



8 AWESOME IDEAS TO PUMP UP YOUR WELLNESS PROGRAM

At Fitbit Health Solutions, our community of HR, benefits and wellness leaders is eager to share their insights into what has and hasn't worked in their corporate wellness initiatives. We've rounded up the best tried-and-true advice for you here. Read on!



1

Nourish your program with food.

Food is a fantastic way to bring people together—but resist the urge to grab a box of donuts, and instead be a healthy influence. Providing nutritious food not only helps employees make healthy decisions, it might even help them be more productive. Research from the Health Enhancement Research Organization (HERO) found **that employees who ate healthily all day long were 25% more likely to have higher job performance**, and those who ate 5+ servings of fruits & vegetables at least 4 days a week were 20% more likely to be more productive.¹

Present healthy food as a fun reward, says **Catherine Moran**, wellness admin at Clark Nuber: “**We like to pair our wellness challenge rewards with healthy food** by bringing in catered lunches or breakfasts. Our favorite event was when we had a caterer make omelets onsite, and the employees could customize them with whatever they wanted. This was a huge success and people are asking for it again.”

Even if you don't have a catering budget, there are lots of ways to help employees eat healthier. Try a weekly fruit delivery, or offer a mix of low carb, low sodium and low sugar snacks in the kitchen.



Reward your employees with a healthy meal, or stock the kitchen with nutritious snacks.

2

Encourage good habits that go beyond exercise.

Physical activity is certainly important, but mental and emotional wellness are, too. A recent Harvard Business School study found that **workplace stress may contribute to \$125 to \$190 billion of healthcare costs each year**—5 to 8% of our nation’s healthcare spending. The good news is, stress can be mitigated by forming healthy lifestyle habits.

Bryan Colyer of Dohrmann Insurance Agency shares, “We’ve been working on challenges that aren’t just physical, but also ones that **change a habit or create a new good habit**—like giving 30 sincere compliments this month, attending a credit seminar, reading a book a month, eliminating deep fried foods, or only buying coffee once a week. Try to reach your people where they need the most help.”

When encouraging better habits, try to help your employees take the first step, like **Kathy Boyle** of Carbon Black, Inc: “We did some seminars, including a **Learning to Meditate seminar**, via a webinar so our remote people were able to participate as well.”



3

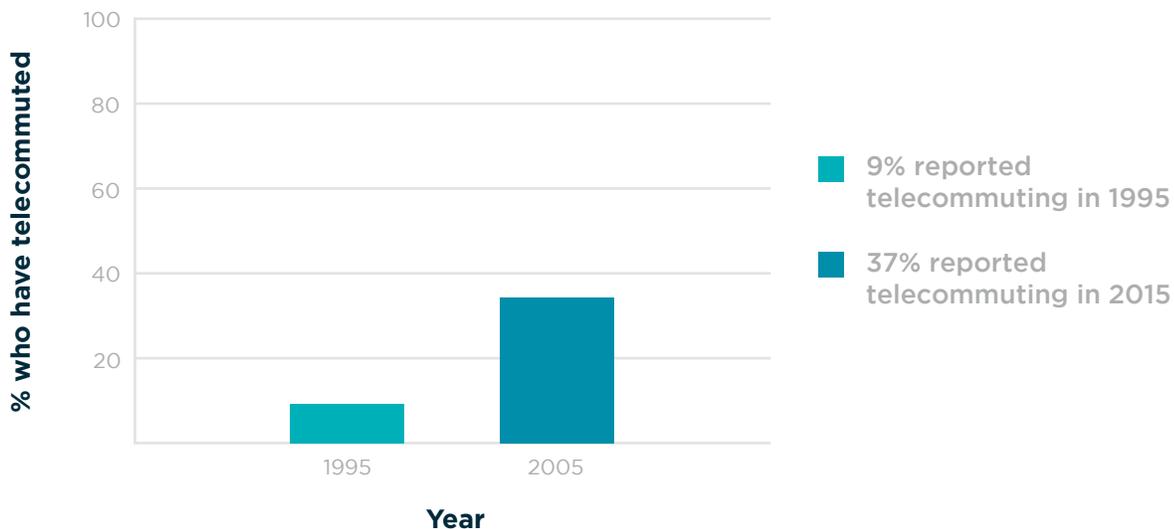
Make everyone feel included.

Being inclusive is key to a successful wellness program, especially when you have remote employees—and the number of employees working remotely are on the rise. A 2015 Gallup survey found that **37% of U.S. workers have telecommuted**, which is a massive bump from the 9% reported in 1995.³

Making all your employees feel included and in-the-know encourages meaningful participation. Follow the example of **Kathy Boyle** from Carbon Black, Inc: “To get remote people involved in our Wellness Week, we had Wellness Bingo where **employees could participate from anywhere** and be entered to win a raffle prize.”

Fostering a sense of community goes beyond incentives, too. Use your company intranet, social media, and even calendar invites to help remote employees stay in the know.

