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Free Workplace Wellness Tip Guide

Consistent and clear messaging around wellness is an effective and low-cost way to keep your company's wellness initiative fresh and front of mind. Use these themed wellness tips however you would like to engage your employees in their wellbeing.

Our top tips for making the most of this content:

- Create a Wellness Tip template in Word, PowerPoint, Canva, InDesign, or another program that you like. This template can be branded with your company's wellness program logo and colors to make it stand out.
- Pair each tip with an eye-catching image. Such images can be taken yourself, gathered from employees, or purchased on a stock photo website such as 123rf at a low cost.
- Develop a communication timeline and designate a point person who is responsible for sending tips out on a regular basis. For example, wellness tips could go out daily, weekly, or monthly, but try to send them out at the same time/day so that employees know to expect them. (Need help with creative, inspiring wellness content? Contact us!)
- Print and post tips in high traffic areas such as stairways, elevators, bathroom stalls, break rooms, etc.
- Email tips out as a jpeg file. For even greater impact, have tips come directly from a someone in a Senior Leadership role.

Wellbeing Tips

Wellbeing 1

When was the last time you celebrated your life?

Time to Read: 1.3 minutes

True happiness lies in this moment, already abundant inside of you. Happiness is not to be found in the future, or somewhere outside of you. Access joy instantaneously by intentionally putting yourself into a beautiful, grateful and happy state. Mindset is everything - what do you have to celebrate today?

Poem: Celebrate Life!!! (Author Unknown)

I woke up early today....

excited about all that I get to do before midnight....

I have responsibilities to fulfill that are important. My job is to

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choose what kind of day I'll have....

Today I can complain because it is raining....

or

I can be thankful the grass is getting watered for free!

Today I can feel sad that I don't have more money....

or

I can be glad that my finances encourage me to plan my purchases wisely and guide me away from waste!

Today I can grumble about my health....

or

rejoice that I am alive!

Today I can lament over all that my parents didn't give me when I was growing up....

or

I can feel grateful that they allowed me to be born!

Today I can cry because roses have thorns....

or

I can celebrate that thorns have roses!

Today I can mourn my lack of friends....

or

I can excitedly embark upon a quest to discover new relationships!

Today I can whine because I have to go to work....

or

I can shout for joy because I have a job to do!

Today I can complain because I have to go to school....

or

I can eagerly open my mind and fill it with rich new knowledge!

Today stretches ahead of me, waiting to be shaped....

I am the sculptor, ready to do the shaping....

What today is like is up to me because I get to choose what kind of day I will have.....

Celebrate Life!!

Wellbeing 2

What is Wellness?

"Wellness is the complete integration of body, mind, and spirit - the realization that everything we do, think, feel, and believe has an effect on our state of well-being." - Greg Anderson

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Wellbeing 3

Try This: Mindful Meal Time

Time to read: Less than 2 minutes

"Mindful" eating means to purposefully set aside a time and place to eat without any major distractions. As it applies to eating, mindfulness includes noticing the colors, smells, flavors, and textures of your food; chewing slowly; getting rid of distractions like TV or reading and learning to cope with feelings like guilt and anxiety about food. Also, allowing yourself to enjoy the pleasure of eating.

Harvard Health Review reports that "a small yet growing body of research suggests that a slower, more thoughtful way of eating could help with weight problems and maybe steer some people away from processed food and other less-healthy choices."

In our busy lives, many of us find ourselves rushing to eat as fast as possible, or taking our meals and snacks while walking, driving, or on public transportation.

