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2004 Strategies – People Focus

Step 6: Encourage Employees to Participate in Workplace Health Matters Including the Promotion, Development and Implementation of Healthy Workplace Activities

Encouraging employees to partake in workplace health matters is integral to the process of creating and maintaining a healthy workplace environment.

Employee participation creates excitement and increases ownership over the healthy workplace strategy, therefore making it more likely to succeed and become sustainable over time at all levels of the organization.

Ideas for involving employees in your workplace health strategies:

- Create a healthy workplace committee and/or advisory team that includes representatives from various areas of the organization. The purpose of this group may be to oversee the long-term development of the healthy workplace strategy.
- Administer surveys and hold focus groups occasionally to gather employee input on organizational health issues. See Step 1 -- Needs Assessment in the CHWW 2003 Strategies Archives for more information on surveys and focus groups.
- Create a website/page used to update employees on the latest healthy workplace developments and encourage people to send in their comments and suggestions to this site. You could also use the website to solicit volunteers to help with various committee/activities.
- Create an **Employee Feedback System** in the CHWW 2003 Participate Archives – Activity 5 to find out how!
- Incorporate the **Neighbour @ Work** initiative throughout your organization to help ‘catch people doing things right!’ (See below for details.)



Neighbour @ Work - A Long-Term Workplace Health Strategy

The Neighbour @ Work (N@W) Initiative is a process for improving the organizational level of fairness, satisfaction, respect and concern for others within the workplace. The impact of these changes will be higher levels of health and productivity.

To achieve these results the N@W Initiative needs to be driven by senior management and guided by a representative steering committee with a program coordinator. Key success factors include a long-term commitment to engaging people in: assessing their work relations, actively participating in implementing changes to the work environment and enhancing their skills to sustain momentum. The implementation steps assist employees at all levels to develop a system for improving the employment relationship thus organizational and societal outcomes. For more information visit the **Neighbour @ Work Centre** website, www.neighbouratwork.com.

Workplace Health in Action! Volkswagen AG (VW)

For VW, health promotion is a corporate objective that depends on the ongoing and active participation of management, workers, and unions. VW emphasizes good work organization and job design, including work-time arrangements, new forms of work organization, policies about sexual discrimination and ergonomic job design. Employees are actively involved through 'health circles', which essentially are problem solving groups. A key to success is senior management support, reflected in health goals being integrated into the product improvement process.

Adapted from: Healthy Workplace Strategies: Creating Change and Achieving Results. 2004.
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