beacon
health options

Creating a Culture
of
Well-being

Employers everywhere are learning that a healthy workplace is good for business. As a business leader, you have an opportunity to establish well-being as a key organizational value, and to create a culture of well-being—a supportive workplace culture that promotes good health for everyone, while boosting your bottom line.

But what is a culture of well-being? Beacon Health Options (Beacon) defines it as the complex web of social influences that nurture people so that they can achieve complete emotional, physical, financial, and social health.

It's possible that your company already has what it takes to improve its current culture. This guide is designed to help you through the process of creating a culture of well-being for your organization— whether you are looking to improve your organization's culture or starting from scratch.

CONSIDER A CULTURE OF WELL-BEING

Employees need a supportive culture in order to be successful—at work, at home, and in their community. Workplace initiatives are a wonderful way to establish health as a key organizational value. This helps develop a culture of well-being, or a workplace culture that promotes good health for everyone.

Employee well-being affects the bottom line. If an employee is healthy and happy, they tend to do better at work. If an employee is unhealthy and unhappy, there will likely be more barriers to getting daily tasks done. The University of Michigan's Health Research Center has tracked the cost spread between high lifestyle risk and low lifestyle risk in more than 1 million employees. Data shows that the gap between low- and high-risk employees exceeds $3,000 per year throughout adulthood. Multiply that number by each at-risk employee in your organization.

By creating and implementing the best strategies, you will reach and engage employees and their families. The goal is to focus on the overall emotional, physical, financial, and social tenets of employee well-being.

> The workplace is a powerful and influential social community that can promote and support healthy behaviors. From overcoming depression to developing relationships to tightening the family budget, **well-being programs can help your employees improve their overall health.** In turn, the programs will help your company enhance performance, increase productivity, experience lower turnover, and reduce costs.

What is a culture of well-being?
A culture of well-being is more than just a buzz phrase. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines well-being as the good outcome that follows people who have full and healthy lives. The CDC feels it's beneficial for public health in that it helps obtain personal longevity, healthy behaviors, productivity, and more.

Beacon considers overall well-being to encompass one's emotional, physical, financial, and social health. Let's take a look at each:

FINANCIAL

- Financial literacy programs
- One-on-one financial coaching
- On-site training programs
- ID theft monitoring

SOCIAL

- Management consultation
- Organizational development
- Community building
- Relationship enrichment programs
- Workplace community

PHYSICAL

- Wellness programs
- Health screenings
- Healthy behavior challenges
- Disease management
- Lifestyle coaching
- Incentive programs
- Medical self-care

EMOTIONAL

- Employee assistance programs
- Work/life programs
- Mindfullness and resiliency programs
- Depression screening
- Specialty behavioral health

A culture of well-being can mean different things to different people at different stages of their life. However, feeling well and being positive can help any employee reach their full potential.

As a business leader, you have an opportunity to establish health as a key organizational value, and to create a culture of well-being. This workplace initiative not only promotes good health for everyone, but can also boost your bottom line. Within a culture of well-being, employees will find it easier to make positive choices. And new, positive behaviors will more likely be sustained for a lifetime.

ASSESS YOUR CURRENT CULTURE

Assess your company's culture

Employers can enhance productivity, boost morale, and improve the bottom line by promoting employee health. But how can you be sure it is worth your time to improve your workplace? The first step is to assess your organization's current culture. Consider the following questions:

- Are your employees healthy enough to show up for work and be productive?

- Would your employees thrive in an environment of wellness and healthy lifestyle support if you provided one for them?

- Can your company benefit from saving money on its health care spend?

- Do you currently provide information for your employees with resources on financial literacy, management consultation, and/or organizational development?

- Do you have wellness programs, health screenings, and an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) in place?

As you run through the questions above, take notes on gaps that emerge between the existing and desired culture. Also consider what it might take to allow a culture of well-being to develop.

Assessing your company's current culture and employee needs will help make a business case for promoting well-being. In order to conduct an Organizational Opportunity Assessment **(OOA)**. Encourage business leaders and management across your organization to take the survey. The intent of the OOA is to provide a baseline understanding so you can broadly assess both strengths and opportunities for improvement.

Conducting an OOA:

- Helps to identify the workplace culture of well-being as well as suggestions that may lead to increased productivity, decreased absenteeism and presenteeism (reduced productivity while at work), and achieving targeted health care costs for both employees and the organization as a whole

- Is a necessary first step before the vision is developed, resources allocated, strategies adopted, and interventions implemented

- Finds natural allies within the organization, and identifies where vendors might be able to fill in the gaps

- Gives results that can be used to determine a program launch that best meets your needs

Develop your vision and business case
The key to addressing any issue in the workplace is first understanding its impact on the organization. Increased medical costs, absenteeism and presenteeism, and mental health risks have dramatic effects on an organization's bottom line. By recognizing the impact, companies are strategically poised to leverage existing programs, promote early identification and intervention, implement new programs and services, and evaluate the effectiveness of such initiatives.

