

# Path To Wellness

## Your Best Practices In Employee Wellness E-Newsletter

Summer 2008- Issue 17

### Welcome Beverly



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.

Thank You For Subscribing,

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

[www.WorkSmartLiveSmart.com](http://www.WorkSmartLiveSmart.com)

"Thank you for your efforts and willingness to share this wellness information - it has been very useful in putting together our programs." Dave, Alberta

### Bring Beverly To Your Workplace

To view workshop themes from **Workplace Stress, Handling Negative Attitudes,**

### In This Issue

Developing A Wellness Operating Plan

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In The News - Wellness Statistics You Can Use

Wellness Conferences

### Developing A Wellness Operating Plan

In building a results-oriented worksite wellness program, it is essential to have an operating plan. [This is the fourth benchmark in the WELCOA model.]

The operating plan is the central document that serves as the key piece of communication as to what your program will accomplish. There are seven essential components of an exceptional operating plan.

1. A Vision/Mission Statement For The Wellness Program That Incorporates The Organization's Core Philosophies And What You Would Like To Accomplish
2. Specific Goals and Measurable Objectives That Are Linked To The Company's Strategic Priorities;
3. Timelines For Implementation;
4. Roles And Responsibilities For Completion Of Objectives;
5. Itemized Budget Sufficient To Carry Out The Wellness Plan;
6. Appropriate Marketing Strategies To Effectively Promote The Wellness Plan;
7. Evaluation Procedures To Measure The Stated Goals And Objectives.

### Beverly's Comments

Though many have an informal Operating Plan, one of the key pieces that is often missing is the connection back to the vision and mission of the company. 58% of those who responded to the Employee Wellness Survey have not tied their wellness program into the vision and mission of the organization. [73% have not tied into vision and mission of the company from the Buffett & Company Wellness Survey]

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](#)

##### July

Personal Wellness Month  
Toss Away The "Could Haves" And Should Haves" Day - July 19

##### August

Simplify Your Life Week - Aug 1-7  
Professional Speakers Day - Aug 7  
National Relaxation Day - Aug 15  
Less Salt Day - Aug 29

##### September

Back Go School Month  
National Menopause Awareness Month  
World Suicide Prevention Day - Sept 10  
National Chimney Safety Week - Sept 28

##### October

Breast Cancer Awareness Month  
World Smile Day - Oct 7  
World Mental Health Day and National Depression Screening Day - Oct 10  
Mental Illness Awareness Week - Oct 5  
National Family Week - Oct 6  
Healthy Workplace Week - Oct 20

#### [Stress and Wellness Tips Blog](#)

#### [Website Contest](#)

Back Issues Of [Path To Wellness](#)

### Order Your Copy **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 new book that has been recently released

## Program Evaluation Simplified

There are several important reasons why you should evaluate your worksite wellness program though our research shows that many companies are missing this key step. Our 2008 Employee Wellness Survey results show that only 30.3% of respondents were evaluating their stress and wellness programs. [Only 26.7% from the Buffett & Company Wellness Survey]

### Why Evaluate?

- To obtain feedback so that you can modify and improve your programming efforts
- To demonstrate the value of your program and to secure continued funding
- To measure changes that are occurring and the efficacy of different interventions
- To establish accountability
- To share best practices and ROI in order to improve the health of all employees and their families

### What To Evaluate?

- Participation (AON shows that 69% of employers don't monitor participation rates)
- Participant satisfaction (see WELCOA's InfoPoint)
- Changes in behaviour and health practices
- Biometric measures (blood pressure, body weight, cholesterol)
- Productivity (missed work days, time off task)
- Medical claims

Source WELCOA

### Beverly's Comments

Without proper benchmarking and evaluation we find ourselves susceptible to the "flavour-of-the-day", re-inventing the wheel and being axed when times get tough. Let's move towards a comprehensive wellness program that includes both benchmarking and evaluation. If you have success stories to share, please send them to Beverly so that other's can learn from our triumphs.

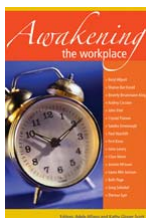
## Healthy Lifestyles - Differing Views Of Employees And Employers

While most employees (88%) say that they engage in healthy behaviours, they don't necessarily take specific actions toward living a healthy lifestyle finds a recent Hewitt Study of almost 30000 employees.

74% of employees agree that their employer has a role in helping them understand how to use their health plan, but only 12% agree or strongly agree their employer has a role

and 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.



If this has been forwarded to you and you would like to be on our mailing list, please send an email to [info@worksmartlivesmart.com](mailto:info@worksmartlivesmart.com) with Subuscribe to the Path To Wellness in the subject. Please include your name, company, city and province in the body.

in helping them understand how to stay healthy.

