A Study of Corporate Wellness Program as Part of Increasing Employee Productivity and its Importance in Post COVID-19 Era

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Abstract: A Corporate wellness program is a health initiative taken by many organization aimed to maintain or improve well-being of employee through proper diet, exercise, stress management, and illness prevention. Examples of corporate wellness programs can include smoking cessation, stress management, weight loss education, fitness challenges, different therapies, and many other initiatives which will be helpful for increasing the overall health of an employee

Increased satisfaction at work is directly related with increased productivity of employee. Many of researchers found that adding corporate wellness programs at workplace found to effectively increase in employee productivity due to this relationship between satisfaction and productivity. Therefore a corporate wellness program helps to develop happier employees, and happy employees work harder and more effectively.

The study also complements to the existing literature by discussing different health initiatives taken by many organizations under corporate wellness program and its impact on employee productivity. Finally, the paper explores some benefits of implementing corporate wellness program.

Key Word: *Corporate wellness program, Employee productivity, COVID -19*

I. Introduction

An employer approach to increasing employee health and wellness they introduce some corporate wellness programs which involve activities such as organization-offered exercise sessions, weight-management competitions, educational sessions, tobacco-cessation programs, and health checking's that are planned to help employees eat nutritious food, reduce weight, and increase physical health of employee. Wellness programs often include financial benefits for employees, like lower health insurance premiums.

Moreover increasing employee productivity and decreasing absenteeism (because of sick leaves)—all of which help to reduce operating cost of organization i.e. By wellness programs organizations can reduce health insurance expenses. Employees can also get benefit from corporate wellness programs by reducing health insurance premiums and an increased sense of happiness. This will help to the economic well-being of both the organization and the employees. Therefore in post covid19 era corporate wellness program will be very important to increase productivity of employee which ultimately helps to improve economic condition of organization.

II. Objective of Study

1. To study the concept and significance of corporate wellness program in thecontemporary business environment.
2. To study corporate wellness strategies in broader context
3. To study corporate wellness programs and its impact on employee productivity.
4. To study importance of corporate wellness programs in post COVID-19 era

III. Literature review

Currently because of unhealthy lifestyle and chronic disease employee health and well-being cost increased and to handle that situation employers try to adopt health promotion and disease prevention strategies, and that strategies is commonly called as corporate wellness program.[1]

Employers have the opportunity to develop workplace wellness programs which can have a significant impact on employee's income, insurance cost sharing, and health as well as economicwellbeing of organization.[2]

Employers and employees show an increased interest to incorporate corporate wellness program for a different reasons. However, the primary reason for the implementation of a corporate wellness program is to bring together with the Affordable Care Act and to decrease employer sponsored health insurance cost. Corporate wellness programs are an organized and designed to support employees which indirectly help to increase productivity that decrease health risks, develop quality of life, enhance personal efficiency, and profitable to the organizations financial position.[3]

According to Mattke (2013), there are 5 factors which affect the success of a corporate wellnessprogram. These factors include: 1) efficient communication strategies, 2) opportunity for employees to engage, 3) leadership commitment and engagement 4) use of available resources and relationships, and 5) uninterrupted evaluation.[4]

According to Berry, Mirabito, and Baun (2010), true on-site integration is essential because convenience matters many successful corporate wellness programs will have a factor which permits employees to give input into the activities of the program. Employee input develop engaged workforce which is more committed to the corporate wellness events of the organization. In addition, easy accessibility of the wellness activities of the organization is also important. Employee's participation in wellness activities is increased if the activities are accessible and existing at a suitable location, and time.[5]

IV. What is Corporate Wellness (CW)?

Workplace wellness or CW is any workplace wellbeing supporting activity or policy designed to support healthy environment in the organization and to increase health outcomes of organization.

Different types of corporate wellness programs-

On-site **fitness** centers, Smoking cessation **programs**, Paramedical services, Yoga **classes**, Lunch and healthy snacks, **Employee** assistance **programs**, Naps, Diet counseling sessions, Regular health check-up of employees, health fairs, weight management programs, wellness newsletters

Need or importance of corporate wellness Program:

- Corporate wellness program helps to cut down healthcare expenses of organizationreimburse for employees.
- It helps to make the workplace a more engaging and comforting environment for theiremployees.
- To reduce employee absenteeism this may be increased due to health problems
- It helps to improve productivity of employees
- It works as precautionary measures for overall employee health.

- Healthy employee can easily maintain a better work-life balance.

- It indirectly helps to improve employee branding of organization and it also help to increase recruitment potential

Importance of corporate wellness programs in post COVID-19 era

After post COVID-19 era health of employee is very important for both organization and employee. To protect employees from covid19 virus infection organization need to improve immunity of employee and this will be very important task for all organization.

For improving immunity of employee all organization need to arrange different types of corporate wellness programs which will be helpful for improving immunity of employee.

V. Steps for Successful implementation of Corporate Wellness Program:

1. Identification or assessment of need for Corporate Wellness Programs:

Before implementation of any program first check need of that program by taking survey i.e. by circulating questioner which gives you general idea about which health problems faced by our employee and according to need organization easily select corporate wellness program for their organization.

