HERO Risk-Cost Research](http://www.iwh.on.ca/home/htm)
 - [Institute For Work & Health](http://www.iwh.on.ca/home/htm) www.iwh.on.ca/home/htm
 - [Migraine Association of Canada](http://www.migraine.ca) www.migraine.ca
 - [Modern Life Guide](http://www.modlife.com) www.modlife.com
 - [Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada](http://www.mssociety.ca) www.mssociety.ca
 - [National Eating Disorder Information Centre](http://www.nedic.on.ca) www.nedic.on.ca
 - [Ontario Healthy Community Coalition](http://www.opc.on.ca/ohcc/) www.opc.on.ca/ohcc/
 - [Ontario Public Health Association](http://www.opha.on.ca) www.opha.on.ca
 - [Parkinson Foundation of Canada](http://www.parkinson.ca) www.parkinson.ca
 - [Partnership for Prevention](http://www.prevent.org) www.prevent.org
 - [Running Injuries](http://www.clark.net/pub/pribut/spsport.html) www.clark.net/pub/pribut/spsport.html
 - [Sport and Exercise Injury Prevention](http://www.amateur-sports.com/injuries.htm) www.amateur-sports.com/injuries.htm
 - [Statistics Canada](http://www.statcan.ca) www.statcan.ca
 - [Stop-N-Stretch](http://www.stopstretch.com) www.stopstretch.com
 - [Strength and Fitness Training](http://www.fitnesslink.com/mind.htm) www.fitnesslink.com/mind.htm
 - [Stress Reduction with Exercise Study](http://www.pslgroup.com/dg//23236/htm) www.pslgroup.com/dg//23236/htm
 - [Wellness Councils of Canada \(WELCAN\), The](http://www.welcan.com) www.welcan.com
 - [Wellness Councils of America](http://www.welcoa.org) www.welcoa.org
 - [Wellness Junction, The](http://www.wellnessjunction.com) www.wellnessjunction.com

About The Author:

Beverly Beuermann-King is the founder and professional speaker for Work Smart Live Smart and is the Education and Development Consultant to the Canadian Mental Health Association Toronto Branch. Both CMHA Toronto and Beverly's company feature a wide variety of affordable and customized corporate wellness workshops.

For companies in the Toronto area, please visit the Canadian Mental Health Association Toronto Branch at <http://www.StressSense.com>.

For companies outside of Toronto, please visit Beverly directly at <http://www.WorkSmartLiveSmart.com>.

Next Issue

July 2003

Suggested Theme: Corporate Wellness Programs - What To Offer?

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Comments/Submissions/Program Highlights:

If you would like to submit an article/a how-to/or a how-you-went-about/or highlight an upcoming wellness event, please send Beverly your information at bking@cmha-toronto.net

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