



Recess Newsletter June 2011

We get straight to the point.

In This Newsletter

Results dissected.

Last chance to be a champion...owner of a new yoga kit.

The way of the well. Very zen.

Daily Dose of ADD



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In The News

Wellness 101

We dive back into the awesomesauce.

By now, those of you who are regular Recess newsletter readers have become well-acquainted with our bubbly lil' infographic. Guess what? The party isn't over yet. This month, we explore the next orange orb of wellness fundamentals: making a wellness program outcome based and measurable.

Infographic: Awesomesauce Wellness



Click image to see the full infographic.

Making a wellness program outcome based and measurable.

[Recess' Blog: You'll Laugh. 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

Can you measure greatness? We believe definitely yes. There are ways to tell if your [wellness program is working](#). Some are obvious. But if everyone in the office doesn't suddenly start showing up for work in full [biker gear](#), how do you know you're getting a decent ROI? First, you step back, take stock, and measure.



High on wellness.

What is measurable?

Happily stating "I'm eating better!" isn't *really* measurable...or at all measurable, though we applaud saying anything happily. Being measurable is about specifics. What are you doing to eat better? Did you increase your fiber intake? By how much? How? We want all the juicy details. How many pieces of fruit did you eat, and was that an increase? That attention to detail is measurable, and that is what [gets results](#).



Careful attention to detail is key.

Results. The reason any of us are doing any of this.

Simply having a wellness program does not guarantee a payback. There is a reason the biggest bubble in our infographic is "fundamental and central to the company culture." We've said it before: Wellness programs are not one size fits all. Even having a great program for your company, one that has had heavy collaboration from staff and experts, doesn't mean your results will be [instantaneously apparent](#). You'll know your program is working when you *see results*.

The eventual goal is healthy employees, which in turn leads to a company that spends less on sick care and more on things like creating jobs, offering great training and other benefits.

According to the [Kaiser Family Foundation](#), annual insurance premiums have increased 114% in the last ten years. Nationwide, health spending in 2009 was nearly 22 times what it was in 1970, and is expected to reach \$2.7 trillion in 2011. What does this mean for you? It means that every time your company has to pay more for insurance in order to receive less care, that it effectively erases your raise.

The good news is that everyone wins when wellness works. A recent study by the [Vitality Group](#) shows wellness programs reduces costs with fewer trips to the hospital, and more trips around the block in a comfy pair of sneakers. A happy outcome, because who really WANTS to go to the hospital, with measurable results.



Because no one wins when workers die.

Health care costs are obviously one easy way to judge whether or not a wellness program is working, but they are also complex and not the only way. Bad health can happen to good people. That is ultimately why insurance is there. Looking at outcome based measures should go beyond just health care spending to other more easily influenced metrics.

A common mistake of many health programs is using incomplete methods--like just looking at [BMI's](#)--a method that sometimes lets skinny, partying sloths off the hook while the "fit-but-fatties" feel the shame.



The picture of health-and happiness?



Clearly unhealthy? For shame.

Looking at BMI alone or presuming that one indicator can tell the whole story for the health of a population just doesn't work. While many studies have linked weight to excess cost, [many other credible studies have shown](#) that large, fit people are healthier than thin, sedentary people.

Very few experts would argue that even modest losses in weight (i.e. no

one will necessarily be stopping you in the hall to tell you how sylph you appear) can have [dramatic positive impacts on overall health](#).

Obsessing about weight or any measure in particular is likely to lead to controversy, but looking into a wide variety of measurable health behaviors can paint a fuller and more accurate picture of the long term impact of any [awesomesauce](#) program.

Measuring wellness accurately takes into consideration "la vie total". Which, coincidentally enough, is the topic of our next section. Ooh, yeah! Smooooooooothe segue.

It's the final countdown...

...For the yoga bag drawing. Forward and win!

If you have already forwarded our email, good for you. You no doubt made a friend very happy to receive this little slice of hilarity, and you were rewarded by being entered in our fab-u-lous drawing, the winner of which will receive this handsome, and oh-so-useful, yoga bag. Brilliant!

If you have *not* forwarded our email, we can only suppose it's because you have more yoga bags than you know what to do with. We salute your generosity in allowing others to have a chance at sharing in the bounty.

What's that? You didn't know we were having a drawing? Well, we are. It's because we know that you love Recess and you love yoga we will be giving away a fabulous yoga mat, yoga block, water bottle and yoga tote bag.



We're all for impact but our bag has a Recess logo.

Just scroll to the bottom of this email and click:

"This is hilarious. I must forward"

Doing so anytime between now and June 24th, 2011 means you will be

entered to win. Good luck!

Chunky wellness.

