


05

GETTING OTHERS INVOLVED

Key questions to ask

- How do I engage my managers?
- How do I engage my employees?
- How do I engage external providers?
- How do I let everyone know what's happening?



A photograph showing three people walking on a paved path in a park-like setting. On the left, a woman in a pink top and light blue cardigan walks towards the camera. In the center, a man in a white shirt and dark trousers walks towards the camera. On the right, a woman in a white shirt and dark trousers walks towards the camera. The path is flanked by large, green, conical trees. In the background, there are buildings and a blue sign with the text 'University of the South' and 'University of the South' and 'University of the South'.

In this section of the Healthy Workplace Resource Toolkit, we look at how to get others involved and how to promote your workplace health and wellbeing program to make it as successful as possible.

HOW DO I ENGAGE MY MANAGERS?

For your health and wellbeing program to be successful, two groups of people will need to be interested and participate in the program: the managers who will support the program, and the employees who will benefit by using the program.

Senior leadership and management support is the foundation of a successful workplace health and wellbeing program; in fact, this has been shown to contribute more to a program's success than the actual content of the program.¹

You might expect your manager to have some questions regarding a workplace health and wellbeing program. These might include:

- How much time will this take to implement?
- What will it cost?
- What will be the benefit to my employees?

Managers may need to be convinced that these questions can be reasonably managed in the program being proposed. For example, the question of cost can be addressed by showing that simple and low-resource strategies and activities can improve employee morale and engagement.



What might be the questions asked by managers in your organisation?

In a smaller organisation, it might be as simple as sitting down with the boss and talking about how certain initiatives could benefit everyone in the business, and showing that those initiatives don't have to cost a significant amount in time and resources.

In a larger organisation, it might help to 'cost out' some potential health and wellbeing measures. For help on how to do this, refer to section 3 'Why invest in health and wellbeing?'

In any size organisation, for senior managers to support a health and wellbeing program, it needs to be in line with organisational goals and objectives.

A health and wellbeing program will be seen as beneficial if it helps solve an organisational 'problem'. For example, an organisation may find it difficult to attract and retain employees – perhaps there is high demand for workers in the industry, or a shortage of specialised skills. Having a workplace health and wellbeing program is a known method for attracting and retaining quality staff, so talking about this might be a good way to engage senior managers in developing and implementing a program.

Other organisational 'problems' that a workplace health and wellbeing program might help to address include:

- managing an ageing workforce
- reducing absenteeism
- reducing injury rates and workers compensation claims
- increasing employee morale and engagement.

One of the most effective ways to engage management support for your idea is to submit a brief proposal and then follow it up with a face-to-face discussion. Consider using the sample template below to develop your proposal.

Download this template from this CD-ROM or from www.worksafe.tas.gov.au



Proposal to senior managers

You could also use the following template when designing a presentation to senior managers.



Presentation to senior managers



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HOW DO I ENGAGE MY MANAGERS?



Depending on the size and structure of your business, it might be worth consulting some other stakeholders, including:

- your workers compensation provider
- relevant unions
- workplace health and safety committees or consultants
- your human resources department.

Other strategies worth considering include:

- developing a 'pilot' or sample program for senior leaders. This will help them to see, at a personal level, that being healthy improves workplace productivity and engagement
- circulating case studies or relevant literature on successful workplace health and wellbeing programs

- getting the idea of a health and wellbeing program on the agenda in senior leadership team meetings, using a guest speaker as a bonus
- emphasising the importance of workplace health and wellbeing during challenging times, given the benefits of increased morale, productivity and engagement
- connecting with your manager's natural desire to excel, by emphasising their innovation and leadership in the field of workplace health and wellbeing.



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HOW DO I ENGAGE MY EMPLOYEES?

It is natural to expect that employees already engaged in health and wellbeing activities outside of work will be attracted to opportunities presented by their employer. A successful health and wellbeing program can benefit from the enthusiasm of these individuals who will often act as a catalyst for others to take up new activities.

It can be a challenge to encourage some employees who may be reluctant to participate in a workplace health and wellbeing program. The following strategies may be useful in engaging those individuals.

- **A program that is endorsed by senior managers:**

A program that has active participants drawn from senior management allows other employees to give themselves 'permission' to join in. Negative or obstructive thoughts such as 'I don't have enough time' have less influence over behaviour when there is a perception that others with 'less' time are involved.

- **A program that is owned by employees:** If employees are consulted as to the content of a workplace health and wellbeing program (such as in a survey or consultation process), then they are more likely to 'own' the program. This ownership will likely increase their engagement in activities. A feedback mechanism is also an important part of program ownership, giving employees a say as to what's working and what's not.

- **'What's in it for me?':** We often consider a new idea through the lens of 'what's in it for me?', and a workplace health and wellbeing program is no exception. An employee who can see a distinct benefit for them if they participate will be more likely to pursue a particular activity. Using this knowledge to highlight personal benefits when promoting program activities can help to increase participation rates.

- **Programs available to family and community members:** If your health and wellbeing program extends to your employees' family members or other community members, for example, through invitations to healthy picnics or sports days, then this will also increase participation rates and interest.

- **Supported by unions:** In some workplace cultures, it's appropriate and important to acknowledge that the relevant trade unions support the program.



HOW DO I ENGAGE MY EMPLOYEES?

Involving everyone

It's good to be aware that there will be widely differing needs among your staff, for example, cultural differences, or differences in learning styles and literacy levels. Think about how to involve everyone, not just those who are easiest to engage. Keep the following points in mind:

- When you are developing promotional material for your workplace health and wellbeing program, use simple, plain, non-technical language, and be alert to the cultural appropriateness of the words and images you use. It might be worth testing your material on a small group of employees before releasing it to a wider audience.
- Use a range of communication methods to improve access to your programs – newsletters, demonstrations, guest speakers, YouTube clips and interactive workshops will all engage different people across your organisation in different ways.
- Be aware that there will be a wide variety of existing health knowledge and health needs among your employees, so you should try to provide a variety of information and resources to address these needs.