Starting this week, see if you can prioritize eating at least 3 meals "mindfully." To ensure success:

1. Don't be in a hurry. Dedicate yourself to however long it naturally will take you to prepare food and eat.
2. Avoid big distractions TV, movies, or reading. Music is OK though- choose something that puts you in a good mood. Or, if you're dining with your spouse or family, engage them in conversation. Try to take a genuine interest in their point of view, even if they are venting or complaining. See it as an opportunity for bonding and connection.
3. Notice the aromas of food as you're cooking and serving yourself.
4. Sit at a table and set (a) place(s) with napkins, silverware, and a lit candle if you'd like. You may be thinking "but it's just me/us, what's the point?" Try it anyway! You may be surprised at how it can enhance enjoyment of the meal.
4. Notice the taste and texture of your food as you eat.
5. Take small sips of water (or your beverage of choice) during the meal, making sure not to chug or gulp too much liquid at once. Drinking too much or too fast while eating can interfere with the way food is received by the body.

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Wellbeing 4

Laugh More for a Healthy Heart

Did you know....?

Laughing can increase blood flow in the body by as much as 20%, according to a study by the University of Toronto. This increased circulation helps deliver oxygen and important nutrients throughout your systems, to keep you functioning your best.

Wellbeing 5

Quick Tip for Stress Relief

Time to read: 1 minute

Diaphragmatic Breathing: One of the most effective ways to activate the relaxation response is by decreasing the heart rate. Since we can't voluntarily alter our pulse, more tangible measures are needed. Luckily, a rapid heart rate can be lowered with deep breathing techniques. The most commonly utilized strategy is breathing by contracting the diaphragm, a horizontal muscle in the chest located just above the stomach cavity.

How to start:

1. Lie on your back with your knees bent. Place one hand just below your rib cage and the other on your upper chest.
2. Breathe in slowly through your nose so that your stomach pushes against your lower hand.
3. As you exhale through pursed lips, gently pull your belly in and let your abs contract inward.

Throughout inhalation and exhalation, the hand on your chest should remain as still as possible.

Do this exercise three times a day for five to ten minutes, then gradually increase that amount. With enough practice, you should begin to breathe this way automatically.

Exercise & Movement Tips

Movement 1

Fight Fatigue with Movement

Time to read: Less than 1 minute.

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Increase your energy by breaking a sweat! It may sound contradictory- but when you exercise, blood flow is increased all over the body. This increased circulation brings oxygen to every cell, which fuels our nervous systems and stimulates their functions. With more oxygen to fuel your muscles, brain and heart, you can go about your daily activities with greater ease. Although going to the gym early in the morning or late in the afternoon may feel like the last thing you have energy to do, once you build exercise into your daily routine, these workouts will actually seem less tiresome because you've built up the physical endurance to carry them out.

Movement 2

Exercise for Better Sleep

Ramping up your fitness routine can help curb insomnia.

Although sleep experts recommend that you not exercise right before you go to bed, exercise during the day [benefits your sleep](#) at night (study by Northwestern University). The physical exertion you engage in during the day helps your body's natural sleep-wake cycles stay in tune. Sleep is important to support your overall health and help you feel less fatigued and stressed during the day.

Movement 3

Fitness Hack for Busy People

You may have noticed that group fitness classes have surged in popularity in recent years. People are flocking to specialty studios and gyms for methods such as Orangetheory, Crossfit, Soul Cycle, Pure Barre, and Core Power Yoga, to name just a few. Why are group fitness classes so popular? Deciding to attend a class regularly may offer unique encouragement to stick with your exercise routine. Classes typically happen on a particular day and time, which takes the guesswork out of when to squeeze in your workout. [Read more about the unexpected benefits of group fitness here.](#) (Time to read article: 2-3 minutes)

Movement 4

Quick Tip for Stress Relief: Stretch at Your Desk

Time to read: 1 minute

Most of us know that movement is good for our physical health. For the past few decades, research has suggested that exercise is even more effective than some medications when it comes to managing anxiety and stress ([learn more from this helpful article from Huffington Post](#)). Making movement a part of your daily routine has been proven to reduce stress, improve

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mood, enhance self-esteem, and increase energy levels. While working, we don't always have time for exercise or long breaks for movement- but what we do in short bursts can add up.

