

Step 4: Implementing

You have identified your Champion and made the case for why your company should create physical activity programs in the workplace. Your Champion and other stakeholders have established a Wellness Committee that has assessed the policies and practices of your company and have surveyed their colleagues on what sort of programs would be beneficial. They have come up with their plans, budgets, and time lines. Now is the time to begin implementing a physical activity program in the workplace. Remember, one of your goals is to provide opportunities for your employees to meet their recommended levels of physical activity. Implementing the program is where the rubber meets the road, or more appropriately, where you hit the track running.

This section has four tracks for you to follow:

- Track One: Getting Started – Easy activities for those just beginning.
- Track Two: Building Momentum – Moderate activities for those who have some experience in implementing programs.
- Track Three: Moving Forward – More advanced activities for those who have established programs.
- Track Four: Keeping the Pace – Activities to help sustain programs and extend them outside the company into the community.



Each track will build upon the earlier track. To determine which track your company may be in, please refer to the informal Organizational Assessment in the **Resources** section. Remember, the four tracks are only guides to help you increase the level of physical activity in the workplace. Each track provides recommendations and examples of activities that can be done easily by you and your Wellness Committee. Though your company may be in one of the later tracks, you may find useful ideas in the earlier tracks.

Track One: Getting Started

Ideas in this area are simple and easy to implement. This is the place to start if you are new to implementing physical activity or wellness activities in your workplace.

- ➔ Promotional information.
- ➔ Brown bag lunch sessions.
- ➔ Active Breaks
- ➔ Individual goal setting.

“For all individuals, some activity is better than none. Physical activity is safe for almost everyone, and the health benefits of physical activity far outweigh the risks.”

- 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

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Promotional Information

How it works: Employers serve as a resource for employees. Provide information about the benefits of physical activity. Share the *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* and the amount of recommended physical activity per week. Provide information about any upcoming programs and what employees can look forward to. And share community resources that may be available.

Whom it affects: All employees

Why it works: Employees may not have the information they need to decide to become or stay physically active. If this type of information is easily available in the workplace, employees may be willing to use it and ultimately become more physically active. Employees may also believe that the company prioritizes this issue and, thus, they may take it more seriously.

What it takes: Depending on how your company is structured, this information may be posted on a bulletin board, intranet, Web page, or made available in employee lounges, break rooms, or human resource or manager offices. Use the *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans At-A-Glance* in the **Resources** section or adapt your own.

Types of information to include:

- Benefits of physical activity: <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/health/index.html>
- Physical activity guidelines for adults: <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/adults.html>
- Adding physical activity to your life: <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/getactive/index.html>
- Local resources and classes

Evaluation: A comment or suggestion box to allow feedback from employees.



Brown Bag Lunch Sessions

How it works: Invite speakers in for a brown bag “lunch and learn” session.

Whom it affects: All employees or a specific group, depending on the topic.

Why it works: Employees may not have the information they need to decide to become or stay physically active. These sessions provide the information for why it is important to be physically active and can provide ideas about how to get started or how to incorporate new activities into an existing routine.

What it takes:

- Choose a topic.
- Choose a speaker.
- Plan a date and select a location.
- Promote.

If you do not have staff in your company who can present a topic, consider someone from the community. Speakers can come from the local health department, a hospital, a fitness center, the parks and recreation department, YMCA, or other health or fitness resource in your community.

Some topics to consider:

- Introduction to the *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*: Use information provided in the **Resources** section to share the recommended levels of physical activity with your employees. Be sure to include all areas of the Guidelines.
- Quick and easy fitness: How to get small bouts of physical activity throughout the day. Examples might be to park at a remote lot and walk further to the office, take the stairs instead of the elevator, or hold a walking meeting. A sample session “Quick and Easy Ways to be Physically Active” is outlined here; use the materials included in the **Tools and Templates** section to host a brown bag session or create your own.
- Physical activity and weight loss: Explain how physical activity can help employees lose weight. Examples can be the amount of physical activity needed for weight loss, activities that burn significant amounts of calories, ways to maintain weight loss, and how physical activity combined with calorie reduction is the most effective strategy for weight loss..
- Highlights of activities: Demonstrates several types of activities to help employees choose one that is right for them. Examples might include yoga, kickboxing, Zumba, or Pilates.

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Evaluation: When providing a brown bag lunch session, most of the time is spent sharing information. You can evaluate this type of activity in several different ways.

- You might be interested in the effect of the presentation. An example question might include: “What did you like best about the presentation?” or be tailored the questions for specific materials to determine if anything was learned.
- Consider asking about the materials and whether they were useful, or if the presentation was easy to understand.
- If you want to evaluate how the meeting worked, you might ask “Was the time allotted for this information too much, too little or just right?”
- You may also want to ask about the meeting space: “Was the location convenient? Was there enough space? Was the room temperature comfortable?”
- Consider tracking how many people participated, or how well they liked the information on a scale from 1 to 5. All of this information could be obtained through a 1-page feedback form completed during the last 5 minutes of the presentation. An example feedback form can be found in the *Resources* section.