How do you measure a life well lived?

Happiness can be a [hard thing to measure](#). Health, on the other hand, can theoretically be quantified, dissected, analyzed, and *understood*. You and your super-jealous-but-still-congratulatory-friends can tell if you've lost weight. It's obvious if you've gone from smelling like you were licking an ashtray to minty fresh and cigarette-free breath. And, hey, good for you if your increased fiber intake is doing the job, but maybe keep the results of that change on the down low.

So what about less tangible areas of wellness? How do the squishier concepts of health tie into our need to be praised for good work, or, our personal dedication to the environment? Clearly connecting health to our values is harder to measure, but no less important to attempt.

Wellness at work.

Healthiest Employee of the Month

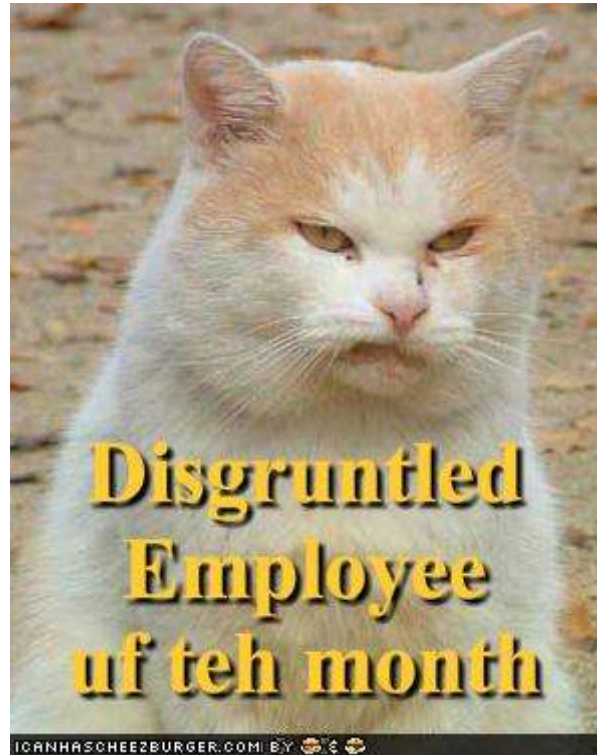
A typical E.of the M. gets what? Some donuts and a free parking space next to the CEO? What are you trying to say by giving your star performer a closer parking space and deep-fried sugar blobs?

"Thank you for your service, Joe, now die so that the young and healthy can take your place for less money?"

If you are looking for innovative ways to recognize employees why not award these achievements with a healthy prize that makes life easier-- like a month of [organic produce delivery?](#)

In the spirit of living workers, why not also reward the person who showed the most improvement in the wellness arena. Did someone give up smoking? Did the office soda guzzler switch to water? Did you swap out your morning double chocolate mocha with extra whip for a skinny soy latte?

Is it any less valid to recognize that taking care of yourself is helping take care of the team?



Is there a prize for this distinction?

Generate some energy.

Running for planetary wellness. That has a nice ring to it doesn't it? Using an [energy generating treadmill](#) or other piece of energy generating exercise equipment for the break room literally shows you how many calories you are burning, *and* how much energy you are generating and thereby saving. What could be a better combo than that?

If you are one of those clever, environmental total product life cycle gurus then let's skip the treadmill altogether (think how many kilowatts went into manufacturing and shipping that thing) and encourage employees to walk, bike or take transit to work. Transit? Yes. [Studies have shown](#) that public transit users are more likely to hit their physical activity goals than drivers. As long as you are not a [rabid carnivore](#), substituting two feet and a heartbeat for the car once or twice a week is good for you and for the earth.



You win!

We need your stories!

Want to be famous? Good news! Fame, of sorts, is within your eager little grasp. We want to profile YOUR team. Send us the stories of what makes your wellness team great. We want the laughter, the tears, the bloopers, and the results. We'll even come out and profile you, if you're in the mood for feeling like a real celebrity. We'll feature the stories in one of newsletters sometime this fall... And you, friend, will be fighting off the adoring hoards quicker than you can say "autograph."

Can't stop reading? We understand. Keep indulging your funny bone over at our blog--->

Wellness. That Doesn't Suck.

We fix [wellness programs that suck](#). It's really that simple.

Did your CFO hire his best buddy from college to start a [cheesy exercise program](#) that only the already healthy attend? Did everyone get excited about the Biggest Loser competition at work only to have a [smoker who takes diet pills win](#)?

Recess can help. We don't just care about tools that look good, but no one uses. We guarantee at least half of your company's employees will catch the wellness bug.

Call us toll-free at 1-866-578-7118, or, [Request a Quote](#).

This is hilarious. I must forward:

