

## Management Support

The senior management of your company plays a crucial role in the success or failure of your wellness program, and support may be difficult to secure. Having support from the senior management in your organization is more than just getting the “go-ahead” from them to begin wellness programming.

### What You Need From Senior Management

- Communication supporting wellness policies and programs to employees
- Participation in wellness programming
- Implementation of wellness policies and programs, including changes
- Resource allocation

### Communication

- Management should communicate to all employees about wellness programming and work to make worksite wellness not only a priority, but part of the organization’s culture
- According to the Wellness Councils of America (WELCOA), management, specifically CEOs, “who communicate the wellness message clearly and frequently have more effective wellness initiatives.” WELCOA also suggests management communicates in the four levels of communication:
  - Written
  - Presentations
  - Making wellness part of the organization’s strategic plan
  - Incorporate wellness into the organization’s vision and/or mission

### Implementation

- A large part of implementing a wellness program is to formally delegate responsibilities to others within the organization. The more people who are on board with the initiative and know it is a priority, the better. This will help to make worksite wellness part of the organization’s culture.
- WELCOA reports these reasons for making the wellness committee a formal appointment instead of a volunteer committee: the wellness committee will continue to be a priority even if schedules are busy and to create a mix of senior management, middle management, and frontline employees, thus creating support and advocates for wellness programming throughout the organization.

Sources:

Sonoma County Employer’s Coalition on Health; [http://www.sonoma-county.org/scech/wellness/employee\\_buy\\_in.htm](http://www.sonoma-county.org/scech/wellness/employee_buy_in.htm)

Wellness Councils of America, 2005; [www.welcoa.org](http://www.welcoa.org)



[www.healthymarathoncounty.org](http://www.healthymarathoncounty.org)

## Participation

- When employees see management taking wellness initiatives seriously, they are more likely to do so also
- Without management participation, employees may feel that wellness programming is being done “to” them instead of “for” them
- According to WELCOA, there are four elements of how management can role model good health practices:
  - Participating in an annual health risk appraisal
  - Receiving an annual physical
  - Participating in company wellness offerings
  - Participating in community wellness activities

## Resource Allocation

- A successful worksite wellness initiative requires several different types of support. Management can ensure that the following resources will be available for the initiative:
  - Staff
  - Space
  - Time
  - Incentives and other programming needs
  - Supplies for marketing and promotion
- According to WELCOA, if you invest \$100 to \$150 per employee, your return should be approximately \$3:1 to \$16:1.
- It is important to keep in mind that few companies are willing or able to make this type of investment at the beginning of a wellness program. Instead, start with an investment that fits your company and work towards the \$100 to \$150 per employee. You will still see results with less money.

Sources:

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