Active Breaks

Implementing active breaks in your workplace is a way to incorporate some physical activity into the workday. It is also easy to do during work hours. For companies where employees may feel “chained to their desks” it can be a way to get them moving during work hours.

Encouraging active breaks can be customized for your work environment. Employers can encourage employees to take a 10-minute walk outside during their lunch hour or coffee break. Promoting the use of public transportation can result in daily walks to and from transit stops.

Employees with disabilities or medical or mobility issues should be encouraged to take active breaks that are suitable for them. For example, employees who use wheelchairs can go around the block at lunch with co-workers.

Encourage employees to team with co-workers in supporting fundraising events, such as a run or walk for charity. Employees can train daily or weekly during their breaks. This approach leads to team-building in the workplace.

Consider developing a Lunch Hour Physical Activity program. Or choose two or three times that work for several groups of employees, such as right before or after work. Try to choose an activity that employees can do on their own time as well.

Components of Physical Fitness

According to the *Physical Activity Guidelines*, physical fitness is the ability to carry out daily tasks with vigor and alertness, without undue fatigue, and with ample energy to enjoy leisure-time pursuits and respond to emergencies. Physical fitness includes a number of components, including aerobic or cardiorespiratory endurance, skeletal muscle endurance, power and strength, flexibility, balance, speed of movement, and body composition. Aerobic activity is when the body's large muscles move in a rhythmic manner for a sustained period. Examples are walking, running or bicycling. Aerobic activity improves cardio-respiratory fitness.

Strength is an aspect of physical fitness that is the ability of a muscle or muscle group to exert force.

Flexibility is an aspect of physical fitness that is the range of motion possible at a joint. Flexibility exercises enhance the ability of a joint to move through its full range of motion.

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EXAMPLE

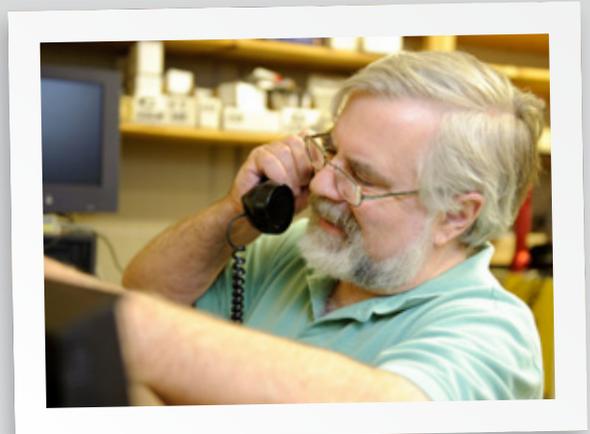
Quick and Easy Ways to be Physically Active at Work

Time: 30 minutes

Supplies needed: PPT Presentation

Rationale: Lack of time is one of the reasons many people are not active on a regular basis. This session will show employees quick and easy ways to fit physical activity into their day.

- 1) 5 minutes: Give a brief overview of the benefits of regular physical activity and provide the 2008 *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* key guidelines for adults. Introduce the idea of meeting the guidelines each week, in part by activities that can be done at work. Highlights the following:
 - 2 ½ hours per week of moderate intensity aerobic physical activity or 1 ¼ hours of vigorous intensity aerobic physical activity, or an equivalent combination of both. These can be spread out throughout the week and should be in bouts of at least 10 minutes at a time
 - Muscle strengthening activities for all major muscle groups at least 2 days per week
- 2) 10-15 minutes: Continue to build the idea of accumulating physical activity throughout the day to a total of 2 ½ hours per week. Distinguish between doing at least 10 minute bouts of physical activity and simply beginning to move more throughout the day, which does not count toward meeting the guidelines. Depending on where your wellness program is, you may provide examples of both types of activities, but keep the benefits clear to your employees.



To move on a more regular basis:

- Print to a different printer. Try printing to a printer located further away from your work area. Consider printing one floor up or down and take the stairs.
- Take the stairs rather than the elevator. Every time you change floors, use the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Park at a remote parking lot and walk to the office. The further away you park, the more activity you can include in your day.
- Walk and talk. Have a walking meeting or step in place while talking on the phone.
- Start meetings with 5-10 minutes of stretching or activity, or add in stretch or activity time mid-way through long meetings.
- Do 60 to 90-second standing breaks for every hour you sit.
- Keep a set of hand weights by your desk. Use them 3-4 times a day for muscle strengthening.

To accumulate at least ten minutes of physical activity to help meet the Guidelines:

- Organize walking meetings – keep a brisk, walking pace for at least 10 minutes
- Get off one stop early. If you take public transportation to or from work, get off one stop early and walk the rest.
- Use your breaks – take a 10-15 minute walk with a colleague during your break or lunch time
- Consider a lunch hour physical activity program.

- 3) 5-10 minutes: Allow participants to add additional ideas of how to fit physical activity into their day. Encourage employees to add to both lists. Show that leadership is supportive of their ideas.
- 4) 2-3 minutes: Evaluation. Have participants fill out the 1-page feedback form. Ask them to recall the physical activity recommendations.
- 5) Follow up: Post a copy of the Physical Activity Guidelines At-A-Glance in a well traveled area in your office. Also post the list of recommended activities your employees can do during the workday, highlighting the ones the employees have identified.

