

Why Have a Health Fair?



As you walked into the conference room, you were greeted by the company's human resources assistant. She checked you in, handed you a very useful recycled fabric tote bag, a slip of paper with which you were to find and record five playing cards from various vendors, and directed you where to go to have your biometric screening done.

As you walked towards the screening area, you were greeted by vendors offering chair massages, vision, spinal and hearing screenings. At each vendor you chose a playing card and wrote it down so that you could be entered into the drawing for prizes that vendors had donated. You knew that if you got the best poker hand out of all the entries you were going to win \$100. How fun!

Many companies are seeing the benefit of educating and encouraging healthy lifestyles for their employees. A health fair can be an important part of that. But, given the expense, both in time and money why would you want to invest in a health fair?

TOP 5 REASONS TO HAVE A HEALTH FAIR

1. **Lower health care costs** by increasing employee's awareness of their current health. Numerous conditions, such as Type 2 Diabetes, High Cholesterol, Hypertension (high blood pressure) and Hyperthyroidism go undiagnosed because they either have vague or no symptoms.

2. **Increase visibility** of an internal health promotion program and staff. Employee retention, morale, and productivity increases when management shows they care. Wellness activities like 10,000 steps programs allow employees to team up, have fun, get healthy, and challenge one another.
3. **Make informed health care consumers** out of your employees. Provide reminders of your current health plan benefits, a variety of health screenings, educational materials, and referrals to community resources. Educated employees can make wise, cost-saving decisions when choosing health care providers and prescription drugs.
4. **Motivate employees** towards making positive health behavior changes. The ease of having biometrics done at work increases the chance that employees will get necessary tests. Offering healthy options like bike racks for riding to work, and fruits at meetings show management's commitment to a healthy workforce.
5. **Plan for future cost controls.** Once health risks are uncovered, program decisions can be made to guide employees toward better health, which brings lower claims costs. Periodic health checks throughout the year provide the opportunity for employees to monitor their progress.

A health fair is a great way to kick off a wellness program in any workplace. To do it right, call an expert in wellness.

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