Employees value Health Risk Questionnaires and about 80% who had an opportunity did so and 60% of employees reported taking actions to improve their health based on the recommendations generated from the HRQ.

There is a disconnect between what employers and employees see as the barrier to health. Employers believe the biggest obstacle when making health care decisions is a lack of understanding as to why they need to make different decisions and the lack of quality information necessary to make informed decisions. Employees already believe that they are engaging in healthy behaviours and may not see the need for change in their behaviours. Employees may not be taking specific actions towards living a healthy lifestyle.

#### Top 3 Business Issues - 2008

- Managing costs
- Keeping employees healthy to improve productivity
- Competitive positioning

#### Top 3 Workforce Issues - 2008

- Employee satisfaction
- Keeping employees healthy
- Protecting employees against catastrophic health losses

#### Top 3 Pressing Conditions - 2008

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Overweight and obesity

Trends show that employers are identifying the health and health care needs of increasingly narrow segments of their populations and crafting solutions that fit those segments. They are moving from a mind-set that health care is a cost that needs to be managed to health and productivity as a critical business investment.

Over the next three to five years, a majority of employers (88%) plan to make "significant investments in longer term solutions aimed at improving the health and productivity of their workers."

#### **Beverly's Comments**

Currently only 33% of respondents to the Employee Wellness Survey are offering HRAs.(19% from the Buffett & Company Worksite Wellness Survey)

These are a proven way to show your employees what issues they are facing and what their next steps may entail.

## **Vacation Deprivation**

Vacation Deprivation is growing in Canada according to the sixth annual Expedia.ca Vacation Deprivation survey. "It is becoming increasingly difficult for Canadians to break away and enjoy a real vacation, given the popularity of electronic devices like Blackberries and feelings of vacation guilt brought on by some employers and colleagues," says Beverly Beuermann-King.

- 29% of Canadians are still not taking all of their vacation time
- Employed Canadians forfeit an average of 2.43 days of vacation per year totalling 41 million untaken days and \$6.3 billion in wages handed back to employers
- 39% of younger workers feel they are vacation deprived compared to 36% of middle-aged workers and 23% of older workers
- 34% of women are more likely to feel vacation deprived as opposed to 31% of men
- Employed adults in the US leave on average 3 vacation days per year as do those in Great Britain. Those in Italy leave 6 days, while those in Spain, the Netherlands and Austria leave an average of 4 vacation days and France and Germany leave on average 2 days
- 16% of Canadians admit that they check messages while on vacation
- 48% of Canadian workers feel that technological advances such as PDAs, Blackberries, cell phones and other devices make it more difficult to get away from work
- 42% of Canadians admit they have felt vacation envy at some point in their life
- 89% of Canadians feel rejuvenated and better about their jobs after a vacation
- 31% feel guilty about taking time off
- 17% of Canadian workers said that they would be more likely to use their vacation time if their boss encouraged it

#### More Vacation Survey information from Employee Benefits.com

- Seven out of ten employers let their workers carry over vacation days, but only up to a certain number
- Twenty percent have 'use it or lose it' policies, while 10% let days accrue limitlessly
- The overwhelming majority of respondents said that employees feel that they are too busy to take time off or that they will not be able to complete deadlines if they take vacation
- Some employees reported that they feel that they have nowhere to go or feel as if they can't afford a vacation
- A smaller majority say unused vacation days can be carried over or cashed out, thus giving employees an incentive to stay in the office.

## **Beverly's Comments**

Vacation Benefits are already apart of most organizations wellness programming, however, few are monitoring vacation useage and actively encouraging their employees to make the most of their vacation time. Some employers and leaders actually make it difficult or encourage employees not to take their time off. Stop rewarding workaholism by allowing employees to cash out their vacation time - it is not in their best interest or yours.

## **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
- Humourous, 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](http://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?

### ROI Calculator

The ROI calculator for health care costs can help you determine whether an investment in a wellness program makes sense for your company. Just go to [www.wellsteps.com](http://www.wellsteps.com) and click on the Tools link at the bottom of the page. There you'll find the ROI calculator and several other tools. (Remember that this is a US site)

You will need just three pieces of information:

1) your company's total health care costs over the past 12 months 2) the total number of benefited employees and 3) the percentage change in health care costs each year for the past 5 years. It would be good, but not necessary, if you knew the percentage of your employee population who were smokers and who were obese.

Our Employee Wellness Survey found that 46.9% of respondents reported that one of the challenges to developing a comprehensive workplace wellness program was that the leadership was unconvinced of the financial benefits. Knowing your ROI gives your wellness efforts a visible financial presence.

