



70 WAYS TO MAKE YOUR BUSINESS HEALTHIER

Running a small business is hard; the cost of business keeps rising, and it seems like the profit margin keeps shrinking. We know you're always looking for new ways to improve and get the best return on investment, and we have something that might help. Your employees are your most important resource. Help them to be healthier, happier and more productive. Here are a few suggestions to get you started. Some of them are simple and easy to start; some of them require more resources. But all of them will make worksite wellness an important part of your successful business plan.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

1. Establish a representative committee or wellness committee that meets at least once a month to oversee a worksite wellness program.
2. Offer regular health education presentations on various physical activity, nutrition, and wellness-related topics. Ask voluntary health associations, health care providers, and/or public health agencies to offer free, onsite education classes.
3. Provide confidential health risk assessments.
4. Designate specific areas in your office or facility to support employees such as diabetics and nursing mothers.
5. During flu season, provide your employees with a list of places that provide flu shots in your area.
6. \$ Offer preventive wellness screenings for blood pressure, body composition, blood cholesterol, and diabetes.
7. \$ Supply the office with disinfecting products to keep the workspace as clean as possible to prevent the spread of communicable illnesses.
8. \$ Have a worksite budget for employee health promotion that includes some funds for programming and/or a portion of a salary for a coordinator.

PROMOTING AND ADVERTISING HEALTH INFORMATION

1. Provide health education information through newsletters, publications, websites, email, and other company communications.
2. Start a Lending Library to share wellness content, like recipes, workouts, and general tips.
3. Join the Rutgers University *Get Moving-Get Healthy* initiative that sends weekly newsletters to employees.
4. Post nutritional information near areas where employees tend to eat, to encourage healthy eating.
5. Hang a bulletin board just for wellness activities, post a daily challenge for your employees.
6. Send health texts to mobile employees or encourage them to download apps like Fooducate to track your healthy eating habits.
7. \$ Supply fitness and/or health magazines in break rooms
8. \$ Add encouraging signs to your office space, like artwork with inspirational or motivational quotes.



SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

1. Praise employees on accomplishments to promote self-worth, boost morale, and provide purpose.
2. Provide opportunities for community engagement and social connectedness, like a potluck lunch day, a staff outing to a ballgame, or participation in a team building recreational event.
3. Institute a drug-free workplace policy.
4. Provide an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or identify a local counselor to provide support to employees in need.

NUTRITION

1. Increase healthy food options when food is offered.
2. Ensure contracts with vending machine vendors states that the healthy options are equal to, or less than, the price of the other items.
3. Label healthy options in the vending machines so employees are able to easily choose healthier items.
4. Encourage employees to drink water instead of soda or beverages with a lot of sugar to reduce their caloric intake and help manage their weight. To help accomplish this, implement a policy to only have non-sugar sweetened beverages at company events (such as staff meetings) or limit or eliminate soda vending machines.
5. Provide employees with access to clean drinking water, to refill their reusable water bottles.
6. Have a healthy employee potluck to share healthy recipes and interact with co-workers.
7. Offer on-site weight management/maintenance programs for employees.
8. Incorporate a themed day of the month or week such as meatless Monday by eating things like tofu, beans, or quinoa. A vegetarian diet can lower rates of heart disease and colorectal cancer.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