Knowing that each company and its employees are unique, the strategies used to address employee health and emotional well-being will vary. It will be based on available resources, management and employee needs and interests, and priority health issues. Developing a comprehensive employee workplace health program to address current needs—or making improvements to an existing program—requires an understanding of worksite contributors to employee health.

ENLIST SUPPORT AND BUILD YOUR TEAM

After gathering additional information, you have decided a culture of well-being would be a great goal for your company. How do you gain support from senior leadership?

Present the business case for a culture of well-being to the senior leadership team; it should be considered a core component of business strategy, budgeting, and planning. Senior leaders who understand how it will shape the business are more willing to devote the time and money that is required to visibly support it.

Provide senior leadership with:

- Detailed research from the OOA and reasons why the program would change your culture

- Time to consider what it would take to be fully invested and provide resources from their standpoint

- Reasons to commit to partially or fully fund and support a multi-year program at the outset—this is essential for ultimate success

With senior leadership support, you can then form a multidisciplinary workgroup, assess needs, design a program or programs, agree on objectives, identify resources, develop a timeline, communicate, implement, and evaluate those programs. And because this culture of well-being will evolve over time, a strategy will help guide this process.

Develop the strategy

Use the following checklist to create objectives for your culture of well-being:

- Use the results of the OOA to show the potential value of reducing the total cost of poor health care and poor health.

- Create a vision of how managing health becomes part of "how we do things around here"— building on established norms for other elements of culture and strategy, such as safety, quality, customer service, etc.

- Prepare a plan to equip leaders and managers. Make sure to define their roles and provide them the tools and support to be successful.

- Balance short- and long-term goals. Some upfront expenses can be offset by also investing in program modules that have earlier results.

- Build a healthy culture with an all-encompassing strategic approach. Do not simply roll out healthy culture programs.

Remember, employees and the organization will benefit from even simple interventions—such as an awareness campaign—so cost should not be a barrier to improving the workplace culture.

Your EAP, if you have one in place, can also be a strong partner in fostering a culture of well-being within individuals and the workplace.
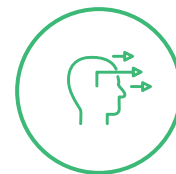
Design the program

After conducting the OOA, reviewing existing programs, developing a strategy, and obtaining leadership buy in, you will be able to plan a workplace health program that promotes a culture of well-being. Visible support from executive leadership, followed by building a robust internal team, makes it clear how important the initiative is to the individual employee and to the organization.

Develop your senior management objectives

Commitment to reaching those in need—employees, family members, and their friends—in a variety of ways is critical. The success of any outreach program requires strong support from senior management as well as Corporate Communications or Human Resources to ensure more employees are aware.

With senior management support, the initiative takes on a more prominent role within an organization and prompts cooperation from all levels. Executives, managers, and committee leaders play important roles in shaping a culture of well-being. There are four primary objectives for all leaders:

1. **Sharing the culture of well-being vision.** Leaders explain the initiative, how to participate, and why it is important. Leaders need to be able to tell these basics in a way that inspires participation and lets employees know that this effort is an organizational priority.

2. **Serving as effective role models.** Leaders develop strategies for walking the talk. This includes sharing personal lifestyle strengths and improvement goals. Leaders participate in core wellness activities, such as completing personal health assessments and working with a health coach.

3. **Aligning cultural touch points.** These are formal and informal ways to establish and maintain behavior. Rewards, training, traditions, communication systems, and the commitment of time and space are examples. Most organizations already have policies, procedures, and programs that influence health behavior, such as smoking guidelines.

4. **Monitoring and celebrating healthy choices.** Leaders keep track of progress and acknowledge individuals' efforts. Leaders can see progress as it happens. Healthy practices generate their own rewards associated with health, energy, and personal performance. Leaders call attention to these positive outcomes, and also see to it that employees get praise, compensation, and other rewards that are available.

Build your team

Once you have the senior management objectives in place, it's time to build your team. Consider who should have a role in the planning, implementing, and evolving healthy culture initiatives.

Assign the:

- Program owner/leader (Who will lead and manage the program and team regularly?)

- Program champion (Who will help the program owner and team overcome obstacles?)