### Prokine

Has a line of small and large wellness posters to advertise a variety of wellness messages - I especially like the one that says "Look After Your Health, Spare Parts Are Rare" - If you would like to request samples, please email Yannick Angers at [yannick@prokine.ca](mailto:yannick@prokine.ca) or call 418-834-8219.

### Add Value Through Grocery Store Education

What is Healthy Eating is in Store for You?

Healthy Eating is in Store for You™ is a collaborative national health promotion project, funded by Health Canada's National Diabetes Strategy. The purpose of the project is to promote healthy food choices through in-store and community education on how to read and apply the nutrition information.

With the release of Canada Gazette 2 the label on packaged foods will now have standardized nutrition information and consumers will need assistance in interpreting these new food labeling regulations.

Healthy Eating is in Store for You™ focuses on the importance of label reading within the context of a healthy diet and aims to reach consumers with these four key messages:

1. Learn to read the Nutrition Facts to get the information you need.
2. Use Nutrition Facts, list of ingredients and nutrition claims to make informed food choices.
3. Nutrition Facts are based on a specific amount of food. Compare this to the amount you eat.
4. Use % Daily Value to see if the food has a lot or a little of a nutrient.

Retailers and manufacturers believe that they share in the responsibility to provide education to consumers. "By offering value-added services such as healthy cooking classes, meal planning session, weight loss programs, and label reading tours, Sobeys can actively promote wellness in the community." - Pam Harris, Community Room Coordinator, Sobeys, Charlottetown, PEI

### Beverly's Comments

This is a great example of how an industry has reached out to impact the wellness of those around them. Though this may seem self-serving for Sobeys, the benefit that other companies receive from this education and resource is top-notch and definitely an asset to their wellness programming.

## **Wellness Programs For Small To Large Companies**

### **Imperial Manufacturing - Stretching At The Workplace**

Presented by Renee Frenette and Karen Mazerolle at the Heart and Stroke Foundation of NB in Moncton, NB

#### **Proactive Prevention**

Imperial Manufacturing has taken a proactive approach to employee wellness and injury prevention by focusing on complaints from employees regarding fatigue as well as back & upper body discomfort.

#### **Project**

The results of the symptom surveys showed prolonged static standing with neck flexion and shoulder protraction and repetitive bi-manual handling with wrist pronation/supination

#### **Analysis of Risk**

Prolonged static postures

Too much of any single activity can increase the risk of cumulative trauma by localizing the blood flow and starving the muscles of rich oxygenated blood. This starvation leads to breakdown. Blood flow depends on muscle contraction and movement. Relief of cumulative tissue strain is accomplished with posture changes and other tasks that require different musculoskeletal demands.

#### **Considered rest break strategies**

Support from the Literature

- "Workers who engage in static work are best served by frequent dynamic breaks to reduce tissue stress accumulation." Stuart McGill, Low Back Disorders, Evidence Based Prevention and Rehabilitation 2002.
- Moore TM. 1998 - A workplace stretching program. Physiologic and perception measurements before and after participation. It's purpose was to implement a primary prevention program in the workplace targeted at preventing muscle strain. The results indicated the potential to prevent muscle strains. Also participants who participated had zero occurrences of musculoskeletal injuries during the 2 month trial.
- KaplanskyBD, Wei FY, Reecer MV. 1998 - Prevention strategies for occupational low back pain. Among strategies to prevent occupational low back pain only job design/redesign and exercise programs appear to have a protective effect.
- Maher CG. 2000 - A systematic review of workplace interventions to prevent low back pain. The review suggests that workplace exercise is effective, braces with education are ineffective, and workplace modification with education is of unknown value in preventing low back pain.

#### **Program Structure**

2 minutes of exercising to be performed three different times throughout the shift.

7:00 am shift start

8:30 am exercise

10:15 - 10:30 break

11:30 pm exercise

12:30 - 1:00 lunch

2:00 pm exercise

3:15 pm shift end

Employees have a maximum time of 1 hour 45 minutes of continuous production before they have a stretch or scheduled break

### **Program Instruction**

The 6 exercises are to be performed at a steady pace versus a fast or slow pace. The purpose of the exercises is not to induce physiological change (i.e. flexibility or strength) but to reverse the static postures induced by the work itself to minimize the accumulation of strain and maximize worker health and energy.