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Get Moving with an Active Break

Below are some ideas that employers can suggest to employees for active breaks. Remember just 10 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic physical activity counts toward meeting the guidelines.

Take an active break: During your regular or impromptu breaks, go for a short walk outside or indoors, every day. Try to increase the distance you walk over time.

In an afternoon slump? Get up and get moving! Go for a walk during your coffee break. If you can take a 10-minute brisk walk, it will help clear your head and help you meet the physical activity recommendations.

Many of your co-workers probably feel the afternoon slump too. Get together with your co-workers to come up with strategies to increase your activity levels. Not all activities will count toward your recommended weekly level of activity, but remember, some activity is better than no activity. Here are two easy ideas to get you started:

- A group walk around the office building (including taking some stairs) to liven things up.
- A walk-and-talk meeting in place of a sitting meeting. Instead of sitting in a meeting room, walk around the block to discuss your business

You may not be able to meet the recommended levels all at once. It may take some small adjustments to increase your daily level of physical activity. So if you need to, start out slowly, but remember each small step adds up.

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Individual Goal Setting

How it works: The company provides information about how employees can create individual physical activity goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-oriented (SMART).

Whom it affects: All employees who actively participate.

Why it works: Employees receive basic health coaching and are able to receive tools to help them make healthy and informed decisions around physical activity, nutrition and general wellness.

What it takes: A series of classes with either internal resources (e.g., company nurse, occupational therapist) or external resources (e.g., local health department official, Red Cross/Y trainer, etc.) for creating individual wellness goals. The first session focuses on SMART objectives. Subsequent sessions can focus on physical activity goal setting, nutrition goal setting, and other wellness goals. An *Individual Wellness Goal Setting* template is provided in the **Resources** section. If employees are willing to share their objectives, try to incorporate them in other company activities.

Evaluation: At the end of the program (e.g., 1 year), have the participants come together to share their successes. Share with the larger company audience.



Track Two: Building Momentum

Ideas in this track are more complex, but still easy to implement. The focus is on helping individual employees increase their level of physical activity by creating more opportunities to be active during the day.

- ➔ Partner with a local fitness center.
- ➔ Healthy stairwells.
- ➔ Bicycling commuter program.
- ➔ Promote local walking paths or trails.

“Adults gain most of these health benefits when they do the equivalent of at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic physical activity (2 hours and 30 minutes) each week. Adults gain additional and more extensive health and fitness benefits with even more physical activity. Muscle-strengthening activities also provide health benefits and are an important part of an adult’s overall physical activity plan.”

- 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

Partner with a Local Fitness Center

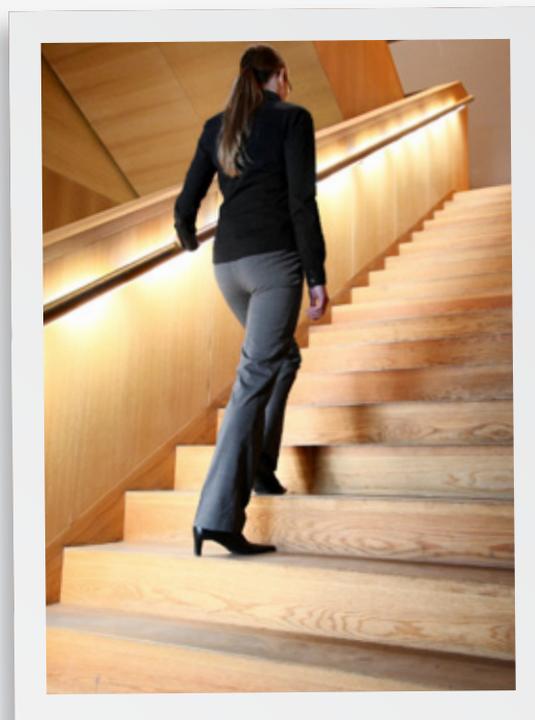
How it works: The company negotiates a discount for employees (and perhaps dependents) at one or more local fitness centers.

Whom it affects: All employees and possibly dependents

Why it works: Employees have the opportunity to use a fitness center for a reduced rate and this gives employees an opportunity to be more physically active outside the work environment.

What it takes: Depending on the size of the company, the fitness center may not charge the company for providing a reduced rate. If the company can guarantee a certain number of employees will sign up, the fitness center may provide a group discount. However, if that is not possible, the company may have to subsidize the reduced rate use for employees. Consider a sliding scale reimbursement to reward those who actively attend the fitness center (*e.g.*, 50 visits per year = 50% of the cost covered). Additional resources are available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/toolkits/fitnessclub/index.htm>

Evaluation: After a set period (*e.g.*, 1 year), determine how many employees used this program. This information can be gathered from the fitness center(s). Re-evaluate this program on a regular basis to see if it is still being used or if additional centers need to be added to keep up with demand.



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Healthy Stairwells

How it works: Stairwells are opened and made safe and attractive to make them more accessible and appealing for employees to use. Then, by using a simple marketing plan, employees are encouraged to use the stairwells.