Taking a few minutes at work to stretch can provide a lot more benefit than taking a few minutes to visit the vending machine or coffee pot. If you feel stressed at work, ask yourself if you have 4 minutes. If the answer is yes, take time to [do the stretches in this video and see how you feel.](#)

Movement 5

Exercising with a Busy Schedule

Time to read: 1 minute

Exercising with a busy schedule can be challenging and life can get in the way of prioritizing healthy living at times. Finding ways to stay fit even with the most demanding schedule can be challenging. Here are some tips to make it easier:

1. Work Out On Your Lunch Break

Save time by dressing strategically, (wear a t-shirt under your work shirt, or leggings under a skirt or dress), packing a post workout snack, and choosing efficient workouts such as a [HIIT routine](#) or one of your office yoga or fitness classes.

2. Walk Daily

You can walk anywhere, with no preparation and reap the benefits with small bouts. Swap the time you use to grab a coffee or scroll on social media to squeeze in a 10 -minute walking break. Make it brisk.

3. Make a Schedule & Commit To It

Working out is a priority worth sticking to! Schedule your exercises (put them in your calendar if it helps) and treat it the same as your office meetings, children's obligations and doctors appointments.

Healthy Eating Tips

Healthy Eating 1

The Sneaky Saboteur of Good Health

Time to read: 2 minutes or less

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That granola bar you popped in your mouth for breakfast may not be as healthy as the claims on its packaging makes it sound. In fact, studies show that there's one ingredient in its recipe that is more addictive than cocaine. It isn't even one of those hard-to-pronounce ingredients, either.

It's sugar.

Previously, fat was thought to be the saboteur of health. Today, sugar is taking its place. An overwhelming amount of research has been published in the past several years alone on the negative effects sugar has on heart health, brain function, body weight and overall mood. Yet, even while a lot of us have read or acknowledged how bad sugar is for our health, most of us continue to consume excess sugar and experience the negative consequences, many times without even knowing it.

Sugar can be sneaky; you may buy something like pasta sauce, peanut butter, or salad dressing that you would not expect to contain added sugar, yet if you read ingredient labels, the majority of these packaged products do. So even though you're avoiding candy, cookies, and cake, all that sugar in so-called "healthy" packaged foods can add up very quickly.

So, you want to cut back on sugar, but where do you start? [Check out these tips from the American Heart Association](#) to get started.

Healthy Eating 2

Cut Back on Sugar: Take it Off the Table

Cut back on the amount of sugar you add to things you eat or drink regularly like cereal, pancakes, coffee or tea. Put fresh berries on your pancakes and cereal instead of syrup or honey, and try blending coffee (in a blender) with half a banana for a creamy, lightly sweet treat with fiber and potassium! If you're still using table sugar (or honey or syrup), try cutting the usual amount of sugar you add by half and wean down from there.

Healthy Eating 3

Cut Back on Sugar: Experiment with Flavor

Try experimenting with extracts or spices to add flavor without sugar. For recipes that call for a small amount of sugar, use extracts like almond, vanilla, orange or lemon. Typically, you can

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also replace small amounts of sugar completely with spices such as ginger, nutmeg, or cinnamon. Find a flavor you love!

Healthy Eating 4

Cut Back on Sugar: Read Labels

Compare food labels and choose products with the lowest amounts of added sugars. All whole foods, with the exception of meat, contain some natural sugars (fruit and dairy contain the most). [Added sugars](#) can be identified in the ingredients list.

Healthy Eating 5

Cut Back on Sugar: Eat More Fiber

When reading food labels, make sure to look at the Sugar to Fiber and Carbohydrates to Fiber ratios. Starchy carbs break down to glucose once consumed, just like sweets do. Here are the ratios you should shoot for to balance your blood sugar, which will help to even out your energy levels, reduce inflammation, prevent weight gain and onset of type 2 diabetes, support weight loss, and even balance your hormones.

Sugar: Fiber → 1:1 (For every 1 gram of sugar there should be at least 1 or more grams of dietary fiber)

Carbs: Fiber → 10:1 (For every 10 grams of sugar there should be at least 1 or more grams of dietary fiber)

Wellness at Work Tips

Wellness at Work 1

Move It or Lose It!

