1. Initiating

Obtain a mandate from senior management. Senior-level executives control the budget, the organizational agenda, and the communication channels.

Identify a wellness team to include representatives from management, human resources, finance, labor partners, and others. Most programmatic decisions occur within this committee. It will be their duty to ensure confidentiality, stress equality, and represent their coworkers. This team should act as cheerleaders for the program by maintaining enthusiasm and positive support. Their first act will be to develop a charter, mission, vision, and values based on organizational priorities, goals, and mission. Establish a working relationship with key stakeholders early and get them involved in planning and implementation. Involve key stakeholders in determining program goals.

2. Planning

Create a detailed plan for the Health Promotion Program, identify steps needed to realize the vision, and then document these steps in a plan that works and is easy to understand and implement. Planning includes research and identification of organizational needs based on data that is relevant to employees. An organizational Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis would be appropriate. In order to determine priorities, it will be necessary to identify key characteristics about the employees. The use of a health risk assessment can help determine health needs of the population, outcome measurements, resource requirements, and provide a method for providing the right resources to the right people. Planning also includes:

- Identification of employee interests and needs, gaps, and opportunities;

- Examination of organizational culture (attitudes toward healthy lifestyle behaviors such as physical activity, smoking, nutrition, and how the worksite environment supports or hinders employee efforts to improve their health);

- Leadership support; resources available; communication structure; current and previous wellness initiatives; and

- A clear vision, along with clear goals and objectives based on identified organizational needs.

During the planning process, a business plan including economic justification, budget, objectives, and outcomes to be evaluated will be written, and management approval and support will be obtained.

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3. Implementing

During this phase, a detailed implementation procedure and associated timeline are developed along with assigned responsibilities and method of accountability. Resources such as an itemized budget needed to conduct the program effectively are received and allocated.

Program components are designed based on organizational structure, employee needs, and desired outcomes. These components should address core health risks such as tobacco use, poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, and stress. Programmatic development can be centered on group or individual design classes, one-on-one coaching, interactive Web-based approaches, support groups, or self-directed study, but should have a mechanism for feedback and evaluation. Decide what metrics to measure and what defines success, and establish a plan for data collection, analysis, and evaluation. Activities must incorporate program goals and take into consideration specific employee needs and interests, as well as provide a way to build awareness, educate, and change behaviors.

It is important to be inclusive and consider different learning needs, varying demographics, and all shifts. The communication plan should market the program in a variety of ways designed to reach all employees. This plan will generate excitement for the program, provide information about what is going on, and deliver progress reports to employees and key stakeholders.

Providing physical activity opportunities may include such options as: walking trails, fitness centers, and/or stairwell projects with point of decision prompts. Nutrition programs may include improving cafeteria choices, lunch and learns, and weight management support groups.

As always, it is important to elicit visible participation from senior management. This can be demonstrated in the creation of supportive policy changes that reinforce wellness such as: allowing flexible work time for employees to come in early or to work late in order to incorporate physical activity into the day, providing healthy food choices at meetings, writing policies discouraging smoking and assisting employees to quit tobacco use, and establishing a strategic incentive system to achieve participation and engagement goals in wellness.

4. Monitoring/Evaluation

This is a continual process that includes participation numbers, success stories, and all hard data needed to keep management updated on successes. It also provides a way to make adjustments to the program as needed. Determine the ideal approach to reach employees with the advice of the steering committee, obtain feedback from employees, and make changes based on feedback.
Program evaluation uses measured data related to program goals and objectives. Have the objectives been met, does the current data show improvements when compared to

baseline data? Have expectations been met, is the program working, and is there a benefit to program continuation?

5. Close-Out

This occurs when the project ends or turns into a maintenance program. This phase includes writing down what works and what does not work for prosperity.

EmployeeHealthPromotion
Disease Prevention

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Center for Engineering & Occupational Safety and Health, and
Occupational Health Strategic Healthcare Group, Office of Public Health (10P3)
Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs
www.publichealth.va.gov/employeehealth

VA/VHA Employee Health Promotion Disease Prevention Guidebook, July 2011   Enclosure 9