How to Plan and Implement Wellness Challenges
Step Up to the Challenge

This e-book shows you how — and why — to design and implement wellness challenges.

Done right, challenges improve your well-being program engagement, help people improve the quality of their lives and promote a positive and fun culture of well-being.
Let’s get started!
SECTION 1

The World of Well-Being
What Is Well-Being?

Well-being is a state of being happy and healthy in body and mind.

There are two essential elements in the definition of well-being: the importance of a holistic, whole-person mentality and the need for ongoing effort on the part of the individual.

It’s not a one-time achievement, or even something that “just happens.” Rather, well-being is an active, ongoing pursuit. And sometimes, we need help accomplishing it. That’s where wellness challenges come in.

Well-being touches every aspect of the human experience.

Physical health is just one of many components of well-being. Of equal importance are things like emotional health, social connectedness, financial stability, stress resilience and more. At the end of the day, true well-being touches every aspect of the human experience.
50% of C-level executives that say culture influences profitability, creativity and productivity.²

92% of C-level executives believe that improving a well-being culture can increase the financial value of a company.²

Benefits of Well-Being at Work

Individuals and organizations alike benefit from robust workplace well-being programs.

More and more, people today consciously choose where they work based on more than "just" pay or job function. A company's culture, in which personal well-being plays a starring role, can help businesses attract — and retain — top talent.¹

² Forbes, "Corporate Culture Matters A Lot, Says New Study," 1/26/2016
The World of Wellness Challenges
Wellness challenges give people the structure and support they need to make positive changes while having fun.

These events put the focus on specific areas of well-being for dedicated periods of time. Challenges encourage people to take steps toward better and ongoing well-being on their own or as part of a team. And, all of this comes packaged and ready to go in a fun and supportive way.
Top 3 Goal Success Tips:

1. Write it down.
2. Tell someone about it.
3. Track your progress.

Do Wellness Challenges Work?

Participating in a wellness challenge increases individual accountability and maintains motivation.

Taking steps like writing down a goal or telling someone else about a goal enhances personal commitment — and increases the likelihood of meeting that goal. Joining a challenge is akin to writing down a goal and sharing it with others.
Well-being doesn’t “just happen.” People need to consciously commit to it — and sometimes we all need a little help along the way.

Even the most disciplined person can benefit from participating in challenges. Effective wellness challenges provide:

- A clear structure and the steps necessary to reach a goal.
- A peer-based support system.
- The ability to connect with coworkers.
- Ongoing motivation and accountability.
- A platform for growing and strengthening a culture of well-being at work.
SECTION 3

Planning Wellness Challenges
Planning Your Wellness Challenge

Proper planning sets your challenge up for maximum engagement and results in success. A good plan should answer these six questions:

1. What **wellness topic** will you focus on?
2. What **group or groups** will you offer the challenge to?
3. What type of **challenge format** will you offer?
4. What **communications** will you use?
5. What **metrics** will you track to measure results?
6. What **rewards or incentives** will you offer?
Planning Your Wellness Challenge

AREA OF FOCUS
Wellness challenges can focus on a variety of topics. For example, you can choose to promote increased physical activity, better nutrition, stress reduction, volunteerism, or another wellness theme — get creative!

TARGET AUDIENCE
Do you want to offer a challenge to people at multiple locations or just one specific location? Are you targeting people with high blood pressure? Clearly identify your audience for each challenge.

CHALLENGE FORMAT
Challenges can be set up as peer or team-based events. Determine which structure best meets your needs. Try mixing it up by offering a peer challenge one time and a team challenge the next time. This will help you appeal to different audiences each time and broaden your well-being program reach.
Planning Your Wellness Challenge

Best Practices Tip:
Plan multiple challenges over the course of a year at one time. This allows you to roll out a variety of events that maintain engagement and appeal to a wide variety of people.

COMMUNICATION NEEDS
Getting the word out about your challenge is essential for it to succeed — before and all throughout the challenge. Make sure you carefully plan your communications to effectively reach everyone in your target audience.

METRICS TRACKING
Determine what information you want to track and set up a program to do so. Challenge registrations and completion rates as well as email open and click-thru rates give you a good view of engagement.

REWARDS AND INCENTIVES
Are all of your incentives financially based? Maybe now’s the time for you to think outside the box and consider things like paid time off to reward people for well-being program engagement and progress.
SECTION 4

Executing Wellness Challenges
Executing Your Wellness Challenge

Armed with your strategy, you’re ready to launch your challenge and boost your well-being program engagement.

CULTIVATE ONSITE CHAMPIONS

If you know people in your organization who are already passionate about well-being, ask them to champion your wellness challenges. Champions can lead teams, encourage their colleagues to get involved, and keep everyone motivated. Their support and excitement can even help increase participation and morale.

COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE

People can’t participate if they don’t know that challenges exist. Come up with creative ways to promote your challenges and make sure people are notified at every step of the way. Solicit sign-ups well in advance of the start date, provide ongoing motivation and tips, and keep participants informed of their progress.
Executing Your Wellness Challenge

Best Practices Tip:
Survey participants to get direct feedback. Use this information when planning future activities.

CROSS-PROMOTE OTHER ELEMENTS OF YOUR WELL-BEING PROGRAM
Your challenges should not exist in a vacuum. Connecting these events to your other well-being offerings gives people more support to reach their goals and also increases utilization of your entire program. Encourage people to connect with a health coach, to take a health assessment, to use your private well-being portal to learn more and watch your engagement grow.

TRACK RESULTS
Like any effort, you only really know how well it’s worked by the numbers. Monitor your engagement rates from start to finish and compare them to other efforts to see what is most effective. This includes metrics for individual communications as well as for general challenge participation.
Let WebMD Health Services help you put the power of challenges to work in your well-being program.

Contact us at connect@webmd.net

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Program Communications:
Your 3-Step Guide to Getting the Word Out—and Getting Results
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