For more information on literacy, visit www.26ten.tas.gov.au

This website provides a range of resources to help individuals improve their literacy and to help workplaces gain skills in literacy awareness.

For workplaces that are male-dominated, such as those in the construction and transport industry, give consideration to male-specific engagement strategies. For more information on engaging men in your workplace health and wellbeing program, download the following resource from this CD-ROM, or from www.worksafe.tas.gov.au



Men's health in the workplace



What other strategies might be useful to engage employees in your organisation?



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HOW DO I ENGAGE EXTERNAL PROVIDERS?

You might find that you need to get someone else in to help you provide some specialised support, such as running a yoga class or providing workplace health checks. Even if you know that you need someone who is experienced and knowledgeable, it can still be difficult to decide exactly who to engage.

Keep the following in mind when choosing an external provider. Remember, not all of these points will apply to every external provider you use.

- ***They need to be a member of a relevant body or have recognised accreditation:*** Is your on-site massage therapist a member of an accredited association? Ask for their registration number and check it on the association website.
- ***They need to have the required professional indemnity or liability insurance:*** Ask for copies of their certificates.
- ***They need to have valid qualifications:*** Ask for copies of their qualifications and any certificates for relevant training they may have undertaken.
- ***They need to use valid and reliable equipment:*** Are they using the most effective equipment for the job? Ask them to provide research that shows this is the case.
- ***They need to practice in accordance with their industry body code of ethics.***
- ***They need to ensure responsible referral and follow-up of high-risk individuals:*** For example, an employee identified as 'at risk' of cardiovascular disease during a workplace health check needs to be followed up through appropriate medical channels.
- ***They need to provide comprehensive reporting:*** Ask for an example of their record-keeping procedures.
- ***They need to practice according to a comprehensive privacy policy:*** Ask to see a copy of their privacy policy, or ask how their records are kept and stored.
- ***They should have a track record:*** Ask about similar programs they have delivered in the past, and ask for testimonials or references from those workplaces.



HOW DO I LET EVERYONE KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Clearly, it's vital that you communicate to your employees that a health and wellbeing program is available for their use.

For a smaller organisation, consider an interesting and fun event that is not a normal work activity, but is suited to your organisation's culture and employees, for example, a subsidised healthy breakfast or lunch.

For a larger organisation, consider launching your program with a VIP or prominent community member who is engaged in health and wellbeing, for example, a local sporting personality.

Some general tips on how to inform your employees that their health and wellbeing program is under way are to:

- always keep messages fun, simple, personalised and humorous
- include a reason for employees to get involved (identify what's in it for them)
- specify a time frame, for example, 'Offer ends Friday!'
- include a call to action, for example, 'Register now, limited places!'
- provide a solution to a personal problem, for example,
 - how to manage stress, or
 - how to be more productive
- include success stories (such as short testimonials or longer case studies)
- include spouses or partners where appropriate.

It's also important to celebrate and enjoy your success – when your evaluation reveals that there have been significant gains in employee health, let everyone know.

Just as important as 'what' to tell your employees, is 'how' to communicate your program. There are several channels available to you. These will differ depending on the size and geographical spread of your workforce, and the type of work your employees undertake.

For example, field-based employees may not be able to respond as quickly as office-based employees when

a time- or space-limited program is announced, putting them at a disadvantage. Consider announcing these sorts of programs with enough lead time to allow access for everyone.

Channels of communication within a workplace may include:

- word of mouth – workplace champions spreading the news
- posters, brochures, newsletters, displays, table flyers and signage on the back of toilet doors
- a dedicated health and wellbeing noticeboard
- the agenda at staff meetings
- company intranet
- emails or blogs from the CEO or director
- messages on payslips.

FURTHER READING

For more general information on marketing your health and wellbeing program, download the following resource from this CD-ROM or from www.worksafe.tas.gov.au



Singapore Health Promotion Board:
Marketing your programme

REFERENCES

1. O'Donnell, M 2001, *Health Promotion in the Workplace*, 3rd edn, Delmar Thomson Learning, Albany, New York.



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HOW DO I LET EVERYONE KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING?



Summary checklist

	Small organisation	Large organisation
1. Engaging management		
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify potential barriers for managers	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion with owner about potential benefits	✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Align program to organisational goals and objectives	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Find organisational 'problems' that the health and wellbeing program may help to solve	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Create proposal for managers		✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Seek input from other stakeholders	✓	✓
2. Engaging employees		
<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure senior managers are actively involved in programs	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure employees are consulted in program set-up	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify and strongly communicate employee benefits	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Make programs available to family and community members	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Engage trade union support (if appropriate)		✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Involve everyone	✓	✓
3. Engaging external providers		
For each provider, check they		
<input type="checkbox"/> Are a member of a relevant body	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Have relevant insurance	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Have valid qualifications	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Use valid and reliable equipment	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Practice in accordance with their code of ethics	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide referral and follow up of high-risk individuals	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide comprehensive reporting mechanisms	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Practice in accordance with a privacy policy	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Have a proven track record	✓	✓
4. Marketing the program		
<input type="checkbox"/> Create a fun event that is not a normal work activity	✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Launch your program with a local VIP or sporting personality		✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Keep your marketing messages simple	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Specify a time frame in your communications	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide a solution to a personal problem	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Include a success story or testimonial	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Include family where appropriate	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Keep it simple	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Celebrate and communicate your successes	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Choose appropriate communication channels	✓	✓
<input type="checkbox"/> Have fun!	✓	✓



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