1. Start a walking club for your employees. Invite other businesses near yours to join the walking club.
2. Provide a discount or a coupon to local gyms to encourage employees to join. Investigate health benefits that might be provided by your insurance, and highlight any discounts provided.
3. Use meeting room to provide an exercise class once a week/month.
4. Put the line of a riddle at the top of each staircase, with the top most level being the answer, to motivate employees to take the stairs.
5. Start at the bottom floor, and give each stair a number so that users can easily track their progress.
6. Map out on-site trails or nearby walking routes for your employees.
7. Offer flexible work hours to allow for physical activity during the day.
8. Create a company sports team, and enter a sports league to promote physical activity.
9. Implement incentive-based programs to encourage physical activity, such as pedometer walking challenges.
10. Establish a themed day in a month or week, such as wear sneaker day or dress down day to encourage employees to walk more.
11. \$ Provide a safe area outside (e.g., through lighting, signage, crime watch) or a walking path on or near the building property to allow constituents and employees to walk or be physically active.
12. \$ Create a theme, and decorate workplace stairwells to make employees feel like they are transported to a relaxing environment (e.g., Hawaiian beach or tropical rainforest).
13. \$ Add carpet or rubber treads to make the stairs safer and more inviting.
14. \$ Use creative lighting to the stairwell (e.g., track lighting, incandescent lighting, or halogen lighting).
15. \$ Offer standing desk stations for employees.
16. \$ Offer free pedometers to employees.
17. \$ Provide a bike rack to encourage employees to ride a bike to work.
18. \$ Provide an on-site exercise facility or a space for organized sports such as volleyball, basketball, ping pong, etc.

TOBACCO

1. Establish clear markings for the distances required to comply with state law regarding smoking near a doorway or window. NJ GASP suggests a minimum of 50 feet from all entrances, exits, windows and vents.
2. Make the switch to a 100% smoke free business, by implementing an outdoor smoking ban.
3. Display signs (including 'no smoking' signs) with information about the tobacco-use policy for your business.
4. Refer tobacco users to NJ's tobacco cessation resources: NJ Quitline 1-866-657-8677 or www.njquitline.org.

NUTRITION (CONTINUED)

9. Set policy that requires healthy food options at meetings and events:
 - a. Provide whole grain products like whole wheat or multi-grain breads, bagels, rolls and muffins, brown rice, or whole grain cereals.
 - b. Serve foods low in sodium, like unsalted pretzels, salads, air popped popcorn, and entrées cooked with spices and herbs instead of salt.
 - c. Offer fruits or yogurt for dessert instead of pastries, or replace half of a serving tray of pastries with a fruit tray.
 - d. Offer smaller portions (for example, whole grain mini-muffins and mini-bagels).
10. \$ Invest in coupons for local Farmer's Market to encourage employees to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables.
11. \$ Provide employees with a refillable water bottle to encourage them to stay hydrated.
12. \$ Provide employees with food preparation and storage facilities.
13. \$ Consider providing fresh fruit in your office through use of a community supported agriculture program or other delivery service.
14. \$ Incorporate plants throughout the workspace to improve air quality. Plants can absorb volatile organic compounds (VOCs) like ammonia and benzene, which are found in many offices.



Actions for Employees

1. Relieve stress by listening to your favorite music while you work or during your lunch break.
2. Start each day, sharing a funny joke, video, article, etc. to lighten the mood and laugh with your co-workers.
3. If you use public transportation, use your commute to read a book, magazine or newspaper. Listen to music or an audio book. Meditate. Or take a restorative nap.
4. Take the stairs instead of the elevator to increase the amount of steps you take per day.
5. Park your car further than usual to increase your walking distance. The further you park the more physical activity you will have for the day.
6. If you take public transportation, get off one stop early and walk the rest.
7. Print to the farthest printer in your office. Try printing one floor up or one floor down and take the stairs.
8. Consider having meetings on the move in place of sitting meetings. Walk and talk or stand while you are on the phone to achieve your physical activity.
9. Encourage 5-10 minutes of stretching or an activity before or during a long meeting.
10. Sit on an exercise ball instead of a desk chair to work on your core muscles.
11. Keep small weights by your desk, and use them 3 to 4 times a day.
12. To make drinking water more enjoyable, add fruit slices. Lemons, oranges, and cucumbers add great natural flavors to water.
13. Brown bag it! Pack a healthy lunch and nutritious snacks the night before, to avoid forgetting lunch if you are running late in the morning.
14. Shop at local farmer's markets to increase their intake of fruits and vegetables.

\$ - Icon indicates that a cost is or may be associated with action.