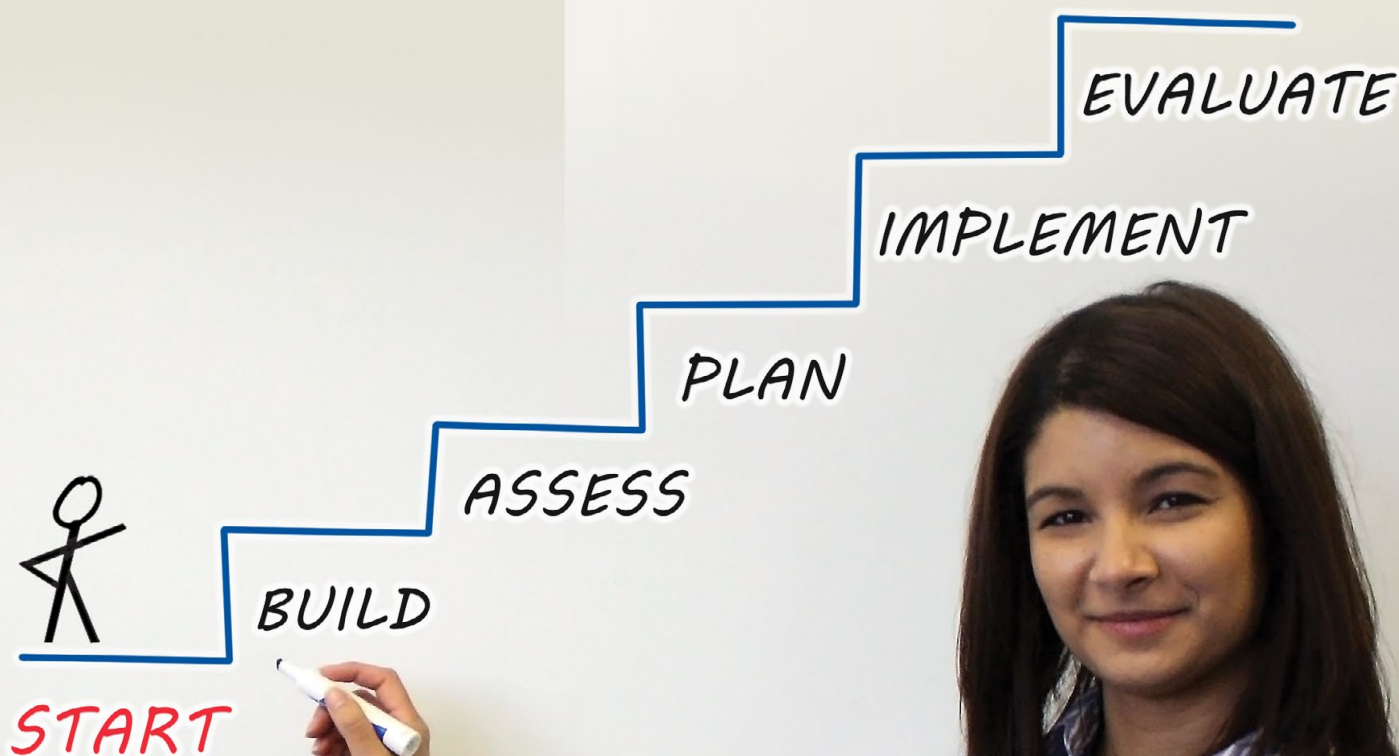


# NEBRASKA WORKSITE WELLNESS

# Toolkit

[www.worksitewellness.ne.gov](http://www.worksitewellness.ne.gov)



Department of Health & Human Services



*In partnership with:*





# GOVERNOR'S LETTER

January 2014



Dear Nebraska Business Leaders,

Nebraska has been at the forefront for many years in its commitment to improve the health of communities across the state. Working to improve the health of all Nebraskans is a challenging task, and one that is best accomplished through effective partnerships, a commitment to culture change, and putting people first. Local businesses are one example of a partnership that improves health through outcome-based worksite wellness efforts. Worksite wellness began in Nebraska in the early 1980s and the process has been perfected by businesses of all sizes in Nebraska communities.

To carry on the tradition of effective practices to prevent and control chronic disease, the **Nebraska Worksite Wellness Toolkit** has been created. Its purpose is to assist businesses that are interested in promoting and implementing worksite wellness programs and policies focused on making it easier for Nebraskans to reach, maintain, and lead healthier lives.



The **Nebraska Worksite Wellness Toolkit** provides a step-by-step process for worksite wellness designed to: **build** the foundation to support your program, **assess** needs and interests, **plan** the objectives you will address, **implement** activities and policies to help you achieve your objectives, and **evaluate** the effectiveness of your efforts. Following this guide will help you develop a comprehensive approach with a focus on prevention and wellness resulting in higher productivity, increased employee satisfaction, and greater control over health care costs in your organization.

For six years now, the [Governor's Wellness Award](#) has been annually honoring businesses across the state for their successful efforts in promoting worksite wellness. Over 200 businesses have been awarded to date. The program offers two categories: the Sower Award recognizes workplaces that have established quality wellness programs; the Grower Award takes it to the next level, honoring businesses and organizations demonstrating significant improvements in employee health status through their wellness program. As you move through your process, we encourage you to apply for the Governor's Wellness Award to be honored for your efforts and your impact on the health of Nebraskans.

We look forward to hearing of your successes and encourage you to share with others across the state. Together, we can help more Nebraskans lead healthier lives. Remember, wellness works!