Whom it affects: All employees

Why it works: Taking the stairs is one easy way to be more physically active. At work, employees are often presented with a choice between taking the stairs and taking an elevator or escalator. Choosing the stairs instead of the elevator is a quick way for people to add physical activity to their day. Although it may not count toward the 10-minute bouts of moderate intensity aerobic physical activity, it still gets individuals to think about choices they can make to become more physically active.

What it takes: One reason employees may not use the stairs at work is because they perceive them as unattractive or unsafe or they have just become accustomed to using elevators. Depending on the current state of the stairs in your building, several actions may be needed. However, before implementing anything, be certain to work with the building management to ensure you are able to use the stairwells.

One way to make the stairwells more appealing is to use artwork that matters to your employees. Consider having a rotating gallery of artwork created by your employees' children. Indicate the name and age of the child as well as the employee's name. Rotate the art every few months and hold a "gallery opening" with each set of new artwork.

In addition, consider partnering with a local school to have students create artwork for the stairwells. Each stair landing or floor can have artwork from a different grade (first graders on first floor, second graders on second floor, etc.). Invite the students for the opening of the "gallery." Invite the local media to cover the event, focusing on both the community partnership with the school and your company's promotion of the arts, as well as your company's commitment to employee wellness.

- Unlock all stairwell doors. Make sure no one can get locked in or out of the stairwell. If for some reason one or more floors need to be locked or have restricted access, post this information clearly so employees know which floors they can access.
- Make sure the stairs are in a safe condition. If the stairs are damaged, repair them. If the surface is uneven, make alterations such as adding carpet to the stairs. Consider adding rubber treads or another surface that will increase the safety of the stairs. Ensure there is adequate light in the stairwell.
- Paint the walls and add artwork or motivational signs. This makes the stairs more appealing for employees. Motivational signs can be found at: http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/toolkits/stairwell/motivational_signs.htm#MessageIdeas
- Consider adding music to the stairwell. This also makes taking the stairs more appealing for employees.

Evaluation: Once changes are made to your stairwell, a simple way to judge the effectiveness of the project is to evaluate the use of the stairwell. You may be interested in how many employees have started to use the stairs because of the changes, compared with before you made the improvements. If you want to compare, be certain to track usage prior to the changes to the stairwell so you can make a more accurate comparison. For ideas on tracking use visit <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/toolkits/stairwell/tracking.htm>

For more information on healthy stairwells, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/toolkits/stairwell/index.htm>

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Bicycling Commuter Program

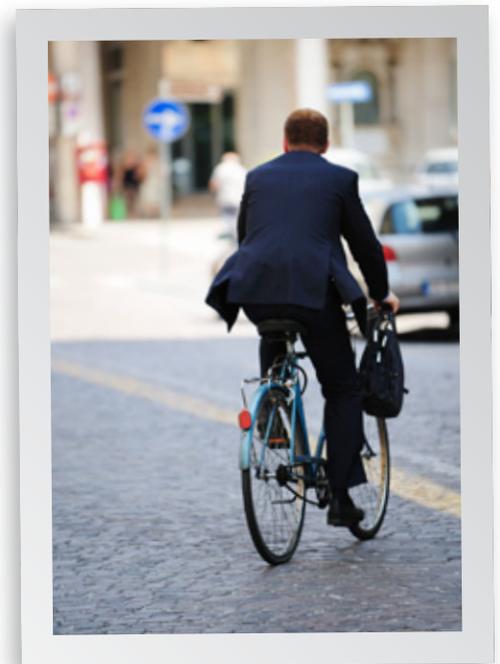
How it works: A Bicycling Commuter Program encourages employees to ride their bikes to work. It should provide information on cycling and health. The program can provide tips on safe routes to work and how to ride in bad weather. It can also teach roadside bicycle maintenance.

Whom it affects: All employees who own bicycles.

Why it works: A Bicycling Commuter Program allows employees to fit a workout into their busy workday. The program also allows for decompression after a full day of work. It also allows the employee to avoid parking hassles and costs. It is a low cost, environmentally friendly, and physically beneficial means of transportation.

What it takes: The program requires convenient, secure, well-lit, bike parking located near a main entrance. Ideally this area is covered, but this is not always a possibility. Accessible changing facilities, showers and lockers are also helpful, if possible. Your company can partner with a local bike shop to offer bicycle proficiency training, cycle maintenance workshops, and bike rentals. Incentives can help promote participation among employees. Rewards can include helmets, reflective vests, and other cycling items, as well as discounts at local bike shops. Competitions can be created for individuals or between groups such as divisions, departments, or floors.

Evaluation: Survey employees who participate in the program to see if the physical changes made were appropriate and if additional changes are needed. Ask them to record number of hours, miles, or days they ride per week to and from work, and use this information to promote the program to others.



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Promote Local Walking Paths or Trails

How it works: Locate walking paths or trails that are near the company and promote the use of the trails to employees.

Whom it affects: This activity has the potential to impact all employees as well as the company's image as the local community sees the company using local resources.

