

## **NCR's Leading Edge Healthy Planning Strategy a win-win for the employer and its employees**

At NCR Canada, physical, mental and financial well-being of employees is management's top priority. And it's the technology company's comprehensive approach to workplace health and sound planning strategy that has played a major role in determining the success of NCR's award-winning *Healthy Workplace Initiative*.

There are a wide variety of inputs and processes NCR employs, providing a clear needs assessment focus to integrate Healthy Workplace programs into the strategic and business plans of the company. The planning process involves gathering data and information from a number of external and internal resources.

### **External Sources for Data**

Externally, NCR makes use of The Workforce Engagement Survey (annual) and the Top 50 Company employee survey (annual).

### **Internal Sources for Data**

In addition to internal company surveys and monthly meetings among HR leaders and the Leadership Team to discuss the pulse of the organization, NCR conducts a HealthFirst Survey (quarterly) and a New Hire Survey (quarterly).

### **Program Development based on trends**

NCR's health and wellness programs are based on trends from these internal and external sources. Internally, the company assesses Employee Assistance Program (EAP) utilization rates - programs and services used on an overall basis and ties those into the trends the company sees in its *HealthFirst* program, which helps employees return to work following injury or illness. Responsible for lowering absenteeism by 30 percent since its inception in 1998, the *HealthFirst* program has helped NCR identify the most common diagnoses in

order to implement education and support programs and improve overall health and wellness of their employee population.

***Key feedback from NCR employees during the National Quality Institute's 2002 site visit was that management is very open, listens to employees, and is flexible in the development of programs.***

NCR believes that this open and flexible approach has helped keep their healthy workplace program design on the leading edge. When one program realizes gains, the company reinvests the saved funds into other programs. For example, the savings the company realized from the *HealthFirst* program are reinvested into an employee *Wellness Program*, which offers an annual \$135 (after tax equivalent) per employee every year for activities and items which encourage good health and well-being and therefore ensures the health and wellness of NCR employees.

### **NCR's Shared Values philosophy drives the planning process**

NCR attributes the success of its current system to the open and naturally empowered nature of engagement between employees and organizational leaders. They call this their *Shared Values* philosophy, a philosophy that drives the planning process across this diverse organization which is comprised of five separate business units. NCR's *Shared Values* are: "Respect for Each Other, Customer Dedication, Highest Standards of Integrity, Commitment to Excellence and Accountability for Success."

### **The Shared Values Model is a very clear and focused approach to achieving organizational alignment.**

"Our *Shared Values* define the relationship that employees have with the company and with each other," says Brian Sullivan, President of NCR Canada. "Management supports the five *Shared Values* because this philosophy is recognised as the foundation of growth and, by extension, the senior manager pledge their support to the Healthy Workplace Initiative."

### **Who's involved in developing and implementing NCR's planning strategy and what are their roles?**

NCR's leadership team, employees, human resources department and various vendors all play a crucial role in implementing the planning strategy. Here's how each contributes:

*Leadership Team* – Healthy Workplace issues form a regular part of the Leadership Team meeting agendas.

*Employees* – Employees are encouraged to comment on NCR's HR-related programs through surveys and direct conversations with management and leadership team members.

*Human Resources* – NCR's HR department aligns diversity, *Shared Values* and the company's code of ethics into various HR programs and action plans, including recruitment and retention strategies, compensation and benefits, work/life balance and diversity strategies.

*Vendors* – Outsourcing HR programs can be a very tricky proposition. At NCR Canada they have undertaken the responsibility internally to have an active and equal partnership with each individual vendor and to form a team so that internal and external members work together towards the achievement of NCR's organizational goals.

This team works together to develop short-term and long-term objectives. Long-term objectives are developed when any new program is launched; short-term objectives are added and reviewed by this group on an annual basis.

### **Translating assessment results into specific program planning**

A prime example of an assessment resulting in specific program planning at NCR is the company's *Virtual Employee Kit*. Based on assessments, this kit has been developed for employees within certain business groups that have made the transition to a virtual (home office) work setting. The *Virtual Employee Kit* is NCR's Leadership

Team commitment to creating a process for all employees that enhances work-life balance. NCR provides home office ergonomics and telephone and PC connectivity. A web-based counselling system with NCR's EAP provider was implemented as part of the company's commitment to work-life balance for all NCR employees. This web-based version of the EAP program allows virtual employees to access the EAP program with the same ease as those employees working from NCR facilities.

### **Building Evaluation into Program Design**

NCR Canada has developed a *HealthFirst* committee to discuss and assess the *HealthFirst*, EAP or wellness issues that arise. Meeting quarterly, the committee consists of HR representatives, Nurse Care Managers from across Canada and a representative from the EAP – each contributing ideas and expertise to the overall improvement of the lives of NCR employees.

The team also analyzes the quarterly employee usage rates of NCR's *HealthFirst* and EAP programs. By examining results, the team is able to identify any patterns or issues which could become serious over the long term. For example, when the company first initiated the *HealthFirst* program they found that 22.7 percent of lost time cases were related to "respiratory" issues. Based on this, the *HealthFirst* committee initiated an annual on-site Flu shot clinic the following winter to help combat the issue. Since the inception of the flu shot clinic program, the company has seen a decline in total lost time linked to respiratory cases from 22.7 percent to 19.5 percent.

- A special thanks to NCR Canada for sharing their Healthy Planning Strategy with other Canadian companies as part of **Canada's Healthy Workplace Week**, October 20 – 26, 2003. For more information visit [www.healthyworkplaceweek.ca](http://www.healthyworkplaceweek.ca).