2. Advantages of the CW program, if implemented.

In case if organization already implemented this program then highlights the benefits get from that corporate wellness program which motivate employees to join corporate wellness program

3. Establish a Wellness Committee/Team.

For successful implementation of program team work is essential part therefore for successful implementation of corporate wellness program first thing is form wellness committee or team. First responsibility of this committee is to help to build and sustain a wellness culture in the organization

Responsibilities of wellness Committee

a) Assessment of Need / Interest
b) Evaluating program, policies related to wellness which is already available at workplace
c) Developing vision statement, goal, objectives and plans for successful implementation
d) Helping in executing, supervising and evaluating wellness programs

Team members should be members from the top management, the HR department, information technology, communications/marketing, and the health and safety department; union representatives; and employees interested in health and wellness.

4. Design a Wellness Program – Goals and Objectives.

Organization design and develop goals and objectives of wellness program according to need or interest of employees which we get after need assessment.

Employer with help of wellness committee design and develop wellness program goals and objectives. Primary and most important goal of wellness program i.e. key goal is to improve workers' health and thereby reduce health care costs. Other goals may be comprise reducing absenteeism, improving worker productivity and increasing retention. Objectives should be clear, time-limited and achievable.

5. Develop a Wellness Program Timeline and Wellness Budget.

Develop a convincing wellness program timeline to apply and evaluate the program. All activities of wellness program should be scheduled at times that are convenient for all participants.

Typically, wellness program budget will be developing by a team i.e. an internal staff person, wellness committee and management.

An accurate and all-inclusive wellness budget will help the wellness committee during evaluation of wellness program because they can easily compare program costs and outcomes.

6. Select Wellness Program Incentives.

Incentives or rewards are an important tool to change unhealthy behaviors, to follow healthy behaviors, to increase participation of employees or it can also motivate individuals to complete a program

Some ideas of wellness program incentives are:

a) Discount for employee health insurance premium contribution
b) Giving some gift card offered bi-weekly to increase engagement.
c) 'Health cash' for employees who didn't join company health insurance plan but activelyparticipating in wellness program.
d) Bonuses and merit pay also help to increase program participation.
e) Offer of an all-expense paid trip to a 14,000 foot mountain climb.
f) Offering monetary rewards for completing qualifying smoking cessation program
g) Monetary Contributions into a health reimbursement account.
h) Discount on medical plan premiums if employee participated in a certified smokingcessation program.
i) Celebration and appreciation events.

7. Acquire Support for the Wellness Program.

Support from management is essential to implement wellness program. Top management support is important for funding purposes, for obtaining support throughout the organization, and for approving policies and processes related to the program.

Management can provide additional support by linking the health promotion objectives tobusiness outcomes, thereby setting wellness as a fundamental part of the organization.

8. Create the awareness about the Wellness Program

Only proposing a wellness program does not assure the wellness of employees. If wellness program is combined with effective strategies for increasing awareness of the programs within the organization, such programs will yield expected results.

There are 3 effective strategies employers can use to increase awareness:

a) Actively advertise your program
b) Develop an effective communication plan
c) Comprise at least one onsite activity to your wellness program

9. **Design and implement the Wellness Program.**

When developing a comprehensive wellness program, it is important that it consists of a different health awareness activity, lifestyle change, supportive environment activities and policies which target risk behaviors, and also consider the needs and interests of the employees while developing wellness program.

Tips on designing a program:

a) Try to develop activities according to your plan goals and objectives which is directly related to the specific needs of your employees. Focus on those activities that are of highest interest to your employees and the highest needs of your company, in that order.Avoid topics with narrow demand.

b) Try to keep it simple. Design and develop the program which will be easy for the participants to understand and track.

c) Try to incorporate a combination of activities to include awareness, educational, and behavior elements.

d) While selecting activities select those in which every employee can easily participate.

10. **Evaluate the Success of the Wellness Program.**

An evaluation is important step because it determines the outcome of a program. By this step you can easily understand your objectives were met or not. Therefore it is a good idea to add an evaluation component to your wellness program.

VI. Conclusion:

From existing literature, it is clear that both organization and employee benefited by corporate wellness programs. Organization's benefit most from reduced absenteeism, increased productivity, reduced healthcare expenses, and increased recruitment of healthyemployees and, more remarkably, from having happier healthier workers, an better culture at the worksite to support health

Employees also get benefits like increased job satisfaction, improved health outcomes, decreased health care utilization, improved employee relations and morale, and decreaseddisability; there were other less noted advantages like changes in employee behavior, increased knowledge on making healthy food choices, better culture at the worksite which support health, improved participation in the program, and increased knowledgeon the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

COVID-19 has completely altered the way corporate businesses used to work before. It has also reformed the sort of wellness support vital for the workforce for the improved business outcome & productivity.

As the businesses are gradually getting back to usual with novel protocols in order to dodge the spread of the COVID-19. With this shifting work culture, employees will similarly have different expectations from the workplace wellness programs. So establishments have to reform their wellness program in order to constitute the upcoming needs for COVID-19.

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