### **How It Was Introduced**

- The exercises were first introduced to two of IMG's production departments
- The exercises were demonstrated on each shift to ensure proper technique and answer any questions from the employees.
- Large posters were posted in the departments to promote awareness and participation.
- Small pictures of the exercises were laminated and posted in the department permanently.
- Supervisors participated in the execution of the exercises
- Supervisors monitored production and reported increases or decreases during the next 4 week period
- Comfort Survey was re-administered
- Feedback was encouraging and the exercises were rolled out in all the production areas
- A Portable display was used as the exercise plan was rolled out in the other departments

### **Program Monitoring And Evaluation**

Feedback utilized from workers and supervisors

Modified exercises for specific workers

Stretching exercises are mandatory and required as part of production employees job task

Exercise program is part of the H&S orientation for new employees

Non-compliance was addressed by discipline policy as it would for any other violation

### **Results**

Decrease in the number of lost time claims due to repetitive movement & material handling:

2002=20

2003= 12

2004= 7

2005=3

2006=3

2007=5

Lost time days due to repetitive motion & material handling have decreased from 372 days in 2003 to 66 days in 2007

### **Beverly's Comments:**

This presentations was an excellent example of how a corporate and individual health and wellness issue was identified and specifically programmed for with exceptional results. Congratulations And Great Work Everyone!

### **In The News - Statistics You Can Use**

**U.S. Employers Spend More Payroll Dollars On Benefits Than Canadian Firms**

The International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans reported that nearly half of U.S. employers estimated about 31% or more of their payroll budget goes toward employee benefits, while slightly more than half of Canadian companies indicated 11% to 30% of their payroll goes for workplace benefits.

Researchers also noted, despite having a universal health care system, more than 94% of the Canadian participants provided extended health care insurance as a way to retain and attract talent.

Moreover, nearly 47% of Canadian firms used a flexible benefit arrangement with the most popular form being a health care spending account. In the U.S., 81.4% of employers offered a flexible benefit arrangement and a health flexible spending account was the most common offering.

### **Men And Women Call EAPs About Different Problems**

According to Bensigner, DuPont and Associates, a national EAP provider found 63% of callers were female, and 37% were male. Women comprise 46% of the total U.S. labor force, according to the US Department of Labor, however, BDA reports they use EAP services more than males at almost a 3:1 ratio.

Men are more likely than women to call employee assistance programs for help with substance abuse, job and relationship problems.

Women are more likely than men to seek help for concerns related to mental health and wellbeing, which are the traditional issues handled by EAPs.

The top four reasons individuals called the BDA helpline in 2007 were:

- mental health issues (36% of callers)
- legal issues (19%)
- relationship/couple issues (10%)
- family issues (8%)

### **The No. 1 Reason Why People Quit**

According to a recent study by human-resources consultants Watson Wyatt, the reason why people quit is excessive stress. Yet employers seem in denial: When asked why they thought employees were leaving, most HR managers gave insufficient pay and lack of career development, including promotions, as the main reasons.

### **Fathers Are Conflicted**

61% of dads polled by Monster® bring work home every week and 75% of these dad's believe that bringing work home interferes with a parent's relationship with their child.

73% of surveyed dads would be a stay-at-home parent if money were not an issue.

### **Conclusions**

Employers should be cognizant of the squeeze these workers are feeling, and make certain they are developing and marketing appropriate work/life benefits within their recruitment and retention initiatives.

### **Wellness Conferences - Join Beverly!**

**HR Southwest in Fort Worth, Texas - October 17, 2008**

**HRMA Richmond in Richmond, Virginia - October 22-24, 2008**

**Insight Circles in Xian, China - October 27, 2008**

**Looking for Beverly to present at your organization - please call her at (705) 786-0437.**

### **Heart and Stroke Foundation of New Brunswick - The Wellness At Heart Award Winners**

Based on the Four Pillars of physical activity, tobacco-free living, healthy eating and psychological wellness and The Four Strategies of awareness and education, skill building and learning, environment and policy.

Gold (four pillars and at least three strategies)

- Marilyn Babineau - South-East Regional Health Authority
- Mary Martell - Health Services J.D. Irving Limited

Silver (four pillars and at least three strategies)

- Marc André Chamberlain - The Place 2000 Health and Wellness Committee
- Barb Brennan - BIRD/RIDEAU
- Michelle Sawler - City of Fredericton
- Marc Blanchard - Crosby Molasses Company Limited

Bronze (four pillars and at least two strategies)

- Melissa Anderson - Therapeutic Services, Physiotherapy Dept., SJRH
- Tracey Ross - Restigouche Health Authority
- Jackie MacDonald - Northumberland Co-operative Limited
- John Warrington - Barry Spalding

Award of Distinction (innovative, comprehensive or outstanding program)

- John Oxner - Department of Public Safety
- South-East Regional Health Authority
- Health Services, J.D. Irving Limited

### **Subscriber's Gifts**



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**May you savour the summer!**

**Beverly Beuermann-King**

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