



The Intangibles of Wellness

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Weighing the benefits of Wellness Programs as it relates to a hard ROI is plain to everyone. But what about those issues that will not show up clearly on paper? What about the additions to your business that can't be definitively put on a ledger sheet?

Companies who implement comprehensive Wellness Programs come to the topic from a combination of 2 factors, and usually weigh heavier on one side than the other. Those issues are Building the Dream, and Decreasing the Pain. The Pain is any combination of increasing health benefits costs, increasing absenteeism at all levels, a lethargic workforce etc. But let's talk about the Dream, because that is where the intangibles come into play.

- **A message of caring.** We regularly hear comments of gratitude from the employees. As one HS&E Manager recently remarked to me, "No one has thanked me for our guarding program, but they have thanked me for our wellness program".
- **Increased social support.** People enjoy interacting with each about a topic that doesn't concern work. They get to know others they may have never spoken with, or get a deeper understanding of those they do work with more closely. You may have heard the saying, "If you don't like someone, you just don't know them well enough." Many wellness initiatives offer a platform for people to get to know each on a personal level.
- **A culture of health.** When the cafeteria cuts down on options like chilli poutine, (yes, it happens) and adds more wraps, salads, hummus dips etc, those healthier choices will be adopted. Combined with newsletters, points of decision, group initiatives and personal assistance, the workplace becomes a place of health and vitality. Employees begin to support each other in their healthy efforts.

And the best part is that in Building the Dream, these intangible benefits will assist with improved productivity, higher levels of engagement and increased employee loyalty, which all move towards decreasing the pain of expensive, unhealthy employees.

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