

Employee participation with the introduction of health management programmes – Daniela Scholl

Objectives

The University of Michigan has published in 2012 a study that reveals the impact of employee participation on employees' health and well-being. As well in 2012 the Employment Research Institute has analyzed the health and well-being of employees in employee owned businesses. The Gallup Organization publishes yearly statistics showing the correlation between employee engagement and physical and psychological well-being.

Especially when introducing health management in a company it is vital that employees are invited from the beginning to work on concept and strategies, as this is doubling in impact on well-being. We have screened various studies and transferred some of the results on our work. With this presentation we will give ideas and best practice examples how to start health management in a company with active employee participation.

Methods

1. The World Café methodology is a simple, effective, and flexible format for hosting large group dialogue. World Café can be modified to meet the needs of various stakeholders. The following five components comprise the basic model: Setting, Welcome and Introduction, Small Group Rounds, Questions and Harvest. In the context of introducing a corporate health program this means that the employees are treated with respect, asking questions like “how do you like to work to feel healthy?”, “which elements of our operations today are putting stress on you?” or “which action needs to be taken by whom to create a healthy working atmosphere?” during the course of the World Café.

2. Open Space is another technology to enable all kinds of people, in any kind of organization, to create inspired meetings. Open Space works best when the work to be done is complex, the people and ideas involved are diverse and the passion for resolution (and potential for conflict) are high. Only the leading topic is defined, the agenda and details are created by the participants.

Results

Introducing the methods as described companies do have a way higher adoption on their corporate health program. Employees' motivation to change behavior and take self responsible action can only be achieved by bringing their ideas to life. The “not invented here” (NIH) philosophy is obsolete.

Conclusion

Using the knowledge that employee participation is already a step towards a more healthy working place, it is a logical consequence to use this knowledge and powerful methods when introducing a corporate health program.