Time to read: Less than a minute

For those of us who sit at a desk most of the day, health and well-being aren't always easy to work into our lifestyles. Still, the facts show that we must be proactive about eating well and moving enough during the day in order to avoid weight gain, stress and diminishing physical fitness.

Small changes, practiced consistently over a long period of time, are the best way to increase health and wellbeing. This week's health tips are all about simple things you can do to stay

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healthy at work. Remember, you don't have to do them all, but small changes can yield big results with time and consistency!

Tip #1: Take hourly breaks, stretch or move in place.

Every hour, get up from your desk and go for a quick walk anywhere (furthest restroom, copy machine, water cooler, colleague's desk). Just move. Don't have anywhere to go? Touch your toes, walk or march in place for a few minutes, do a good set of jumping jacks (who cares what your neighbor thinks!). Consider elevators, escalators and moving walkways off-limits. Unless maybe you work at the top of a 40 story building.

Wellness at Work 2

Plan It Out

Time to read: Less than a minute

"A goal without a plan is just a wish."

Tip #2: Plan Your Workouts & Meals

Studies show that scheduling what you eat and when and how you exercise is the best way to stick to a healthy lifestyle. Write it down! Maybe you try waking up 30 minutes earlier to do a fitness DVD at home. Maybe you cook food for the week on Sundays and put it in the freezer. Come up with a plan, put it on your calendar and hold yourself accountable for it.

Wellness at Work 3

Go Nuts!

Time to read: Less than a minute

Tip #3: Try replacing "energy" bars, granola bars and/or candy bars with a handful of nuts and dried fruit, or a small piece of high-quality dark chocolate. It's always best to eat foods that are closer to the way they are found in nature, whenever possible. A handful of almonds and dried cherries, for example, will provide you with a lot less sugar, more protein and fiber, and a good dose of heart-healthy fats as compared with leading energy bar brands. If you opt for dark chocolate, limit it to 1 oz at a time. Choose a brand that lists a cocoa content of 60% or higher on the label, and less than 10g sugar per serving. As an added bonus, the high cocoa content will mean the chocolate contains more theobromine, a mild stimulant which can help keep you a bit more alert in the afternoon.

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Wellness at Work 4

Just Say No!

Time to read: Less than 2 minutes

Tip #4: Just say no- to the sugary office treats, that is. Seemingly, there is always an occasion to celebrate at work. A coworker's birthday, someone's last day, a company anniversary, a national holiday- and there are always cakes, cookies, doughnuts or the like to go along with it. Sometimes, coworkers will even bring in treats for no reason at all. While it's always a kind gesture, and people mean well when they do this, a high dose of sugar in the middle of the day can really sabotage your focus and energy level. Make sure to sincerely thank whoever brought them in, and be happy to explain (if necessary) that you're making an effort to avoid excess sugar. Instead, reach for the nuts, fruit or dark chocolate mentioned in tip #3. They will fill you up and increase your energy, while a piece of cake or a cookie will leave you feeling lethargic. That being said, if someone brought in your all-time favorite treat and you absolutely must indulge, follow these steps:

1. Take one serving. Cut it in half, keep one half at your desk and put the other half in a slightly inconvenient place, such as in the fridge or at a trusted coworker's desk.
2. Eat a small protein-rich snack first, such as a hardboiled egg or some nuts.
3. Eat half of your treat. Take your time to smell, taste and enjoy it.
4. Wait 20 minutes (set a timer if you have to!). If you still want the other half after 20 minutes, allow yourself to have it. At least you're sneaking in some activity by getting up to go grab it!

Wellness at Work 5

“You will never feel truly satisfied by work until you are satisfied by life.”

– Heather Schuck, author of “The Working Mom Manifesto”

Need to freshen up your workplace wellness program, or get one up and running? Contact Allie Andrews, OmBody Founder and Program Director, to learn more about our Healthy Culture Kickstart and other workplace wellness services. (Email: allie@ombodyhealth.com)

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