- Development/planning team

- Corporate implementation team

- Additional internal and external support, such as:

  » IT for data interfaces

  » RFP and negotiations support

  » Communications

  » Legal

  » Vendors

  » Community resources

  » Clinical resources, such as a medical director or vendors' physician, to advise on the proposed strategic initiatives

Prior to bringing your team together, determine how to assign roles and what preparatory work needs to be done to facilitate an organizational culture change, such as:

- Support from key leadership that improving health and productivity is part of everyone's job

- Align business leaders and managers to take comprehensive approaches to opportunities

- Enhance the skills and scopes of staff members in their formal roles

Once you bring your team together, be prepared for potential skepticism, anxiety, and resistance. Staff may be concerned if the initiative will be a success or if they have the support, time, and skills to contribute.

Assessing the current situation, attitudes, and opinions

Your team will want to review your OOA, as well as the company's current policies, practices, and employee attitudes. Think about the following as a team:

- What are some of the biggest workplace issues?

- Who is covered by an existing program?

- When was the program established, and why?

- Is it outdated?

- What are the employees' attitudes about the current program?

- Do employees comply with the program? If not, why not?

Crafting a plan

If you have a program that addresses workplace issues like overcoming depression to developing relationships to tightening the family budget, your workgroup will review them with your new goals in mind. If you do not have a program in place, your team will develop one. This will provide:

- A clear statement of intent and firm foundation for the culture of well-being

- A framework for action

- A commitment to the health of everyone in the workplace

- A justification for the allocation of resources to workplace well-being

With a culture of well-being program, you send a clear message to employees and the community: We care about your health. Be sure that your programs are in line with other company policies and procedures, such as code of conduct and health and safety practices.

When you announce a new or revised workplace program, remember that employees are all unique. Some might dive right into a program while others might be wary. Still others may not be ready to make a behavior change. Be sure to communicate clearly and often on these important benefits, to encourage employees to take advantage of the support your organization is offering them.

IMPLEMENT A CULTURE OF WELL-BEING

Ready to start your culture of well-being programs but not sure how to begin? Create an implementation plan and work with your team to build consensus around the following topics:

Program components and resources

Build a project plan for each resource, activity, and program deployment to ensure required resources are allocated with a timeline. Start by conducting a three-step process of:

1. Reviewing all available data

2. Identifying health behaviors you want to address

3. Proposing the activities, events, and resources to offer it

Consider any senior management directives, pre-designated funding limitations, and the clinical appropriateness of strategic initiatives as part of your planning process. In addition, don't forget to meet regularly during the planning and implementation period to determine status of deliverables and timeline, and to address issues that arise.

Consider your audience

Once your team has completed the three-step process, determine how to get through to the intended program audience. Be thoughtful of how to most effectively communicate with them.

Individuals typically do not want to feel as though they are being targeted based on a particular health issue or their claims data.

Don't forget to involve and communicate with employee spouses, partners, and family members. Remember to include employees who don't have a typical schedule or telecommute. Keep in mind each group will differ based on their needs and interests.
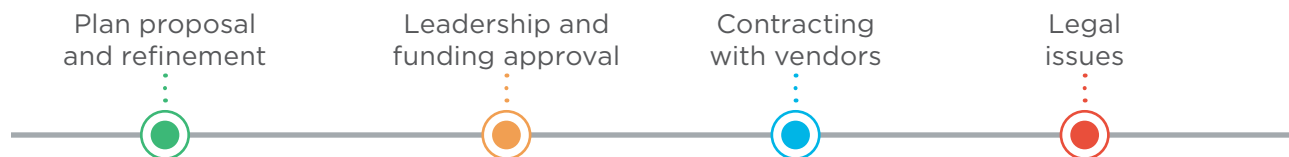
Resources and funding
Think about how the program and incentives will be funded:

- Will you receive special funding from the CEO's office?

- Will funding come out of the Human Resources or Benefits budget?

- Do you have the option to bill back the business locations for their fair share of the program costs as an offset to medical costs?

- Can you consider slightly raising health plan contributions to offset the expense?

Culture of well-being timeline
Build a detailed comprehensive deployment timeline and project plan that includes:

Plan proposal and refinement	Leadership and funding approval	Contracting with vendors	Legal issues

Data integration
The program offerings that support your culture of well-being should be selected and evolve based on data and fact-based decisions. Data is significantly more valuable when you include everything that is available to you. Consider the health plan, prescription drug, vision, dental, disability, health risk assessment, biometric screening, and absence data (including presenteeism). Often, it can take much more time to integrate data than you initially anticipated, but it's definitely a worthwhile investment.

Vendor integration
You likely have multiple vendors offering a variety of programs to employees and their family members. It's important the vendors work together in sharing data, and in planning for and coordinating the timing of their interactions with individuals to minimize confusion. Put yourself in your employee's shoes. Vendor coordination makes for a more effective and efficient program.

