



Recess Newsletter January 2011

Women Laughing Alone With Salad

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Daily Dose of ADD



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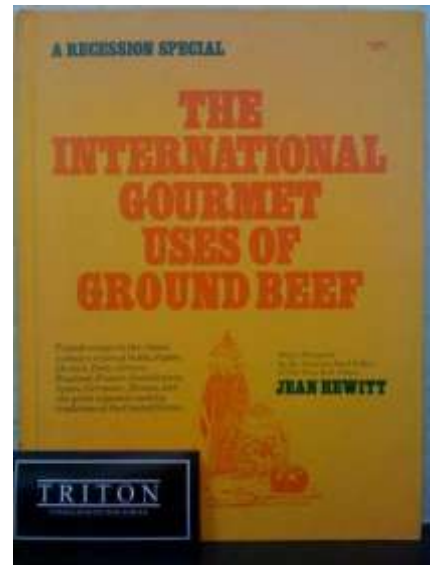
The International Gourmet Uses of Ground Beef

And the winner is....Traci Fajardo From OnPoint Credit Union. Traci, thank you for sharing the love with your friends.

As thanks you are now the proud owner of this journal. ----->

We will be doing more fun giveaways in the future so keep your eyes peeled and your appetite for international ground beef dishes high. You can always share your enthusiasm for the newsletter by scrolling to the bottom of this email and click:

"This is hilarious. I must forward"



Giving Meaning to "Wellness"

Recess helps firm up the definition of "wellness."

Remember our bellyaching last month? About how meaningless the term wellness has become? Well, we are not the kind of people who offer a complaint without offering a solution.

In the next several newsletters we are going to break down our definition of workplace wellness one step at a time.

[You'll Cry. You'll Lose Weight Just Reading It.](#)

LiveWire on OPB (.mp3)

No Place Like Work. Recess Client Rose City Mortgage in Oregon Business.

Fun Wellness: Recess Client Bullivant Houser Bailey in Oregon Business Magazine

Portland Business Journal: Smoking Cessation

Why the workplace? Most of us spend the majority of our waking hours at work. In fact, in the United States we spend more hours working than any industrialized nation in the world, according to the [International Labor Organization](#).

Why bother even defining what good workplace wellness means? If we want to get well we are clearly going to need employers to get on board. There are over 85,000 US employers who employ between 500-10,000 people. That's a lot of people.

Many very large employers have turned to wellness as a way to help slow the increase in health care costs, but most of us do not work for very large employers. What about folks in the middle?



Now you know who is doing the heavy breathing during conference calls.

Even companies with weight lifting junior executives are unlikely to realize return on investment unless the employer can persuade a substantial portion of the workforce to engage.

Thanks to the meaninglessness of the term "wellness" most employers who are not large enough to simply throw the book at a wellness until something works, have been burned by programs that suck.



Click to learn about worst case wellness.

As a result you find a lot of HR organizations that are sick of wellness programs that fail to produce results. It's no wonder.

Here are some statistics:

- [SHRM](#) estimates that more than half of US companies offer wellness programs.
- The [IFEBC](#) found that more than 80% of those responding to their wellness programs survey have an average employee participation rate of 50% or below.
- [Research indicates](#) that employers must have wellness participation rates in excess of 40% percent over at least a three year period in order to realize return on investment.

What workplace wellness isn't.

Wellness isn't just a [Biggest Loser competition](#). It isn't just Weight Watchers at Work. It is not health surveys. It is not blood tests. It is not a matrix with a list of wellness vendors and their respective "features." It is more than just a strategic plan that a broker or HR consultant writes up and plops on someone's desk (where it collects dust).

What workplace wellness is.

Workplace wellness is an entire culture of behaviors that are organized, consistent, efficient and effective at creating a workplace where any person can find a way to engage in better lifelong habits at, or outside of, the workplace.