Why it works: Encouraging employees to walk regularly helps to get them in the habit of regular physical activity. Providing a resource for where they can walk near the worksite takes it one step further and allows them to know where to go.

What it takes: Find local parks close to your office or call the local municipal parks department to find parks nearby or if there are specific trails or paths for walking. Request maps if available or use free mapping software (*e.g.*, Google Maps or Map My Run) to create maps of safe walking routes around your worksite. With the Wellness Committee, walk the paths with the maps before sharing with employees and others to ensure accuracy and safety. Ensure distance is indicated on the maps, especially if there are different routes. In addition, consider rating trails on level of difficulty (if appropriate). Share the map with employees through e-mail or posting on a bulletin board. If close to your building, promote use of path for "Walk and Talk Meetings." Encourage use during lunch or breaks. Host a monthly or quarterly company walk on the path, and provide trail maintenance and clean up during these walks.

If pre-existing paths are not available, use a Walkability Assessment to find an appropriate place for your employees to walk:

<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/toolkits/walkability/index.htm>

<http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/ped/walkingchecklist.pdf>

Evaluation: Twice a year, poll employees to gauge how many use the maps and paths and how often.

For more information on walking paths:

http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/WalkingMapGuide/Texts/WalkingMapGuide_lowrez.pdf



Track Three: Moving Forward

Ideas in this track will be more complex and provide ideas to help employees increase or maintain their recommended levels of physical activity while fostering a sense of teamwork across the company.

- ➔ Sponsor a walking competition.
- ➔ Walk and talk meetings.
- ➔ Wellness exams.
- ➔ Physical activity and fitness coaching.

“Adults have many options for becoming physically active, increasing their physical activity, and staying active throughout their lives. In deciding how to meet the Guidelines, adults should think about how much physical activity they’re already doing and how physically fit they are. Personal health and fitness goals are also important to consider.”

- 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

Sponsor a Walking Competition

How it works: Invite employees to join a team or walk on their own. Encourage employees to find a walking buddy. Each participant enters their daily or weekly walking totals (in number of steps or miles). The employee who walks the most or improves the most wins a prize.

Whom it affects: All employees.

Why it works: Encouraging employees to walk regularly helps to get them in the habit of regular physical activity.

What it takes:

- Pedometers.
- Walking route maps.
- Distance tracking forms.
- Prizes or incentives for participation.

Use a variety of ways to promote the competition (see **Step 3: Promoting** for more ideas). Have a member of senior management participate and encourage participation, or challenge employees to meet a certain mileage mark. Once the competition starts, send regular reminders with motivational messages to keep employees committed to the competition. Have prizes for those teams or individuals who logged the most miles.

Use the distance tracking templates in the *Tools and Templates* section or create your own; these templates can be used “as is” or can be customized with your company’s logo or other information.

Evaluation: Track the number of participants, and ask participants to complete a 5-minute survey when the competition is over.

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Walk and Talk Meetings

How it works: Encourage employees to walk during small group meetings that do not require technology or note taking. Use interior hallways (as appropriate), outside sidewalks, or walking paths. Ensure the meeting is at least 10 minutes long and the walking is brisk for employees to meet the recommended levels of physical activity.

Whom it affects: Walk and talk meetings affect all employees. Be sensitive to those who may have disabilities or conditions that could prohibit participation.

Why it works: Employees are able to get moving while doing necessary work. When modeled by senior leadership, staff will be more likely to consider a walk and talk meeting instead of a traditional meeting in a conference room.

What it takes: A walk and talk meeting requires an agenda to keep everyone on track, comfortable shoes, water, a destination or route to follow, and a sense of adventure.

Evaluation: Request informal feedback after each meeting. Conduct a more formal evaluation by using an employee questionnaire annually. Include a question or two about location of trails and distance, as well as comfort level in participating in such meetings.



Wellness Exams

How it works: Employees are screened for selected health conditions. If a company is sponsoring or promoting physical activity programs in the workplace, a health screening can be conducted to help employees feel that they are medically able to participate. This may include checking blood pressure and resting heart rate. However, the *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* state that physical activity is safe for almost everyone, and the health benefits of physical activity far outweigh the risks. People without diagnosed chronic conditions (*e.g.*, diabetes, heart disease, or osteoarthritis) or symptoms (*e.g.*, chest pain or pressure, dizziness, or joint pain) generally do not need to consult with a health care provider about participating in physical activity. Wellness exams help employees understand more about their health and have the potential to uncover previously undetected conditions.

Depending on the resources available, the types of screenings can be expanded to include the following:

- Health Risk Appraisal (HRA).
- Body Mass Index (BMI).
- General blood work.
- Cholesterol.
- Diabetes.
- Cancer.
- Thyroid.
- Skin.
- Vision.
- Hearing.

If you plan on collecting specific information gained from the wellness exams for any reason (*e.g.*, baseline data, insurance premium reduction), please be certain to work with your human resources and legal departments to ensure information collected complies with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) privacy and security rules. For more on HIPAA privacy and security rules, please visit: <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/index.html>

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Whom it affects: Wellness exams affect employees who voluntarily participate.

Why it works: Offering opportunities for employees to take part in wellness exams may encourage them to be more invested in their health. It can provide incentive for them to take part in physical activities. Even the most physically fit individual may have an unseen condition that may not be detected without screening.



What it takes: Depending on your budget, the company can partner with a local clinic or an insurance company-recommended provider to perform specific screenings. If you are looking at only blood pressure and resting heart rate, check with your local health department to see if they offer onsite screenings. Be prepared to provide your employees with information should something be uncovered. Many national organizations have free material to help individuals learn more about conditions. Consult with the person administering the exam for what information should be available and where employees can go for further information.

Check with your local Red Cross chapter about holding a blood drive—this can accomplish two things at once. All donors get their blood pressure and heart rate checked as part of the donation process, and your company can help replenish the local blood supply.

Evaluation: Administer a questionnaire to participants to understand what additional screenings they would take. In addition, ask individuals how they used the information they received. Consider asking employees about future physical activity programs they would be interested in having as part of the program.

Personal Fitness Training and Coaching

How it works: When resources allow for it, hire a physical activity or fitness coach to work with employees. It can help employees have the appropriate training to know how to do the activities safely.

Whom it affects: Personal fitness training affects all employees who take advantage of the physical activity and fitness programs.

Why it works: Individuals who take on a new physical activity or fitness program without knowing how to do the activities or exercises properly are at risk of harming themselves. Some individuals are afraid of beginning new exercise programs or trying all the different exercise machines and equipment. By offering physical activity and fitness coaching, employees become more informed on how to incorporate physical activity and exercise into their lives in small, measured steps. They can be shown how to be safe, reducing the chance of injuries and possibly increasing the participation rate.

What it takes: If your worksite has an exercise room, consider bringing in a trainer to work with employees on a regular basis. Trainer can work with the individual employees to develop their SMART Wellness Goals (See *Tools and Templates*) and help them track their progress over time.

If your company does not have an on-site facility but rather contracts with a fitness center near your location, consider having physical activity and fitness coaching as

Wellness Coaching

Different from Fitness Coaching, wellness coaching looks at all aspects of employee health. Wellness coaches can provide not only advice on physical activity and fitness, but also work with the employees on reading and interpreting Health Risk Assessments (HRAs) and other wellness exams, healthy eating habits and nutrition, and other areas of general wellness. Wellness coaching sessions can be face-to-face or over the telephone, depending on the type of Wellness Coach hired or the available resources.

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part of the contract. This will allow all employees who take advantage of the center to be able to work with the trainer. Apply this approach to subsidized fitness plans as well. If you reimburse for an employee's health club membership, consider reimbursing for fitness coaching sessions as part of the contract. Depending on your budget, these could be done once a year, once a month or as frequently as desired.

If funding is limited, consider group coaching instead of individual coaching. This can offer the same transfer of knowledge from coach to individuals, but may not allow for the same level of personal attention. Consider grouping individuals on the basis of wellness goals and preferences. These groups could then form the nexus of fitness clubs for future team competitions.

Evaluation: Evaluate the program annually. Track the number of participants. Ask how often they met with the trainer. Have them evaluate the trainer. Ask if they are meeting their wellness goals. And review any fitness center contacts you may have annually to ensure physical activity and fitness coaching is provided.

In this step...

- A champion takes active part in the activities and encourages the company's leadership to do the same.
- The wellness committee puts their plans into place and leads the activities and programs.

Track Four: Keeping the Pace

Ideas in this section are complex and focus on all areas of the workplace. This is the place to come if your worksite already has a wellness program. It offers ideas and projects that can serve as resources to your wellness committee as you look to expand your company's offerings.

- ➔ Create an employee walking club.
- ➔ Create wellness teams and extended competitions.
- ➔ Partner with your community.
- ➔ Identify and create safe walking routes.
- ➔ Environmental strategies.

“Adults who are already active and meet the minimum guidelines (the equivalent of 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity every week) can gain additional and more extensive health and fitness benefits by increasing physical activity above this amount. Most American adults should increase their aerobic activity to exceed the minimum level and move toward 300 minutes a week. Adults should also do muscle-strengthening activities on at least 2 days each week.

One time-efficient way to achieve greater fitness and health goals is to substitute vigorous-intensity aerobic activity for some moderate-intensity activity. Using the 2-to-1 rule of thumb, doing 150 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity a week provides about the same benefits as 300 minutes of moderate intensity activity.”

- 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

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Create an Employee Walking Club

How it works: A small group or groups are created to walk together during breaks, lunch, or other approved times. Participants convene at regular times to walk anywhere from 2 – 3 times per week to daily. Routes are preplanned but can vary from day to day and can have a destination (*e.g.*, walking to a weekly farmers' market). If possible, do a walkability assessment of the different routes to ensure appropriateness and safety (for more on Walkability Assessments, see **Step 2: Planning and Assessing**).

Whom it affects: Walking clubs affect all employees who choose to actively participate.

Why it works: Walking is an easy way to be physically active and most people can participate.



What it takes: Walking clubs need the following: a planning committee to determine the walking route or routes; maps showing distances of the routes, (this can be generated from online mapping programs); promotional information on the walking club; prizes and rewards for those participating in the club; a kick-off event; and ongoing support from the champion and wellness committee.

