

October 2018

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Why Workplace Well-Being Works for You



Well-Being at Work

According to Forbes, “Contributors with poor well-being only produce 64% of possible work output, while those with excellent well-being produce a whopping 83%.”

Can the health of employees really contribute to the organization's overall effectiveness, productivity, and prosperity? *Absolutely*. Learn how the simple factors of health and well-being can play a role in various positive outcomes on organizations and what you can do as an employer to engage your workforce in healthy and happy behaviors.

What is Employee Well-Being?

Well-being is a holistic view of health - it challenges the traditional view of HR to consider all workplace factors that can influence an employee's physical and mental state. As a result, it suggests that organizations carry a greater responsibility to support their employees, rather than just providing financial compensation and insurance benefits. So what is included in worker well-being? Quite simply, it consists of much of the same needs we have in other realms of our lives, such as social support, physical health, mental health, financial security, and spiritual health. After all, working adults spend a vast amount of time at work, and that time doesn't go by in a vacuum; it spills over into time spent at home with family, out socializing, and time spent pursuing individual interests. If well-being needs aren't met during the crucial hours at work, then the well-being of the whole person will be affected.



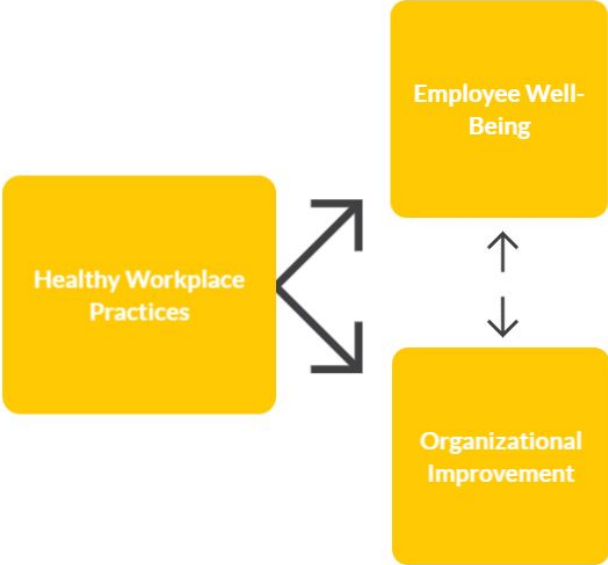
Why Should You Care?

Now that you have a better understanding of what is meant by "employee well-being," it is necessary to recognize the organizational benefits that come with a healthy workplace. The hard return organizations receive from investing in wellness practices goes far beyond the avoidance of sickness or absences. Embracing this concept can yield significant savings on health care costs, higher rates of presenteeism, greater productivity, higher quality work, and an increase in employee morale. Pharmaceutical and consumer-packaged goods giant, Johnson &

Johnson, began incorporating wellness initiatives and investing in their employees' social, mental, and physical health. In just a matter of ten years, Johnson & Johnson had saved an estimated \$250 million dollars on health care costs - from simply investing in their employees' health⁴! If that doesn't convince you enough, let's look at the average cost of a single sick day in the United States. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, an organization loses \$348 dollars in productivity due to a single sick day from one employee⁵. Clearly, making investments in your employees' and organization's health really does pay off!

What Can You Do?

Addressing well-being at work may seem like a large undertaking considering its numerous components, and in some ways, it is. But luckily, research has broken down the five key practices of healthy organizations that lead to increased employee well-being and improved organizational outcomes¹. Grawitch, Gottschalk, & Munz (2006) provide a framework known as the PATH Model in which these five core focus areas can help your HR department hone in on areas in which practices, policy, or culture could be revamped to improve employee well-being, and with it, decreased turnover and absenteeism and increased job satisfaction and productivity². Take a look at the infographic below to explore areas that your organization may want to invest more in.



The PATH Model



Putting it into Perspective

That all seems pretty intuitive, right? But it's still a lot to consider, so let's take a look at a quick success story that focuses on physical health. Confluence, a mid-size financial services technology firm in Pittsburgh, utilized an incentivized exercise program in which those who earned enough points were rewarded with high-value items such as iPads, cash, and vacations. However, Confluence found that only its already-fit and exercise-oriented employees took advantage of this program, and the firm's insurance costs continued to increase while the medical claim rate remained stagnant.



To tackle this issue, Confluence introduced a revamped wellness program that met the diverse personal health needs of its employees. This three-part program focused on offering co-pay and deductible savings for adhering to one of the many health-related activity offerings. In addition, employees and their families were educated about their health risks through a personalizing questionnaire and biometric screening, and finally, an online health toolkit was offered. Ultimately, Confluence experienced a 13% reduction in health care premiums due to increased participation in the program. For more details on this program, you can read the full case study [here](#).

Confluence's health program is just one of the hundreds of ways your organization can make a positive impact on well-being, and there are always multiple ways to address well-being depending on what your organization's goal is. As you brainstorm ways your organization can apply the PATH Model to increase employee well-being, consider these tips:



Customize

Be sure your initiative appeals to a wide range of employees to maximize participation.



Communicate

Develop an air-tight communication plan. Poor communication is one of the greatest detriments to the success of a new health initiative.



Ask

Not sure where employee well-being may be lacking? Ask them. A survey or focus group can gather employee feedback that makes employees feel heard and gives them a sense of ownership over the new initiative.



Role Model

Lead by example. Be sure you have buy-in from your leaders and managers. Employees are less likely to participate if they feel discouraged by their manager or don't see leaders taking the initiative seriously.

If we can leave you with one piece of advice it would be to *invest in your employees' social, mental, and physical wellbeing - it pays off!* You are now ready to take action. UCF Performance Solutions is an applied research group who seeks to strengthen the quality of work life for all employees and develops solutions based on cutting edge research. Performance Solutions consists of UCF's faculty and graduate students from the Industrial/Organizational Psychology field who are eager to team up with your organization to help improve and maintain employee health and safety by preventing work-related injuries and illnesses, and promoting well-being in the workplace. Check out our [website](#) to discover more, or contact us by email at performancesolutions@ucf.edu.



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