Here is our conceptual framework for a workplace-centric concept of wellness:

Infographic: Awesomesauce Wellness



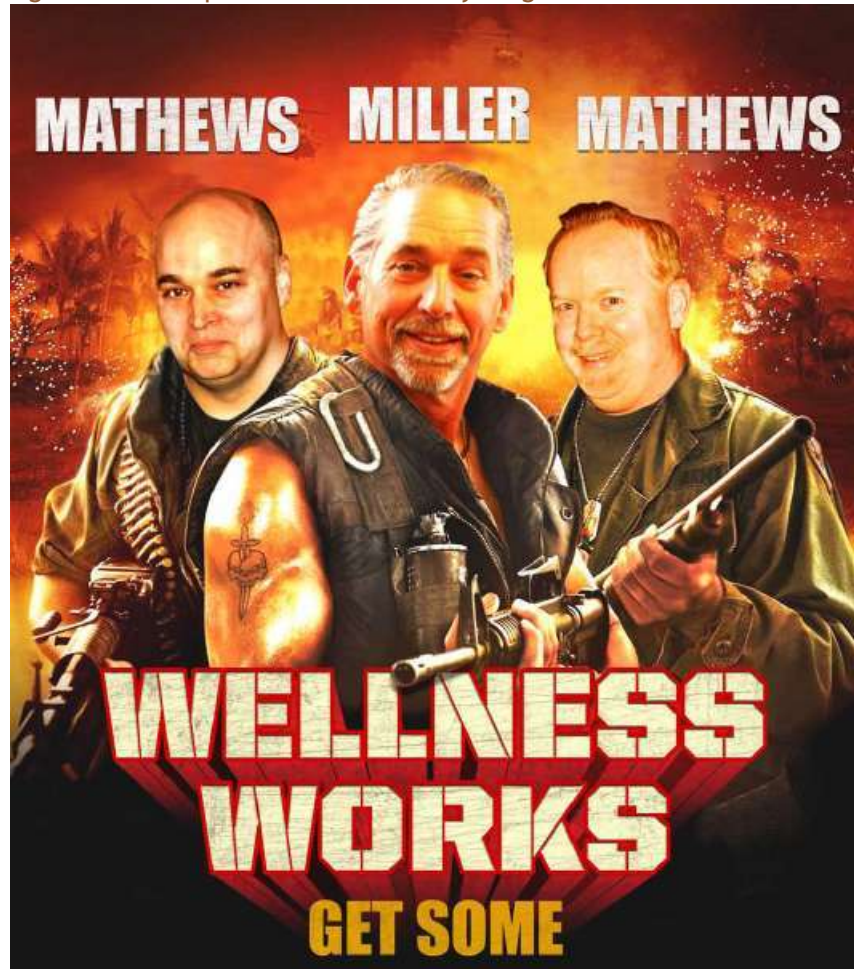
Click image to see the full infographic.

This month, let's start with the first aspect of an effective workplace wellness program. A good program...

Generates buzz & has buy in from employees.

Overall, the workplace wellness program has high employee engagement (more than 40% of the workforce). Participation increases with subsequent years and can be achieved without giving away more than \$50 in incentives per person per year.

Management is meaningfully involved. What does that mean? A picture is worth a thousand words. Would your company's manager let you use her image to create a poster that looked anything like this?



Yes? That is a sign management is meaningfully involved.

The program has buy-in at every level of the organization and in all locations/departments. It is not just an HR initiative, run only by administrative employees, nor is it specific only to the biggest office. There is a wellness team that holds efficient, effective meetings with team-based decision making, thus creating ownership in the program. The team is able execute on deliverables and likes to "do" as much as they like to talk. Members with burnout are encouraged to resign.

No silos. The program is not run or dominated by one specific branch of the company. People involved with the program are diverse. They don't all look, act or think the same.

The opposite of a buzz-generating program?

Women laughing alone with salad and other humorless, trite depictions of health.

Read on below.

Laughing Alone With Salad.

And other stupid health marketing ploys.

Here at Recess we have been forwarding this link (from The Hairpin) around for a couple of weeks. Here's a taste of the post:





It is easy to see the humor in bland health marketing photos when placed end to end in this way. Yet, all too often insipid images of health nuts giddily choking down undressed vegetables are what people associate with workplace wellness.

Do you have a wellness program where you work? Do its devotees look more like women laughing maniacally at their lunch rather than like you and your co workers? It could be that your employer's program is violating Recess' first rule of awesomesauce wellness: Don't be boring.

[Wellness For The Rest of Us Over At The Blog. >>](#)

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Local to Portland, OR? Call 503-282-5560.

This is hilarious. I must forward: