



CREATE A **Healthy Workplace** ON A BUDGET

Cluster Board Discussion Notes

Below are the notes captured from the cluster board activity at the *'create a healthy workplace on a budget'* forum on Tuesday 19 November 2013.

The aim of the cluster board activity was to share practical ideas around the barriers and solutions to some of the issues that workplaces are faced with. The six discussion board topics included:

1. Creating resilient workplaces and encouraging the five ways to wellbeing
2. Managing fatigue and shift work
3. Workplace health and wellness on a budget
4. Supporting healthy eating in the workplace
5. Wellness doesn't stop at work - how to support a work/life/whānau balance
6. Sedentary work and how to encourage more movement in the workplace

1. Creating Resilient Workplaces and Encouraging the Five Ways to Wellbeing

Facilitated by Kelly Davis Martin and Pete Roe

Workplace wellbeing is all connected. The areas of five ways of wellbeing (connect, give, take notice, keep learning, be active) are inter-related and the practice of workplace wellness is interconnected. For workplace wellness programmes to be successful they must acknowledge and address holistic wellbeing at the organisational and individual level.

Barriers

- a. Focusing on the problem
- b. Resistance to wellness initiatives
 - The term 'wellness' – what does it even mean?
 - Stigma of 'needing' wellness initiatives
 - Time and work pressures
 - Resistance and fear of talking about 'mental' health openly
 - Fear of being judged by others
 - Fear of showing emotions in public or with people who are unknown to them
- c. People, culture and norms
 - Organisational and individual norms
 - Worried well
 - People and employers wanting quick fixes
 - People and employers wanting a sense of control
 - Seeing wellbeing as 'fluffy' and/or as a private issue
 - Traditions preventing wellness initiatives from being successful; breaking traditions can be difficult
 - Stress - subjective interpretation by the individual
 - Once exposed to wellness then not feeling like they can share or ask for help
- d. Difficulty with accessing workplaces and employees
 - Rural businesses and communities
 - Small business communities
 - Farming and other types of industries
 - Small businesses not being a priority

Solutions

- a. Focus on solutions and grow what works – enable common sharing of issues with other organisations
 - Collaborate and share with like minded individuals who are champions of wellbeing
- b. Foster the capabilities of the individual
 - We are inherently resilient and just need to recognise that and learn how to tap into our own strengths
 - Provide individuals with education and development
 - Foster knowledge about locus of control
 - Celebrate successes
 - Learn stress management such as how to recognise stress and deal with it early
 - Improve perspective, outlook and happiness
- c. Leadership and culture
 - Walk the talk - ask leaders to be involved in competitions and events
 - Promote the five ways to wellbeing in house
 - Explain the basics behind leadership involvement

- Use culture surveys to show what the employees want
 - Responsible mentoring
 - Consistent and comprehensive wellness programmes that are well supported by leaders, especially the CEO
 - Ensure Public Health entities are involved – as often the services are less costly than private providers
 - Use policies to lead the way
- d. Connect with people
- Create a buddy/coach/mentor system
 - Have collaborative conversations
 - Tell stories
 - Use relatable language
 - Tap into individualised motivators

2. Managing Fatigue and Shift Work

Facilitated by Gareth Smith and Chris Polaczuk

A shift worker is anyone who follows a work schedule that is outside of the typical '9 to 5' business day. The main complaint for people with shift work sleep disorder is excessive sleepiness. Other symptoms can include:

- Insomnia
- Disrupted sleep schedules
- Reduced performance
- Difficulties with personal relationships
- Irritability/depressed mood

Barriers

- a. Business/organisational
 - Production pressures internally
 - Production pressures from overseas
 - Poor rostering/scheduling of shifts
 - Length of the working day
 - Policy and guidelines for work hours (more so for small to medium sized businesses (SMES) and self-employed)
 - Production vs pricing vs employee wellbeing focus from senior management
- b. Lifestyle/individual
 - Poor eating and drinking habits
 - Poor sleeping hygiene
 - Lack of exercise, activity and movement
 - As employers can't enforce improving lifestyle habits outside of work
 - Family pressures and commitment
 - Financial pressures to perform
 - Employees working second and third jobs
 - Current co-morbidities (chronic health conditions)

Solutions

- a. Business/organisational/legislative
 - Management commitment and buy in for 'health' alongside safety alongside production costs
 - Following good or best practice rostering guidelines
 - Further definitions of work hours and clear definitions of job responsibility
 - Work with unions to ensure good shift policy or enforcement of shift work guidelines
 - Technology or framework to create rosters and to calculate fatigue scores based on the roster
 - Improved systems at temp agencies to reduce double shifts that are in their control
 - Ensure training occurs within shift work time and strong induction/re-induction programme
 - Reward and recognition schemes
 - Breakout rooms
- b. Lifestyle/individual
 - Increased focus on health aspects as part of health and safety
 - Improved nutritional, exercise, sleep education, training and resources
 - Significant focus on sleep education
 - Mandatory health checks

- Vitamin D supplementation
- Structured exercise and activity
- Creating family friendly workplaces
- Avoid long commutes and extended hours
- Take short nap breaks throughout the shift
- Work with others to help keep you alert
- Try to be active during breaks (e.g. take a walk)
- Don't leave the most tedious or boring tasks to the end of your shift when you are apt to feel the drowsiest. Night shift workers are most sleepy around 4-5am.
- Exchange ideas with your colleagues on ways to cope with the problems of shift work. Set up a support group at work so that you can discuss these issues and learn from each other.
- Eliminate noise and light from your sleep environment (use eye masks and ear plugs)
- Avoid caffeinated beverages and foods close to bedtime
- Avoid alcohol - although it may seem to improve sleep initially, tolerance develops quickly and it will soon disturb sleep

3. Workplace Health and Wellness on a Budget

Facilitated by Judy Montgomery and Vanessa Cooper

The perception is often that health and wellbeing programmes cost a lot of money to incorporate into a workplace. Many simple programmes can be organised on a small budget, with commitment and a small team of champions.

Barriers

- a. Time
 - Most common issue is lack of time
 - Lack of time to investigate and compare prices between providers
 - Tight and intensive key performance indicators means there is no time for change
- b. Priorities
 - Priority in the workplace is generally not with wellness. There can be a conflict with setting wellness as a priority.
 - The perception is there is a barrier for continual engagement with wellness programmes and providers
 - Conflict with visibility on the return on investment
- c. Knowledge
 - There is a lack of knowledge to know where to go to get help
 - The workplace has multiple locations therefore a provider in one area may not be available in another area
 - Not having a good strategic plan
 - In the organisational policy – there can be a lack of focus on wellness
 - Knowing who your champions are
 - Disjointed – lack of structure within an organisation when focussing on wellness
- d. Cost
 - Uncertainty over how to spend limited funds in a small organisation
 - Skilled interventions will cost money – although it will lead to greater savings in the long run
 - Why on a budget? If employees save money for the employer, their profit will increase – so why bother considering the cost?

Solutions

- a. Time
 - Start small and grow from there
 - Allow approximately one hour per week for team/group activity that will not penalise employee meeting key performance indicators
 - Team up with the social club to provide services
- b. Priorities
 - Leadership – it starts at the top
 - Plan to include everyone
 - Find champions to take ownership
 - Include health and wellbeing in the meeting agendas
 - Encourage participation via competition (growing mana)
- c. Knowledge
 - Use staff skills – share the knowledge
- d. Cost

- User pays – ask employees to contribute to part payment
- Reward/recognition programme (not necessarily monetary)
- Use free resources from Non Government Organisations, Regional Public Health and community groups
- Share training with local businesses

4. Supporting Healthy Eating in the Workplace

Facilitated by Vicki Robinson and Karen Cruikshank

The workplace is an ideal setting in which to produce healthy eating policies and incorporate excellent healthy eating practices to a wide audience, thereby vastly improving the health outcomes of employees.