Evaluation: Keep records of who attends each walk to be able to track increases or decreases in participation. Have a bi-annual questionnaire to determine participant satisfaction, appropriateness of the route(s) and any other factors the participants want to share.

For more information on Walking Clubs, visit: <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cpns/Documents/Network-FV-WP-WalkingClubTool.pdf>

Create Wellness Teams and Extended Competitions

How it works: Employees create teams (based around internal departments or across departments) to train together and participate in a series of planned competitions. Depending on the number of events, the teams can remain together for several months to more than a year, competing against other teams along the way. The team that wins the most competitions by the end of the program is declared the winner. In addition, individuals within the teams can be recognized for their achievements, such as most participation or most improved.

Whom it affects: Wellness teams affect all employees who participate.

Why it works: Because they are interacting and working as a team, individual employees work to support their team members to achieve their individual goals and the recommended amount of physical activity.

What it takes: Having wellness teams that compete against each other requires coordination on multiple levels. Team members should organize to ensure all individuals participate. The Wellness Committee should plan a series of competitive activities. These activities can stand alone and be scheduled periodically or they can build upon each other, culminating in a challenge event between teams.

Some ideas for competition are:

- Extended walking challenge.
- Stairwell challenge.
- Office olympics.
- Fitness field day.

Evaluation: Each individual event or activity should be evaluated separately, with an additional evaluation at the end of the larger competition. Questions should be asked about how the competitions help individuals achieve their physical activity goals. Additional questions should be asked about the value of longer-term teams and the types of activities throughout the entire program.

Steps to Physical Activity - Step 4: Implementing

Partnering with Your Community

How it works: Physical activity programs create opportunities for your company to partner with the local community. Local organizations such as the YMCA or the local branch of the American Heart Association and health agencies are often eager to collaborate on activities that benefit the community. These can be one-time events or long-term relationships.

Whom it affects: Partnering with your community affects all employees who choose to actively participate, the surrounding community, or beneficiary agency.

Why it works: Your company is able to:

- Tap into or expand employees' existing social connections.
- Demonstrate corporate citizenship and social leadership.
- Promote the health of the community.

By connecting your programs to local organizations and agencies, all participants can benefit. Connecting to the community can be done in a relatively new program by having a kickoff event or in an existing program to increase sustainability and maintain interest. In addition, you can find existing programs the other organizations have and see how you can participate.

What it takes: Get to know your community. Become more knowledgeable about the community and its economic conditions, political structures, norms and values, demographic trends, history, and experience with business engagement efforts. Some of this knowledge can be gleaned by simply talking to other businesses or nonprofit businesses in the community. Connect with local hospitals and health agencies to understand community health issues and what community efforts already exist to promote physical activity in the community.

Evaluation: Consider evaluating how many new partnerships are established because of reaching out to the community. Determine how much time was dedicated to community outreach and document what the results of these efforts have been for promoting physical activity among employees and within the community. Share the results with employees and other key stakeholders in the community. Use this as an opportunity to share your corporate citizenship and social leadership.

Identify and Create Safe Walking Routes

How it works: Your company partners with the community to identify and create safe walking routes for all to use.

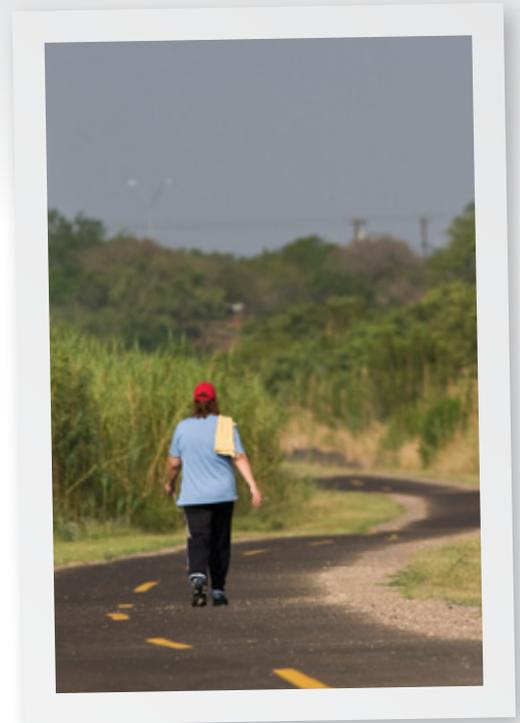
Whom it affects: Safe walking routes affect all employees and the community. By partnering with a local community organization, your company can build and create goodwill.

Why it works: Access to and promotion of a safe place to walk helps increase the likelihood that employees and the local community will make walking part of their regular routine and help them achieve the recommended levels of physical activity per week. This project can be an opportunity to publicize what you do within the larger community.

What it takes: This will vary from community to community and worksite to worksite. It may take land, tools, and volunteers to develop a trail. A pathway of brush and foliage may need to be cleared and other potential improvements, such as paving or wood-chipping may be needed to ensure routes are safe.