Number of Americans who have telecommuted



4

Get fit for good.

Wellness does a body good, so why not spread that goodness to the community as well? According to the 2014 Millennial Impact Report, **47% of employed Millennials had volunteered for a cause or nonprofit in the past month, and 57% want to see more company-wide volunteer opportunities through their employer.**⁴

It's smart to cater to this age group: Millennials became the largest generation in the U.S. workforce in 2015, at 54 million people. And that number is set to hit close to 70 million by 2030.⁵

54 million

At 54 million members, Millennials are the largest generation in the U.S. workforce.

Here's what our network of HR and wellness experts had to say about combining wellness with service:

"I'm kicking around the idea of **combining getting moving with service in the community**. Being in Southern California, the first thing that comes to mind is participating in a beach cleanup."

—**Rebecca Rowland**, Campbell Hall Episcopal

"Our company is planning a challenge called ChallengeFit. It will be a team-based challenge, but we will also have individual daily challenges where the **winners will have a donation made in their name** to the Challenged Athletes Foundation (CAF)."

—**Emily Aronis**, The IMA Financial Group

"We donated one school meal through a global anti-hunger charity for every 5,000 steps a person walked, and people loved it. I heard story after story about people who made themselves **go for an extra walk before bed in order to earn another meal donation.**"

—**Mark Goldberg**, Latham & Watkins

5

Design a challenge around powerful imagery.

According to the Social Science Research Network,⁶ **65% of people are visual learners**—so it’s worth thinking about visual elements when designing your wellness program. Some people may be more motivated to stick to their goals if they can picture something to work toward. Check out some of these wellness leaders’ creative ideas for keeping participants inspired.



Appalachian trail 282 miles

“We had a ‘Scale the Trail’ challenge where we virtually hiked the Maine portion of the Appalachian Trail, encouraging employees to walk Maine’s portion of the trail, which is 282 miles.”

—**Nicole Fletcher**, Bangor Savings Group

“I love incorporating current events like the Olympics! You could always incorporate other sporting events, like college football, basketball, golf tournaments or tennis and design themed challenges around those.”

—**Jolee Miedema**, HLR

“Our first group challenge was stepping from Stockton, CA to Dublin, IR in time for St. Patrick’s Day. **Now, we’re stepping through 9 national parks in the west.** At each park they reach, participants will receive a short video about their destination. Just like a vacation, they have two weeks to complete their journey, and we’ll be hosting a bbq for all the participants in a local park after work.”

—**Bryan Colyer**, Dohrmann Insurance Agency

6

Be clear, even if it means talking dollars and cents.

Sometimes it's best to be direct—especially when important topics like compensation and benefits are involved. **More than one-third of millennials don't understand their basic medical coverage.**⁷ If you're struggling with ways to communicate confusing material like benefits options, present it in a way that employees can't ignore.

Kristy Clark of Parker Smith Feek offers advice: “Outlining the cost of the **benefits as part of their compensation package** will get their attention.”

This could mean translating a key benefit to a dollar or other tangible amount. For instance, if you offer free gym memberships, tell your employees the average cost per year so they understand the value they're getting.



Don't be afraid to be direct when explaining compensation and benefits.

7

Offer creative and affordable incentives.

Incentives are a key element of any successful wellness program, and CEOs are catching on. A 2015 Fitbit Health Solutions survey of 200 CEOs found that **95% were interested in providing additional incentives to employees who use a fitness tracker.**⁸ But you don't need to break the bank to make your employees feel like winners. In addition to offering fitness trackers, check out these cheap (or free!) ideas to reward and motivate people:



“If your group is competitive, **sometimes just bragging rights is enough to keep people engaged!** Post or email who's in the top 10, or come up with a trophy that the person in the lead gets to hold on to. If your folks value time off, a day off with pay is a great prize.”

—**Nicole Fletcher**, Bangor Savings Group

“**For employees who participate in our wellness programs, we offer a reduction in their insurance premiums.** We also give smaller prizes to participants throughout a challenge. In the past, we've offered trips as a prize. This year, we donated money to charities, which resonated well with our employee audience.”

—**Pamela Pikus**, Indiana University Health

“We've done several different wellness challenges, and **one reward our employees especially like is denim day.** Since we're a professional services firm, we don't get the opportunity to dress down very often, so this is a real treat for us.”

—**Catherine Moran**, Clark Nuber

8

Keep up with the trends.

Don't be afraid to latch on to new trends and use them to your advantage. In fact, **it's smart to tap into something that's already popular with employees.** Take Pokémon GO for example, a smartphone game that took the world by storm in 2016 and got people moving far more than expected. Be on the lookout for future trends that you can turn into fitness motivation.



Turn cultural trends into motivation.

“My daughter is off the couch, we’re meeting new people, having a great time—and I got over 60,000 steps this weekend!”

—**Evette Jowers,** Savings Bank of Mendocino County

“It makes me smile, and I enjoy interacting with the folks playing.”

—**Debbie Ware,** Oklahoma United Methodist Conference

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