Barriers

- a. Time
 - Time to prepare healthy lunches or breakfasts
 - Individual workplace gap in knowledge around services available – where do you get healthy food?
- b. Access
 - Healthy food availability e.g. cakes are normal for celebrations
 - Special occasions – unhealthy food is normal in special occasions
 - No such things as ‘treats’ anymore
- c. Perceptions
 - There is changing evidence, which may challenge current beliefs of healthy food and have different recommendations to mainstream beliefs
 - Misconceptions about how difficult it will be – fear of failure
 - Employer seen as ‘Big brother’ wanting to interfere
 - Message consistency
 - Anger at being told what to do
- d. Habits
 - Geographical and cultural backgrounds and past experiences
 - Staff concerns – fear around lack of control
- e. Cost
 - Budget constraints
 - Perception of healthy food being more costly than unhealthy or packaged food

Solutions

- a. Time
 - No meetings at lunch times
 - Provide information about quick and easy lunches to make at home
- b. Access
 - Gardening skills workshops – promote or help set up vegetable gardens at work
 - Vegetable growing competitions
 - Review vending machines – place them out of sight or provide healthier vending machine options
 - Access to markets – wholesale fruit and vegetable information
 - Specific staff lunch room with well equipped kitchen facilities
- c. Perceptions
 - Carry out a survey for all employees to find out needs and wants
 - Produce healthy food policy in consultation with employees
 - Catering guidelines
 - Role modelling by management to employees
 - Promote Wellington local food week to employees
 - Invite providers to talk with staff to encourage message consistency

- Encourage small changes such as healthy barbeques
- d. Habits
- Cooking classes at work, training for in-house cooks/chefs
 - Cook offs e.g. cooking competitions
 - Making healthy food fun – education and awareness with our relationship with food
 - Invite providers to talk with staff about healthy eating
 - Provide recipes and information on label reading
- e. Cost
- Teams purchase fruit bowls - replenish weekly/fortnightly and/or all contribute and/or workplace subsidy to provide fresh fruit
 - Provide trim milk
 - Provide clean drinking water or cool filtered water
 - Provide seasonally available cheap deals

5. Wellness doesn't stop at work – how to support a work/life/whānau balance

Facilitated by Nicole Murray and Dave Wood

For many employees today, their lives are becoming difficult to ensure the balance of work, family/whānau and other personal responsibilities and interests are maintained. Therefore, in an effort to retain employees, it is increasingly important for organisations to recognise and help manage this balance.

Barriers

- a. Shift work
 - Shift work and being available for the whānau when not working
- b. Whānau
 - How much is the voice of the workers and whānau being heard or considered in planning work and shift patterns?
 - Workforce can be suspicious of wellness programmes/attempts to include whānau
 - Hard to make business case or show return on investment for this type of programme or for extending benefits to whānau
- c. Culture
 - Culture of wellness is often set in the home, not the workplace
 - Poor communication between management and workers
 - Managers might feel uncomfortable asking about things happening at home
 - Managers might be worried that all staff will start expecting time off to be with whānau
 - Sometimes it's hard for employees to stand up to managers and voice their concerns
 - Unions can be suspicious of intent
 - Increasingly blurred lines between work and personal lives, especially with new technologies e.g. smart phones
- d. Time
 - Time pressures
 - Commuting – if distance is long between home and work it can take away from work/life balance
 - Not taking leave
 - These days there is an expectation to be on call all the time – people check emails, have access to work phones and read work papers etc at home regularly
 - Guilt/pressure to work longer hours
 - Treating non-occupational illness outside of work hours