Sincerely,

**Dave Heineman**  
Governor  
State of Nebraska

**Joseph M. Acierno, M.D., J.D.**  
Chief Medical Officer  
Director, Division of Public Health  
Department of Health and Human Services



# INTRODUCTION

## Why worksite wellness?

Nebraskans spend an average of nearly nine hours a day at work—more awake hours than any other place.<sup>1</sup> With increasing costs related to health care, workers compensation, turnover and productivity, employers are reaching for sustainable solutions to manage a growing workforce. Since employees are an organization's greatest asset, and much of the financial burden lands on the employers, it makes good business sense to strive to develop a worksite environment that helps employees to stay or become healthy. Creating a worksite wellness program is a wise investment for the organization that will yield long-term dividends. These benefits are not only monetary but also relate to the quality of life for employees, their families, the organization and ultimately, the community.

## How to use the toolkit?

This Nebraska Worksite Wellness Toolkit is a easy-to-use guide for organizations to follow to effectively develop a comprehensive worksite wellness program. The Toolkit is available both in a document and online. Organizations are given detailed steps to follow to build or expand worksite wellness efforts. The website contains additional resources beyond the Toolkit document and connects business with up-to-date information to support their programs.

### Here are some ideas of how businesses can use the Nebraska Worksite Wellness Toolkit:

1. *Print the entire document or each chapter and share it with wellness committee members.*
2. *Save the website as a "favorites tab" for easy access and to check regularly for additional resources.*
3. *Develop an action plan to create or enhance your organization's worksite wellness efforts.*
4. *Review the case studies, quotes, active links and special considerations in each chapter to gain more information.*
5. *Seek additional assistance from the Wellness Council experts from [WorkWell](#), [WELCOM](#), and the [Panhandle Worksite Wellness Council](#).*
6. *Document activities by using the checklists made available at the end of each chapter or on the website.*
7. *Share successes with other businesses who may be beginning their wellness program.*

<sup>1</sup>Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010, American Time Use Survey, 2010.

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# BUSINESS CASE FOR WORKSITE WELLNESS

## Proven cost savings due to wellness:

- State of Nebraska:  
For every \$1 spent on their program, health care savings were estimated at **\$2.70**.
- Lincoln Industries:  
For every \$1 spent on their comprehensive health and wellness program, savings were estimated at **\$5.00**.
- University of Michigan:<sup>①</sup>  
For every \$1 spent on their workplace health programs, savings were estimated at **\$1.50 to \$2.50**.
- Dupont (USA):<sup>②</sup>  
For every \$1 spent on their company health promotion program, savings on just their disability expenses were estimated at **\$2.05** after 2 years.
- Coors Brewing Company:<sup>③</sup>  
For every \$1 spent on their fitness program, savings were estimated at **\$6.15**.

## Worksite wellness makes good business sense

Beyond the financial returns of an effective wellness program where employees' quality of life is improved through healthy eating habits and increased physical activity, lower stress levels, and a reduction in illness and injuries, there are other very strategic reasons why a worksite wellness program makes good business sense.

### ‣ *Improved productivity and performance*

*First, an effective employee wellness program improves the overall productivity and performance of employees and the organization. The employer benefits from healthier employees who are more productive on the job and are absent less. This leads to reduced sick leave, a more consistent workforce, and a decreased need for temporary workers or increased workload on co-workers.*

### ‣ *Improved morale*

*Second, a company that demonstrates that it cares about its employees by offering a worksite wellness program is often viewed as a better place to work and perceived as an organization that demonstrates a social responsibility to the community. The improved morale, increased engagement, and enhanced company image provided by a wellness program improve both recruitment and retention of talented employees.*

### ‣ *Cost savings*

*Third, the monetary value of worksite wellness programs is well established. Well-designed and executed worksite wellness programs have resulted in great cost savings for many organizations, such as the ones described to the left.*

### ‣ *Improved corporate image*

*Finally, there is another business issue that impacts every company: a company's reputation or organizational profile can be a critical factor in the marketplace. While difficult to quantify, no CEO would argue with the idea that their corporate image is incredibly important in relation to the prosperity and success of the company.*

<sup>①</sup>Bachmann, "Health Promotion at Work," 5-7; J. E. Fielding, "The Proof of the Health Promotion Pudding Is...", *Journal of Occupational Medicine* 30, no. 2 (February 1998).

<sup>②</sup>T. Golaszewski, "Shining Lights: Studies that have Most Influenced the Understanding of Health Promotion's Financial Impact," *American Journal of Health Promotion* 15, no.5 (May/June 2001).

<sup>③</sup>Jacqueline Taggart and Jamie Farrell, "Where Wellness Shows up on the Bottom Line," *Canadian HR Reporter* 16, no. 18, (October 20, 2003): 12

## The evidence-based process for worksite wellness

While there is not a “one size fits all” approach to worksite wellness, 30 years of experience and evidence from research have proven that there is a step-by-step process to develop an effective worksite wellness program. Each chapter of this toolkit includes action items for each of these steps for businesses that are beginning or growing wellness initiatives.

- › **Build** the foundation to support your program.
- › **Assess** your organization’s needs and interests.
- › **Plan** the objectives that your wellness program will address.
- › **Implement** the activities that will help achieve your program’s objectives.
- › **Evaluate** your program.

It may take several months going through the steps outlined in this toolkit to launch a worksite wellness program, but the resulting outcomes experienced will be well worth the time and investment. This toolkit also offers ideas to help slowly shift an organization’s culture in the right direction if the current culture is not supportive of wellness.

### *Special considerations for small businesses:*

This toolkit offers special considerations to tailor worksite wellness programs to improve the health of employees at organizations with fewer than 50 employees. These recommendations will be provided in the sidebar in each chapter.

### *Make it easy. Join a wellness council.*

Your local wellness council can offer support through the entire process of developing and expanding a worksite wellness program.

