



# Cultures of Health and Engagement – Small Steps, Big Rewards

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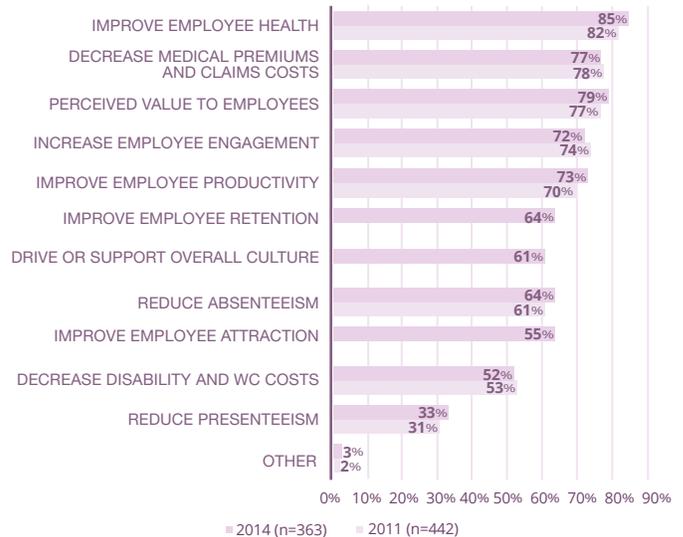
Organizations commit millions of dollars each year to designing the optimal compensation and benefits packages for their workforces. They spend considerable resources providing perks to attract and retain high-performing employees in their marketplaces. Top talent is hired to lead the charge, forming strong human resource and benefit teams. Yet, organizational goals can fall short if the company culture fails to engage employees and provide an environment where they can thrive and want to come to work. How important is it to build cultures of well-being and engagement, and what might that look like? The topics of workplace culture, well-being and engagement are forefront in the minds of employers. According to the 2015 Integrated Benefits Institute (IBI) member survey (Integrated Benefits Institute, 2015), four out of five of the most important health and productivity management issues are related to workforce health and well-being. The figures below reflect the percentage of employers who indicated these categories as “very important.”

- workplace culture of health – 44 percent
- employee health engagement – 44 percent
- wellness and health promotion programs – 38 percent
- well-being – 38 percent

This sentiment is echoed in other industry surveys of national employers as well. The 2015 WorldatWork study finds 96 percent of organizations support well-being initiatives, with 74 percent of organizations planning to increase their well-being offerings in the next two years. According to the study, employers’ top objectives are improving workforce health, impacting health-care costs, increasing productivity and driving overall culture (WorldatWork and Healthmine, 2015).

## Why Well-Being?

What are the reasons for offering well-being programs/initiatives to your employees?



Any one of these objectives or a combination of several may motivate companies to make changes; but regardless of the reason, focus on company culture can take many forms. Many organizations have a solid foundation on which to build, such as firm leadership commitment, a comprehensive and robust benefits package or generous employee flexibility. From a solid foundation, organizations can begin to develop a clear vision of what they want their culture to reflect, how it should support the needs of their workforce, and what bottom line goals they want to achieve.

The journey to a culture of health and productivity can have many steps (big or small) along the way. That’s why one Employers Health member, TimkenSteel, branded their well-being initiative as “STEPS – It’s Your Journey.”

“Since our company became its own entity just over a year ago, we knew we wanted to take a different approach toward a wellness program,” said Tara Sidel, senior manager of benefits strategy and administration at TimkenSteel. “We want our culture to reflect what we provide our customers – innovation and possibility. Our company motto is ‘YES. IT’S POSSIBLE.’ And we’re building a culture at TimkenSteel where employees know positive overall well-being is possible no matter where they are on their journey.”

The well-known research firm Gallup has demonstrated in its well-being research that companies with engaged workers have significantly higher productivity, profitability, customer ratings, less turnover and absenteeism, and fewer safety incidents (Gallup, 2013) – all critical to organizational success.

## Well-Being Linked to Job Performance



With more than 1,000 national employers surveyed, the Families and Work Institute determined that effective employers recognize employees’ personal and professional lives are both sources of strength and challenges that can affect work outcomes. According to the authors of the study, by creating effective workplaces where processes and infrastructures address stressors and enhance employee performance and well-being, employers will be able to continuously reinvent their workplaces so that their people and their organizations can thrive (K. Matos, 2014).

The benefits of cultures of well-being can be realized in many ways as the moving parts come cohesively together. Those companies with stronger-than-average cultures marked by strong leadership, company reputation, focus on performance and employee engagement drive higher overall engagement, revenue growth, productivity and shareholder value. (AonHewitt, 2014).

Category	n	Extremely negative or negative effect	No effect or neutral	Extremely positive or positive effect
Employee satisfaction	102	1%	25%	75%
Biometric screening	56	2%	25%	73%
Employee engagement	75	0%	28%	72%
Productivity	21	0%	29%	71%
Health care costs	123	2%	33%	66%
Absenteeism rates	54	0%	37%	63%
Employee stress	14	7%	36%	57%
Disability costs	53	2%	45%	53%
Turnover rates	46	4%	52%	44%

WorldatWork and Healthmine, 2015

*It doesn’t all have to happen at once.* Building a successful culture takes time, commitment and a well-prepared plan. In creating your road map, begin with the end in mind, set forth well-defined targets and identify the paths you must create to achieve them. You can’t change what you don’t measure, so be sure data is integrated and metrics are aligned with the overarching organizational objectives. Don’t let the lofty goals prevent you from beginning your journey. Take inventory of what is already working, then build upon those successes to further enhance the culture of your organization today.

*Contact Employers Health to help prepare the road map for identifying and capturing success metrics as you work to build a successful culture of engagement in your organization.*

### Works Cited

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