If your company owns its property, consider using part of the undeveloped land to create a trail. Work with your legal department to determine if public use is appropriate. If your company does not have property it can use, contact the local parks and recreation department to suggest a partnership to develop undeveloped municipal or county property near your office. Consider partnering with the Boy Scouts or Girls Scouts, YMCA, Big Brothers Big Sisters, or other community groups. Establish a planning committee to chart the path and determine what is needed to create route. Hold one or more work weekends to get the work done. Publicize the opening of the path in the local media, being sure to highlight both the partnership it took to create the trail as well as the health benefits the trail will provide to the local community.

If you do not have access to land that can be developed for a trail, do a walkability assessment of the area surrounding your worksite. Determine what routes are safe for employees to use. Share results with the local municipality and other companies in the area and determine if there are areas that can be improved for better walkability. Combine efforts to make these improvements, partnering with local organizations.



Steps to Physical Activity - Step 4: Implementing

Use internet mapping programs (e.g., Google Maps, Map My Run) to create maps for the safe walking routes, which include mileage for the different routes. Distribute these maps to employees and share with other businesses in the area. In addition, if you have permission, place mileage markers along the routes. Include information on the mileage markers about the *Physical Activity Guidelines*, reinforcing the concept of how many hours per week should be dedicated to physical activity.

Evaluation: Conduct a survey among employees about how often they use the new walking routes. If you are able, consider a paper survey and survey collection box along the walking routes (perhaps along with maps for the walking routes) to see what other groups or individuals may be using the routes. If you partnered with others to develop the safe walking routes, ask them how often they use the routes. Work with your community partners to do spot “man-on-the-street” surveys along the walking route to find out who is using the routes and why. Create a survey Web page and provide a link to it on the maps you create for the new walking routes.

Key Points for Partnering with the Community

- **Know what you want to do.** Before approaching a community or community-based organization it is important to articulate what you want to do, what you anticipate will be the outcome of your efforts, and who you want to impact.
- **Know whom to engage.** By knowing your community and what you want to do, you will already have a sense of who needs to be involved in the process and the best way to get them involved.
- **Identify and use community assets.** Community engagement is best sustained by identifying and mobilizing community resources and building the community’s capacity to take action for improved health.



Environmental Strategies

How it works: The wellness committee works with human resources and facilities management to implement a change based on the Company Policy Checklist (found in the *Tools and Templates* section). The change helps to make the work environment more conducive to physical activity and general wellness. Examples of changes include:

- Bike racks for employees who want to bicycle to work.
- Creating attractive and safe stairways to allow employees to walk between floors versus riding the elevators.
- Measuring distance in the hallway and making an internal walking lap within the building or facility.
- Creating an exercise facility on company property to encourage employees to use breaks, lunches, and time before or after work for exercise.
- Installing showers or changing facilities to allow employees who take advantage of alternative commute options or who are physically active during the day to shower or change clothes.

Whom it affects: Environmental strategies affect all employees.

Why it works: Changing the physical environment affords your employees more opportunities to be more physically active and shows them the commitment the company leadership is willing to make in investing in their health.

What it takes: Environmental strategies require assessments of what sort of physical changes can be made and estimates of the costs. Some are less expensive than others (*e.g.*, hallway laps, bike racks), and some can cost considerable amounts of money (*e.g.*, installing a fitness center). Get input from your employees through an Employees Needs Assessment, or do surveys to find out what sort of changes would help them be more physically active.

Evaluation: Survey employees to measure the number of participants and to find out how often they take advantage of the changes made. Ask if they have made their own changes based on the company's physical changes. For example, they now take the stairs after the stairs opened or ride their bikes to work a certain number of days a week after the bike racks were installed. Inquire what other changes may be required to sustain or increase interest.

Steps to Physical Activity - Step 4: Implementing

Family Involvement

Your programs can expand beyond your employees to their families as well. There are several ways you can involve families in your programs:

- **Lunch and Learn or After Work Activity Time** — Encourage your employees to invite their families to attend lunch and learn sessions or schedule the activity after work. Develop specific sessions that focus on activities families can do together to increase their physical activity levels. Consider having age appropriate activities at the lunch and learn for children who may attend the session.
- **Wellness Exams** — If you offer wellness exams to your employees, consider their families as well. Check your insurance policy or with your insurance carrier to see what may be covered when extending this type of program.
- **Fitness Center Memberships** — If you provide fitness center memberships to your employees, consider offering it to their families. Or offer a sliding compensation for family members who actively go to the centers.
- **Fitness or Wellness Coaching** — Consider offering Fitness or Wellness Coaching for family members. This can help them in creating and maintaining their own fitness goals and could help keep the employee active as well.
- **Walking and Other Fitness Competitions** — Open some of your competitions to family members, especially ones that measure physical activity outside of the workplace.



In addition, consider family fitness challenges. Create a family-oriented fitness event leading up to a company-wide family picnic or event. Whatever the competition, ensure that it is age appropriate to allow all family members to participate. At the company-wide event, recognize all participants and have awards for different age categories.

Encourage parents and care-givers to be role models for their children. The *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* recommends a minimum of 1 hour a day of physical activity for children.