Solutions

- a. Shift work
 - Provide virtual tool boxes to support shift workers who can't attend daytime sessions
- b. Whānau
 - Bring whānau to work on occasions e.g. once a week allow whānau to join shift workers for dinner
 - Include whānau in the design of your wellness programme
 - Extend health and wellbeing offers to whānau
 - Family focused take home materials
 - Sports teams that include whānau
 - Holistic approach - include whānau, hapu and iwi
 - Promote or highlight nearby school holiday programmes

c. Culture

- Trial different shift patterns
- Be clear and open about goals/objectives and expectations of the programme right from the start
- Show management commitment to work/life balance options
- Include unions in discussions
- Provide technology to support working from home etc
- Help employees learn how to turn off phone/not check emails (don't ask them to) – this could be in the form of a policy or IT check system
- Encourage short term goals to show impact of altering work patterns and report successes to other employees
- Focus on achievements and successes
- Broadcast successes internally and externally – this will help with branding for the company

d. Time

- Allow working from home with access to essential work documents
- Allow flexible hours
- 'Clock off' policies to encourage people not to take work home
- 'Holiday coaching' – talk to staff about what they are doing to relax, help them plan quality time whilst off work
- Ensure people take two weeks leave at one time at least once a year to get a good break
- Education on contributory factors such as inter-relationships to show the importance of wellness to holistic health and impact on the workplace

6. Sedentary Work and How to Encourage More Movement in the Workplace

Facilitated by Caroline Gordon and Kate Rawson

Due to changes in lifestyle and employment, the health risks associated with sedentary behaviour are increasing. The average adult now spends 50-60% of their time sitting at a desk, which significantly increases risk for cardiovascular disease, diabetes and other health issues.

Barriers

- a. Beliefs
 - A lack of knowledge means people don't know the risks of sedentary work
 - 'Too busy' mentality
 - Attitudes towards more work, less play
 - 'Key performance indicator' driven work environment
 - Lack of support from employer
 - A lack of awareness from both the employee and employer of the importance of movement
- b. Costs
 - Cost of changing to standing desks
 - Contractors paid by the hour don't prioritise their health over money
 - Technology and our reliance on it
- c. Traditions
 - Belief that gyms and exercising are boring and a punishment
 - Workplace norms such as sitting down meetings are hard to change
 - Those who focus on helping others don't consider the impacts on their own health

Solutions

- a. Beliefs: Creating good habits
 - Create 'Exercise of the day' everyday at 3pm. All employees take turns choosing two minutes worth of exercises or stretches.
 - Develop a stair challenge, such as walk up the sky tower in a week
 - Staff pedometer challenge, 10,000 steps challenge
 - Stand up every day to do the five minute quiz
 - Lower key performance indicators so there is time for movement
 - Everyone participates in a warm up game before coming on site/into the building
 - Set up a lunch time walking group
 - Add compulsory stand up/movement breaks to company policy
 - Incorporate music breaks, everyone to stand up and dance or move around
 - Use pause software that forces staff to take scheduled breaks
- b. Traditions: Emails and meetings
 - No internal emails to someone on the same floor, walk to their desk
 - One day per week with no internal emails allowed
 - Encourage walking meetings
 - Meeting rooms with no chairs
 - Stand up management meetings (this sets a good example for staff and meetings are shorter)
- c. Workstations and Environment
 - Replace desk chairs with swiss balls
 - Schedule activity breaks into daily calendar, five minutes every hour

- Lights off in the office everyday from 12noon - 1pm so all staff are able to go for a walk
 - Each employee has a stress ball on their desk and is encouraged to stand up and throw it between colleagues
 - Locate printers and other office equipment to encourage walking
 - Hot desk stations with standing desks
 - Encourage transitions to stand up desks
 - Set up a stand up phone area
- d. Education
- Invite employer and employees to be part of the conversation to determine what will work for their organisation
 - Educate staff on the benefits of moving
 - Educate staff on fundamental movement patterns and how to move effectively - watch the YouTube video 'Let's make our day harder' while standing
 - Develop community support systems involving information, inspiration and application