



Different strokes for different folks: Three companies take unique paths to wellness

By Sue Pridham

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The return on investment of workplace wellness programs is well-documented. With a planned and targeted program, companies can expect to save at least \$3.5 dollars for every dollar invested.

Still, many organizations have not embraced workplace wellness or moved beyond the annual health fair or an occasional wellness lunch n' learn.

DundeeWealth, Enbridge and Campbell Company of Canada are three organizations that have implemented unique wellness programs that reflect their corporate culture, strategic direction, physical environment and employee needs. They are also committed to continuous improvement over the longer term.

"Health is Wealth" at Dundee

In 2006, when DundeeWealth moved 1,200 employees to a new corporate head-office in downtown Toronto, senior management decided the time was right to launch a formal wellness program. Under the banner "Health is Wealth," they linked their external brand to an internal initiative.

Dundee's Director of Wellness David Doull knew he would have to roll out the program in a creative way, because the company planned to replicate the head-office program for 600 employees at seven satellite locations across Canada.

An initial employee wellness survey helped to create a program focus for the first year. Nutrition and weight management, physical activity and life balance were identified as the top three priorities.

"We recognize that running a wellness program is like running any other department in the organization. It takes

dynamic leadership, backed by financial and human resources, who are guided by a clear mission and vision that is tied to corporate objectives," says Doull. "Stephanie Yeates, our onsite wellness coordinator is the face' of our program. Her enthusiasm for wellness is contagious and spreads throughout the organization."

Dundee's program offerings in the first year included:

- A nutrition fair.
- A weight management program plus a weight loss challenge.
- Walking and running training programs, team events, yoga and pilates classes.

Most of Dundee's employees do not have access to an onsite fitness centre at work, so Tri Fit's bilingual online Get Fit @ Home program has been made available to all employees and their families across Canada. A monthly wellness newsletter is also posted online.

The Health is Wealth program is one component of a broader strategic initiative to become an employer-of-choice. Although it is too early to see measurable results, Dundee is delighted with the response to the program.

In addition to tracking participation, Dundee is monitoring sick leave, absenteeism and employee engagement, and tracking results through the Top 100 Employers Survey.

Future plans for the program include enhanced methods of communication, strengthening the link between the external and internal brand, and integrating the program into all aspects of the company's culture.

Enbridge provides energetic leadership

Enbridge Inc. is a leader in energy transportation and distribution in Canada and the U.S. Approximately 1,500 employees are headquartered in North York, ON, with several hundred additional employees located in Ottawa and Thorold, ON.

This company's commitment to health goes back 20 years, and their program initially started as an integrated disability management program called "Health Wise."

In 2000, the manager of environment, health & safety developed a business case for a worksite wellness program. The proposal included onsite physiotherapy, massage therapy, wellness seminars, nutrition counseling and a worksite fitness facility.

The proposal was accepted by senior management, and \$50,000 was allocated for equipment and supplies. A 1,200

sq. ft. facility was set up with refurbished equipment and opened in July 2001. Although onsite physiotherapy was provided two half-days per week for approximately two years, it was discontinued due to insufficient use.

Extensive water damage from a flood in the basement in 2005 was the catalyst for a complete renovation and expansion of the onsite fitness centre. In August 2006, a new 3,800 sq. ft. facility opened its doors.

The day-to-day operation of Enbridge's new health centre is supported by a wellness committee, volunteer fitness instructors and a wellness coordinator. The wellness initiatives are designed to reflect the needs and interests of a workforce that is 60% female, with an average age of 45. Group exercise classes, showerless workouts, weight-loss challenges, walking groups and a weekly recipe club are some of the more successful programs.

Thirty percent of employees are members of the EnShape fitness centre and up to 60 employees participate in the regular wellness campaigns and challenges. The "World Record Walk" in October drew 175 people, and their health fair last March was attended by 200 employees.

In addition to reporting 2007 long-term disability savings of \$466,000 (a 23% reduction), in 2006 Enbridge was recognized as a Top 100 employer by -- magazine. A more rigorous approach to program evaluation and a stronger link between health and productivity are on their agenda for the upcoming year.

Campbell nourishes body and spirit

In 2003, Campbell Company of Canada launched its "Wellness Within" program - an extension of its corporate vision of "Extraordinary, Authentic Nourishment for All." The company has 1,265 plant and office employees located in Toronto and Listowel, ON, plus across Canada.

After a thorough analysis of its health claims and surveying the employees to assess their needs and wants, the company developed a three year plan based on personal, comprehensive, confidential and voluntary health checkups.

The highly interactive evaluation includes height, weight, fitness, nutrition and lifestyle assessments; lipid, blood pressure and blood sugar screening; and immunization status. Employees receive a health report card, plus a professional one-on-one counseling and goal setting session to assist them in making positive lifestyle changes and reaching their health and wellness goals.

Campbell Canada's health and wellness communications reflect national and seasonal themes, as well as employee interests, and are delivered by a multidisciplinary team of two occupational health nurses, two kinesiologists, four employee wellness councils and a part-time communications specialist.

The company also liaises with its employee assistance provider and cafeteria vendor to integrate wellness themes.

"The program is designed to reach everyone," says Fanny Karolev, R.N. and Campbell Canada's manager, worklife health and wellness. "I have the support from senior leadership to deliver wellness programs to all employees, from those on the midnight shift at one of our manufacturing facilities to sales representatives out in the field."

When it comes to measurement and evaluation, Campbell Canada has been relentless. A sophisticated data collection system allows for regular reports so the company can review the impact of these programs and employee uptake. The organization is also currently involved in a one year medical research study, called "Heart to Heart," to determine the impact of a wellness program on reducing risks associated with cardiovascular disease, with results expected in June 2009.

Employee involvement at Campbell Canada speaks for itself. More than 50% of office staff, and more than a third of plant employees, have participated in the health checkup program to date. In addition the participation tracking system shows that every employee participated in a minimum of five wellness events in 2007! Furthermore, Campbell's mental health claims are below industry average.

"We have created a healthy workplace environment that is rooted in trust, and that is the key to our success," says Karolev.

Common success factors

Three companies with three unique approaches - but Dundee, Enbridge and Campbell Canada all agree the following are key ingredients in the recipe for a successful workplace wellness implementation.

- Create the business case and relate it back to the strategic direction of the company.
 - Identify a program sponsor and champion to drive the program forward.
 - Survey employees.
 - Develop a multidisciplinary leadership approach.
 - Get employees involved.
 - Determine evaluation measures up front.
 - Solicit professional support.
 - Develop a long-term plan.
 - Monitor and celebrate success.
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