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As organizations continue to overcome challenges and remain competitive in this rapidly changing economy, corporate health & wellness initiatives are becoming a more popular strategy to help attract, retain, engage and motivate employees in the workplace.

A successful health and wellness program can be an important differentiator in the competition for talent, while helping employees become healthier and happier. These programs often lead to reduced benefits costs, reduced absenteeism, and higher productivity (not to mention, these initiatives can also help build an organization's profile as a socially responsible employer). These programs can also help fulfill an organization's legal duty to create and maintain a safe and healthy workplace for their employees.

**Here are a few notable and interesting statistics regarding employee health to consider:**

**In an office with 100 people...**

*Sitting all day causes all kinds of ailments - physical and emotional*

- 59 spend their entire workday seated
- 49 are classified as "Physically inactive" even in their leisure time
- 30 more have "limited" participation and activity

*Being Under Constant Pressure Grinds a Person Down*

- 66 report high job stress
- 32 do not feel supported in their work efforts by coworkers
- 15 are experiencing actual conflict with coworkers

*Obesity shortens lives*

- 36 are overweight
- 23 are obese
- 5 have diabetes
- 5 more have either prediabetes or undiagnosed diabetes

*Depression and Mental Health Issues affect more than just the person suffering*

- 4 have experienced a bout of depression in the past year
- 8 more have previously had an occurrence of depression (prior to the past year)

For well over a decade, research has been showing the effectiveness of employee wellness programs. In fact, according to the *Conference Board of Canada*, "...for every dollar spent on a Corporate Wellness Program, the returns have been cost savings of between \$2.30 and \$10.10 in the areas of decreased absenteeism, fewer sick days, reduced WSIB/WCB claims, lowered health and insurance costs, and improvements to employee performance and productivity".

A comprehensive workplace wellness program ideally consists of three components: **Prevention, Recognition, and Assistance** and should include the following essential elements:

1. Senior management commitment;
2. A benchmark or baseline;
3. Wellness programming related to business needs;
4. Follow-up with participating employees; and
5. An evaluation of the program and initiatives.

There are so many creative ways to implement a health & wellness program - such as weight loss programs, fitness programs, smoking cessation, ergonomics, coaching and counselling, lunch and learns, on-site healthcare and more. How your company's health and wellness program is designed should all depend on the unique characteristics of your work environment and corporate culture.

There are a number of questions to consider before establishing any program, such as how much space (in your office) can you dedicate to the program? How receptive are the employees to this initiative? What is most important to your employees – what do they value most? What is your budget for the program?

It is always a good idea to start with an employee survey or questionnaire to understand what components are most meaningful and important to your staff. This way you will be better equipped to build a unique wellness program that is most likely to succeed.

For more information regarding health & wellness initiatives for your organization, **please contact us at 416-822-3471** or [inquiries@peakperformancehr.com](mailto:inquiries@peakperformancehr.com) and visit our website at [www.peakperformancehr.com](http://www.peakperformancehr.com)

For related articles on employee wellness, please visit the Small Biz Advisor website or click here: [Small Biz Advisor](#) and "[Ways Clients Can Introduce Wellness Programs](#)"

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