Beacon has a variety of **Workplace Well-being Programs** in place to create your culture of well-being. These resources should help your team put the programs in place to develop a successful culture of well-being.

Communicate

Regular and consistent communication is a vital component of the overall program. It also fosters an organizational commitment to employee health. Employees are key stakeholders and should be informed of the program's purpose, the actions taken, and the reasons for and results of those actions. Consistency comes from repetition and uniform presentation from all levels of the organization. Over time, it will create a culture of well-being.

> **Communicate early and often**, but also have a long-term communication strategy. Provide periodic updates to the organizational leadership and workforce to maintain program visibility.

A good communication plan is what ties your program together and keeps it on the forefront of the employees' minds. It's important to keep the communication plan updated and continuous.

As you plan your outreach to employees, consider developing the following:

- **A statement of purpose.** This is the foundation of any prevention and awareness program. It acknowledges the problem, commits to supporting the individual, organization, or group, and expresses the core objectives of the program. Try to develop a statement that closely supports the company mission statement.

- **Communication objectives.** Defining clear objectives will help set priorities among possible communication activities and determine the message and content to use for each. Once they have been defined and circulated, they serve as a contract or agreement about the purpose of the communication, and establish what outcomes should be measured.

- **Key educational messages.** These should include both the program's marketing strategy, as well as the rationale for the program's strategic direction. Employees also need to be aware of program goals for both individual employee health and the employer's bottom line.

- **A communication strategy statement or creative brief.** This includes:

  - » A definition and description of the intended audience.

  - » A description of the action the intended audience members should take as a result of the communication

  - » A list of any obstacles to taking action

  - » A description of the support that will make the benefit, and its ability to attain it, credible to the intended audience

  - » The consumer-perceived benefit of taking the action

  - » The settings, channels, and activities that will reach intended audience members—particularly when they will be receptive to or able to act upon the message

  - » The image your program plans to convey through the tone, look, and feel of messages and materials

- **A branded health strategy, possibly including a logo.** This will make all materials immediately and easily recognizable.

MAINTAIN A CULTURE OF WELL-BEING

Monitor and evaluate your program

Once the implementation is in place, the final stage of designing a workplace initiative involves how to monitor and evaluate program activities. Just as assessment data is critical for evidenced-based program planning and implementation, so too is evaluation to prove that workplace interventions have been effective. It also builds the business case for continuing them. Ideally, evaluation tactics should be developed as part of the planning process and before beginning the culture of well-being activities.

The program evaluation plan should include:

- ✓ Identification of the data to be tracked and analyzed
- ✓ Establishment of a data collection system of important health indicators
- ✓ Determination of how data will be stored and who will have access to it
- ✓ Establishment of a process for regularly reporting progress to key stakeholders

Potential areas of evaluation

Improved worker productivity

Were there improvements in emotional, physical, financial, and social health? Did it enhance stamina, concentration, and focus leading to greater work output? Health risk assessments (HRAs) and employee surveys can be important sources for this kind of information.

A workplace culture of well-being initiative can reduce (and, therefore, you might measure):

- Absenteeism and presenteeism among employees
- Overtime to cover absent employees
- Costs to train replacement employees

Lower health care costs

Potential evaluation measures for health care costs include:

- Changes in the number and type of health insurance claims over time
- Changes in health care utilization
- Increased access to evidenced-based care with improved clinical outcomes
- Quality of care indicators (for example, percent of employees diagnosed with a mental or physical health issue that is being controlled through medication)

Improved health outcomes

Potential evaluation measures can compare the health status of program participants over time, such as:

- Targets for the optimal levels of health status (for example, percent of employees reporting good or excellent health before and after a health promotion program or intervention)

- Levels of disease, injury, or disability (for example, percent of employees diagnosed with a mental or physical health issue before and after a screening program or number of employees who experience disability before and after a workplace initiative)

Organizational engagement and cultural change

A culture of well-being is achieved when the organization's structures, policies, procedures, and practices are aligned to support and maintain the emotional, physical, financial, and social health of employees. Organizations can enhance their culture of well-being by helping employees with overcoming depression to developing relationships to tightening the family budget and more.

Increased employee participation in programs like the EAP, physical fitness, and emotional health issues can be a meaningful sign of positive program impact on the organization—including the bottom line.

Keep the programs fresh to sustain employee engagement over a long period of time. Ensure your company continually looks to enhance and expand the program offerings. The workplace is a powerful and influential social community that can promote and support healthy behaviors. A culture of well-being is a positive goal that your company can nourish for years to come.