

OVADIA HEART HEALTH

WHITE PAPER

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

The challenge is overcoming that perception of lack of time and for some 'disinterest' in wellness efforts.





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Leading by Example



INTRODUCTION

In leadership circles the world round the benefits of leading by example are rigorously demonstrated and promoted. Management courses, MBA programs and executive coaching systems all teach and encourage the value of leading with actions. Premier coaching programs like Better Up suggest “Taking care of yourself” as one of the top ways to lead by example.[1]

In the business book realm, Steven Covey’s, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* to Jim Collins, *Good to Great* to Brené Brown’s, *Dare to Lead* offer a mere sample highlighting the phrase, actions speak louder than words. As a leader are you leading on the health and wellness front? And do you actively demonstrate prioritizing your own health?

If productivity, longevity and overall wellbeing of your employees is a concern, leading by example is a first step in garnering trust, respect and boosting a positive work culture. Simply said, you can’t just offer the program, you need to be participating in it.

This 2023 study from Australia[2] fits right in line with that thinking.

“Critically, the study highlighted the need for workplace wellness programs to intentionally include leaders rather than only expect them to implement them.”

The above distinction between leaders who implement and those who participate fully could be the make-or-break cog in your employee wellness program. Harvard Business Review (HBR) offers insight on the lead by example test front.[3] Two powerful questions HBR states that can directly apply to company programs is below.

- 01 What influence and impact do the examples actually have on people’s perception and behavior?
- 02 Are direct reports inspired to admire and emulate?



Many leaders feel they don't have permission and or are "too busy" to participate. However, when that mindset is overcome, and they "allow" themselves to take care of their health this provides additional support to the success of the program. The challenge is overcoming that perception of lack of time and for some 'disinterest' in wellness efforts.

"It was giving people permission, and I was one of those, as a leader, that went, 'We can do this. It's okay to do this. You can do this because this is what we need. This is collectively what we need, and you have my support to do it.'"[4]

OVERCOMING PERCEPTION OF LACK OF TIME

Creating a work atmosphere that sees wellness initiatives as timesaving, energy boosting and ultimately increasing productivity need to be at the forefront of programs. This requires four key program initiatives.

- Short in duration
- Easily accessed and user friendly
- Simply communicated with clear instructions
- Consistently scheduled to enhance planning and participation

SHORT AND EFFECTIVE

In many workplace environments a big concern is lack of physical activity. Granted companies are not in the business of personal training and or physical fitness instruction. That said efforts that inspire short bursts of activity can be an easy tool for leaders to demonstrate participation over being a bystander.

In the work of Jim Loehr[5] and Tony Schartz[6] authors of "The Power of Full Engagement" they advocate for breaks after every 90 minutes of work for the corporate athlete seeking high level performance. In this short 9-minute summary video by Lozeron Academy of Loehr and Schwartz' work, four recovery rituals are stressed for easy implementation.[7] All four offer a chance to lead by "physical example" in short duration.



BE CREATIVE

- Quick meeting break, walk up the stairs, around the block and or just step outside
- Hold standing meetings, they will by nature be shorter
- Create a lunchtime walking group and or initiate the buddy system
- Install a recovery room, open space to stretch, decompress, breath and restore

UNDERSTAND YOUR COMPANY PAIN POINTS

There is no 'one' way to do wellness. Finding out what your employees biggest challenges are from a health perspective can be the lead into a successful program. Is it movement like stated above, is it education and empowerment in metabolic health, is it having support in the realms of nutrition and mental health? All questions only you the leaders can answer but should be at the forefront of your efforts. Then find a partner who can help you build a program to fit your company needs.

SIMPLE COMMUNICATION

Jessie Gordon, CEO of Executive Performance Training^[8] who has been leading executive communication programs for decades, encourages leaders to build a toolbox of concise and simple communication practices to accelerate company performance. In her book, *What Gap? A Communication Tool Box*,^[9] Ms. Gordon identifies essential building blocks in communication for leaders who want to make a difference.

Leaders who communicate well on every level, not only in promoting health and wellness efforts but lead with energy, encourage movement and build a performance mindset are very positive ways to enhance employee wellness participation at a foundational level. This might involve training of individuals, especially managers, on improving communication skills in general which in turn supports clarity around wellness initiatives.



CONSISTENCY

There is a saying amongst fitness educators when asked 'what is the best exercise'? Answer: The one you will do! If a company is very sporadic and haphazard about wellness programs and or even the communication about them, participation and engagement will be erratic.

For example, in a manufacturing company the Ovadia Heart Health Team works with the CEO has a weekly company broadcast. In this meeting, each time either a video, handout and or communication on something wellness is promoted. This sets a weekly example that individual health and overall company wellbeing is a priority consistently.

Given there is plenty of work to be done on the employee wellness front. For example, numerous surveys point to very low numbers of employees who feel their company cares about their health. Statista states that only 25% feel the company really cares about their health, 32% a moderate level of care and 43% total in the categories of somewhat, not very much and not at all.[10]

The start of the New Year offers a unique opportunity for change, fresh starts and the energy to lead by example with more than just a wellness plan.



MOVING FORWARD

For decades worksite wellness efforts have looked great on paper. The theory of a “good wellness plan” has not always manifested into moving the needle health wise. The need to address chronic health issues is at the forefront of discussions nationwide with the Make America Health Again movement. As Fortune Business Insights points out the demand for healthier employees is high (see below quote).[11]

“The rising prevalence of chronic diseases owing to unhealthy diet patterns, sedentary lifestyles, high-stress levels, and overexposure to digital screens caused due to long time working schedules is increasing the demand for wellness programs at the workplace.”

One cannot expect to see improvement in the health of employees if managers and leaders are not participating in the efforts. Implementation is one step but leading by example is the big leap forward towards a successful and sustainable metabolically fit company.



References

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OUR TEAM



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Dr. Philip Ovadia

Board-certified Cardiac Surgeon and founder of Ovadia Heart Health

Our mission is to optimize the public's metabolic health and help people like you stay off my operating table. As a heart surgeon who used to be morbidly obese, I have seen firsthand the failures of mainstream diets and medicine. I realized that what helped me lose over 100 pounds was the same solution that could have prevented thousands of open heart surgeries I've performed — metabolic health. Through Ovadia Heart Health, I teach individuals and organizations my complete metabolic health system to prevent and reverse disease, avoid early death, and live well for life.



Next Steps: Your heart's health is too important to leave in the hands of someone who doesn't fully support your wellness journey.

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