Shape Corporation workplace health program protects “most important asset”

Company Name: Shape Corporation
Location: Grand Haven, Michigan
Industry: Engineering and manufacturing
Founded: 1974
Number of Employees: 1,487
Age of Workplace Health Program: 20 years

Employer In Action*

Employee Health Program Origin
Shape’s workplace health program dates back more than 20 years, when an employee asked the president if the company could install a treadmill in the cafeteria so he could run during his lunch break. The president decided that if Shape was going to have exercise equipment for staff, it should do it correctly. In 1993, one of the cafeterias was converted into a full-service on-site fitness facility, known to employees as the “Fitness Factory.” The program grew to include incentive programs, blood pressure readings, lunch-and-learns, and exercise classes.

In 2005, Shape’s vice president for human resources projected that the company’s future health care costs would rise at double-digit rates each year and would soon become out of control. An initial health risk assessment was completed indicating that the majority of the company’s employees were at high risk for preventable health issues. The company asked employees to do everything possible to control the cost of healthcare. Shape’s wellness program kicked into high gear, is now extensive, and is connected to the company’s employee health insurance plan.

Shape Corporation Workplace Health Program Features
Some of the main features of the Shape program are:

- Strong eight member wellness committee
- Full facility “Fitness Factory” with exercise classes and personal training
- Requires all employees on Shape health insurance plan to complete a health assessment every year
- Requires all employees to sign an affidavit stating whether they use tobacco/nicotine products and enrolls tobacco users in a cessation program

Photo provided by Shape Corp.
A glimpse of the Fitness Factory where employees can work out on campus.
Stairwells have art in them, and are well lit
A tobacco-free campus
Weight-loss challenges and programming throughout the year, with awarded gift cards and t-shirts, an annual golf outing and family Halloween party
Nutrition, stress management and tobacco cessation classes offered four times during the day to accommodate multiple shifts
Bicycle racks
Cover 100 percent of tobacco cessation medications and regular physical exams.
On-site wellness staff

Program Costs
Shape Corp. has a health program budget of $230,000 a year.

Program Outcomes
Shape’s health program participants spent 11 percent less in health care costs than non-participants in 2012-2013, amounting to a cost savings of $600,000 in that one year. Also, 88 percent of those enrolled in the weight loss or tobacco cessation programs successfully complete them. Of those enrolled in the company’s disease management program, 97 percent are actively engaged in preventive care.

Challenges
Changes in food provided on Shape’s campus have created a challenge. Typical fare for a ceremony, celebration, or meeting often involves less healthy choices, leading Shape to feel like it was forcing a culture change on its employees by providing only nutritious food on campus, and in its vending machines. In the beginning, employees were very resistant to this policy change, but over time have begun to bring in healthier lunches and the company is tracking the sales of healthy vending machine items to see what is popular. It was also a challenge to accommodate workers on all three of the company’s shifts with the health program interventions.

“*We feel that in order to carry (our) core value through all levels of the company in an authentic and caring way, we must cultivate a culture of wellness,” says Shape’s wellness manager Valeria Williams.*